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INDEX.

TALES AND STORIES.

PAGE

Almond-Tree, The. By R. E. Francillon . . 635

AUNT MARY. By Fred M. White 273, 298, 313, 329, 344

CAPTAIN BLACK AND WHITE. By John Oxenham 417, 441

CAST BREAD. By Mary Stuart Boyd 65, 88, 105, 121

Changed Trunk, The. By S. Baring-Gould . 759

CLOSED BOOK, THE. By William Le Queux

I. Which mainly concerns a Hunchback 1
II. The Priest and the Book . . 3
III. In which the Prior is Mysterious . 20
IV. By the Tideless Sea . . . 35
V. Shows Something Suspicious . . 53
VI. The Opening of the Book . . 71
VII. Forbidden Folios 84
VIII. Concerns a Woman's Serfdom . 100
IX. Doctor Pellegrini's Opinion . . 114
X. Across Europe. 132
XI. The Old Lady from Paris . . 150
XII. The Sign of the Bear-Cub . . 163
XIII. What the Watcher saw . . . 183
XIV. The Counsel of Friends . . . 195
XV. The old Monk's Secret . . . 214
XVI. Continues the Record . . . 228
XVII. Contains forbidden Knowledge . 243
XVIII. Lady Judith speaks . . . 260
XIX. The Hand and the Glove . . 279
XX. Walter Wyman is unreasonable . 292
XXI. We make Preliminary Investigation 308
XXII. What happened at Crowland . . 324
XXIII. Tactics of the Enemy . . . 339
XXIV. Forestalled! 360
XXV. What the Buried Chest contained . 371
XXVI. A Discovery in Harpur Street . 388
XXVII. 'If you knew the truth!' . . 403
XXVIII. The Stranger in Black . . . 425
XXIX. Some Explanations . . . 436
XXX. Humours of a House-Party . . 455
XXXI. Under the Gallows Knob . . 468
XXXII. The Major makes a Statement . 485
XXXIII. Will the Sun shine? 501
XXXIV. The Red Bull of the Borgias . . 516
XXXV. What we found at Threave . . 535
XXXVI. Shows the actual Spot at Crowland 548
XXXVII. In which I enter the House of Mystery 566
XXXVIII. The Room of the Bear-Cub . . 578
XXXIX. Contains Lord Glenelg's Story . 597
XL. By which the Book remains Open . 612

PAGE

COLONEL'S MURILLO, THE. By Andrew W. Arnold 625, 648, 665, 680

COMEDY OF LIEUTENANTS, A. By Richard Arthur 209, 233, 249, 266

Conscientious Objector, A. 125

'Contrabandista,' The. By Commander E. Hamilton Currey, R.N. 801

DEAD HAND, THE. By Mrs J. H. Needell 689, 714, 726, 740, 755

FIVE-HEAD CREEK. By Louis Becke . 721, 745

Freeing of Ivancho, The. An Incident in the Macedonian Insurrection of 1903. By Nigel Carlyle Graham. 572

Gold *versus* Brass 219

HER EXCELLENCE. By Carlton Dawe . 481, 506

How the *Saint John* came Home. By W. Victor Cook 477

Intercepted Letter, The. By John Leys . . 252

'ISLES OF DESTINY, THE.' By H. Halyburton Ross . 593, 614, 630, 643, 659, 676, 696, 709

Judy, an Ugly Duckling. By Katharine Tynan 520

Leopard-Couch, The. By A. Sarsfield Ward . 136

'LUCK.' By Louis Becke 145, 169

Maiden's Shoe, The. By Alfred Colbeck . . 30

MESSAGE FORGOTTEN, A. By Arthur H. Henderson 529, 553

MYSTERY OF THE DALOON RIVER, THE. By Arthur H. Henderson 10, 24, 41

MYSTERY OF THE VIOLET STORK, THE. By H. A. Bryden . . . 769, 788, 808, 818

One who Never Got There, The. By John Oxenham 56

Reformation at Trawdsley. By Robert Stonecheek 380

RIGHT HORSE BUT THE WRONG MAN, THE. By F. B. Forester . . 353, 376, 393, 408

Setting the Clock Back; or, The Rejuvenation of Professor Wentworth. By Mrs Isabel Smith 318

TOREADOR'S TALISMAN, THE. By Charles Edwardes 177, 200

Tragedy of Hougomont, The. By Ethel F. Heddle 778

UNDERSTUDY, AN. By Arthur O. Cooke 449, 472

'VAIN THREADS.' By Mrs Isabel Smith 561, 583, 601, 618

389577

ARTICLES OF INSTRUCTION AND ENTERTAINMENT.

	PAGE
Abeokuta. By a Resident	641
Aerial Railway, The Original	540
Africa, The Prospects of British East	374
Air, The Conquest of the. By John Bacon, M.A.	699
Alien, The Criminal. By Edward John Prior	216
American Methods. By Sir Edmund Verney, Bart.	6, 22
Andes, Across the Chilian	284
Anecdotes of Celebrated People, New. By Orion	189
Arizona, The Petrified Forest of	140
'Around the World through Japan'	74
Atlantic Cattle-Carrying. By Walter Wood	453
Attire, Old Survivals in	335, 544
Australia, The Progress of Western	129
Australia in the 'Thirties.' By Philip Laurence Oliphant	26
Australian Cinderella, The	129
Bananas	46
Battlefield, Humours of the. By Captain Lewis Golding	173
Bell (Henry) and his Share in Steam Navigation	797
Biological Station, A New	783
Blind Deaf-Mutes, The Education of, with the Case of Helen Keller. By Charles Ray	568
Blue-Book, An Illustrated	540
Breakfast, Some Phases of	753
Breton Gentleman of Former Days, A	757
British East Africa, The Prospects of	374
British Trade with Foreign Countries. By a Resident in Brazil	231
Burglary, The Most Daring, on Record. By W. B. Robertson	154
Burton (Sir Richard), A Reminiscence of	538
Cape Castle, The Passing of	627
Cattle-Carrying, Atlantic	453
Chemist in the Days of the Stuarts, A	734
Chess-Problems, About	13
Chilian Andes, Across the	284
Chinese Humour. By Helena von Poseck	462
Chinese Labourers on the Rand Mines. By a Resident Engineer	748
Church Blunders and Stories Clerical	652
Clocks, The Crown	772
Colour-Problems in America. By James Burnley	
I. The Black Man	692
II. The Red Man	730
III. The Yellow Man	826
Conquest of the Air, The	699
Conscripts Old and Young. By M. Betham-Edwards	677
Co-operative Holidays	543
Cornhill Burglary—The Most Daring Burglary on Record	154
Corvo, Azores, The Island of	95
Country Doctor in France, The	241
Criminal Alien, The. By Edward John Prior	216
Crown Clocks, The	772
Cypress and Myrtle. By Lady Napier of Magdala	600
Dead Sea of the New World, The	431
Deaf-Mutes, The Education of Blind	568
De Rullecourt's Invasion of Jersey. By C. T. O. Cooke	378
Dickson, Antonia Kennedy-Laurie	55
Dinner *à la Carte* or *Table-d'Hôte*	401
Doctor in France, The Country	241
Domestic Evolution, The coming. As Foreseen by a Mere Man	289
Doss-House, An Evening in a. By H. Jenner-Fust, M.A.	396
Dowie Dens of Yarrow, The. By Robert Borland	458
Drink Monopoly, Russia's. By J. Blake Harrold	337
Duchy of Lancaster and Estates, The. By W. M. J. Williams	494
Edison, An Italian	45
Electric Trams, How they Work	148
Electricity, Protection of Treasure by	613
Enhydros, or the Salto Water-Stone	44, 750
Ennerdale, The Wild-Dog of	470
Essex Marshes, The. By the Rev. Canon Vaughan, M.A.	657
Estate Management	544
Ex-Schoolmaster, Some Reflections and Reminiscences of an	491
Factory-Workers of the Twentieth Century. By Priscilla E. Moulder	812
False Alarm of 1804, The. By Elizabeth Grierson	49
Fantasies which have Come True. By T. C. Hepworth	712
Fighting Power of Modern Warships, The. By Archibald S. Hurd	257
Flowers, Forcing, by the Direct Action of Fire. By J. E. Whitby	784
Foods and Feeding, On. By J. Cater, M.D.	158
Foreign Countries, British Trade with	231
Forest of Dean, The. By William Andrews	654
French-Canadian Rebellion, Diary of the Last Surviving Prisoner of the	108
French Officer, The. By One who Knows Him	172
Friskines, The	235
Fruit-Culture on Small Holdings. By J. M. Hodge	580
'Garden of England, The:' Its Literary Fertility. By W. Scott King	433
Gas Industry, Some Aspects of the. By a Gas Engineer	390
Gentlemen-in-Waiting. By a Retired Lady-in-Waiting	683
Geography in Commerce and Education	542
Giant Suns. By Alexander W. Roberts, D.Sc., F.R.A.S., F.R.S.E., Lovedale College, South Africa	294
Glengarrys, The Two. By Norman Maclean	108
Gomera, The Whistlers of	347
Greene (Captain), The Death of. By Pilgrim	206
Guanajuato	212

PAGE

'Habitants,' In the Home of the. By the Rev. Robert Wilson, Ph.D., St John, New Brunswick 663
Handicrafts, The Style of Modern. By Charles L. Eastlake 793
Hawthorne's 'Rome,' Some Remarks on. By George Pignatorre 310
Heron, The. By Captain J. H. Baldwin . . 342
Highgate Hill, On. By Oliver Grey . . 37
History in Roman Remains, Buried . . . 366
Holidays, Co-operative 543
House of Lords, Replenishing the. By W. V. Roberts 91
Humour, Chinese 462
Humour of America, The Provincial . . . 153
Humours of the Battlefield 173
Industrial Scotland 543
Ironclads, A Reminiscence of the First Fight between 459
Ironworks in America, Early 316
Italy, Travel and Misadventure in. By the Editor 497, 513
Jacobite Gleanings, More 541
Japan, The Sword-Makers of 518
Jersey, De Rullecourt's Invasion of. By C. T. O. Cooke 378
Kapock 541
Keller (Helen), The Blind Deaf-Mute . . 568
Labourers on the Rand Mines, Chinese. By a Resident Engineer 748
Ladies of Politics, The Great. By Henry Leach 421
Lancaster and Estates, The Duchy of . . 494
Leopolds, Under the Shadow of the. By Alexander Macdonald, F.R.S.G.S. . . 185
Life-Saving Service of Sable Island, The Canadian. By Arthur P. Silver . . 716
Literary Recreation 124
'Little Monkey' 511
London Poor, The Lives of the. By H. Jenner-Fust, M.A. 396
Loss to Gain, From—The Romance of the Rubbish-Heap 504
Lycée Fénélon for Girls, The. By Miss Betham-Edwards 724
Magnetic Storm and Sun-Spots, The Recent. By Violet Tweedale 86
Mangoes in Jamaica 282
Man-Tracking. By Stanhope Sprigg . . 743
Marie Celeste, The Case of the. By J. L. Hornibrook 671
Marriages, Mixed 113
Match-Making. By T. C. Hepworth . . 166
Midland Meadow of Enchantment, A . . 577
Mole and its now Fashionable Skin, Concerning the. By Canning Williams . . . 33
Monsieur Le Curé, My Friend 427
'Mr Speaker, Strangers, Sir!' By T. H. S. Escott 263
Napier (Robert): A Pioneer Steamship Builder 637
Navigation, Henry Bell and his Share in Steam 797
Navigation, Progress of Steam 301
Nelson's (Lord) Prize Captures. By R. A. Gatty, LL.B. 276, 355

PAGE

'Never Never' Land of Australia, In the. By Alexander Macdonald, F.R.S.G.S. . . 644
Novel-Reading, Guidance in 97
Nurse, Our Little 617
Old-Book Collecting, The Romance of. By Clive Holland 814
Opalised Dogfish, An 542
Opium-Dens in London 193
Palestine under the Sultan's Sway . . . 362
Panamá Canal, What America hopes to gain by the 540
Patmos: Its Monastery and Passion Play. By Sir J. William Whittall 701
Paton (Sir Noel): The Queen's Limner for Scotland 805, 823
Peat, Our Undeveloped Resources of. By W. J. Millar 251
Petrified Forest of Arizona, The . . . 140
Photographic Progress 332
Pianist, The Passing of the. By T. C. Hepworth 669
Piedmont Peasant, The. By Eustace Reynolds-Ball 369
Pneumatic-Tool Works at Fraserburgh, The . 720
Police Telegraph-Code, The 16
Politics, The Great Ladies of. By Henry Leach 421
Pompeii To-Day. By T. P. Armstrong . . 222
Port Blair in the Andaman Islands, The Penal Settlement of. By a late Settlement Officer 574, 586
Portuguese Sketch-Book, Leaves from a . . 406
Potato, Romance of the 444
Queen's Limner for Scotland, The—Sir Noel Paton 805, 823
Radium 180
Rag Fair of Rome, The. By G. G. Chatterton 438
Rand Mines, Chinese Labourers on the. By a Resident Engineer 748
Ravelston Dykes: A Disappearing Edinburgh Landmark 589
Revenue, The Cost of Collecting the. By W. M. J. Williams 117
Riviera, Wintering on the. By an old Resident 81
Roman Remains, Buried History in . . . 366
Rome, The Rag Fair of 438
Rome as it is To-Day. By George Pignatorre, late British Vice-Consul at Messina . . 310
Round the World 'On Duty.' By Surgeon-General G. J. H. Evatt, C.B. . . . 564
Rubbish-Heap, The Romance of the . . . 504
Russia's Drink Monopoly. By J. Blake Harrold 337
Russo-Japan War, One Aspect of the . . 327
Sable Island, The Canadian Life-Saving Service of 716
St Andrews, Underground 531
St Andrews and Elsewhere, Ancient Wells in. By W. T. Linskill 17
Salto Water-Stone, or Enhydros, The . 44, 750
Salvation Army Shelter, A Night in. By H. Jenner-Fust, M.A. 396
School in Wild Life, The 305
Scotch Manse, Reminiscences of a . . . 197

	PAGE
Sea-Power, The Race for. By Archibald S. Hurd	705
Sea-Sickness, and how to Avoid it. By Eustace Reynolds-Ball, F.R.G.S.	509
Shakespeare in Scotland. By Alexander Cargill	785
Sleepy Hollow Gazette, The	774
Snaileries	429
Sport in Ancient Rome. By Professor Rodolfo Lanciani	102
Stars Inhabited, Are the? By Alexander W. Roberts, D.Sc., Lovedale, South Africa	445
Steam Navigation, Henry Bell and his Share in	797
Steamship Builder, A Pioneer—Robert Napier	637
'Stiff-Catchers' and their Victims	453
Submerged Class, Memories of a. By T. H. S. Escott	604
Sundials, Something about	484
Sun-Spots, The Recent Magnetic Storm and. By Violet Tweedale	86
Suns, Giant	294
Sword-Makers of Japan, The	518
Talks with Girls. By Katharine Burrill	
For the Everyday Girl	67
Diana and Atalanta	161
Of Many Books	225
The Garden of Friendship	321
Thursday's Bairns	385
Jenny Wren and Fine Feathers	465
Visitors and Visited	545
Letter-Writing and some Letter-Writers	609
The Tears of Mr Turveydrop	673
An Understudy for an Angel	737
Teachers of My Time, Great. By T. H. S. Escott	77
Telegraph-Code, The Police	16
Thibet, A Visit to. By Captain A. H. Baldwin	245, 410
Torpedo, The Deadly	364
Travel and Misadventure in Italy. By the Editor	497, 513
Treasure, Protection of, by Electricity	613
Utah, The Great Salt Lake of—The Dead Sea of the New World	431
Vatican, The Finances of the. By Salvatore Cortesi	632
Walton (Izaak), an Old Edition of. By Charles Locke Eastlake	525
War, Ancient and Modern, Destruction of Life in	551
Warships, The Fighting Power of Modern	257
Water-Stone, The Salto	44, 750
Weapons, My. By Reginald Wyon	239
Wells (Ancient) in St Andrews and Elsewhere. By W. T. Linskill	17
Western Australia, Progress of	129
Whistlers of Gomera, The	347
Who goes First?	596
Wight, Isle of—'The Garden of England:' Its Literary Fertility. By W. Scott King	433
Wild Animal Farm, A Visit to a. By W. B. Robertson	488
Wild-Dog of Ennerdale, The	470
Wildfowling	134
Wild Life, The School in	305
Wintering on the Riviera	81
Woodcock. By Lady Napier of Magdala	817
Yarrow, The Dowie Dens of. By Robert Borland	458

POETRY.

Amantium Iræ	656
Answer, The	352
Autumn Days, In	704
Beside the Alps	720
Bookstall, At a	816
Call, A	416
Change	560
Cupid and Psyche	80
Dreamer, The	240
Dreamland Ship, The	640
Drifting down the River	224
Evensong, An	592
Flagstaff Hill	128
Flowers of Kindness	576
Fonte Avellana, At	304
Friend, To an Old	752
Fulfilment	512
Gate to Yesterday, The	688
Gloaming Hour, The	144
Good-bye	624
Great Magician, The	288
Home-Thoughts	96
I Dream	464
Kingship of the Hills, The	160
Listen	272
Longing	800
Love's Treasury, In	736
Memory Awakened	320
Missal of Life, The	832
New Year's Eve, On	32
Nightingale, To a	544
Northward Ho!	192
Outlook, The	112
Plea, The	176
Skylark's Song, The	432
Sleep, Dream, and Wake	784
Solace in Nature	48
Song of Exile, A	256
Song of Roses, A	400
Song of the Clock	608
Song—Will he come when comes the spring-time?	384
Statue of Memnon, The	336
Summer Night, A	672
Ten Years After	208
Watcher of Inishail, The	448
Were I?	496
Where Love is	368
Winding Way, The	768
Winter-Time, In	64

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

	PAGE
Agriculturists, Natural	622
Alcohol, Duty-Free	475
Algerian Wine	622
Alpine Accidents	766
Aluminium, About	62
Aluminium, Electroplating	475
Angler's Paradise, An	767
Animated Microscopy	61
Anthrax	687
Apples, Coreless	831
Attar of Roses	767
Aurora Borealis, The	270
Bananas, Dried	476
Battle Wounds	686
Bird Slaughter	829
Birds, The Protection of	64
'Bits from an Old Book-Shop'	63
Boat, A New	686
Bread	272
Bricks from the Gas-Works	270
British Association, The	685
Bulwark, A Natural	350
Canal Traffic	829
Cancer Research Fund, The	621
Chafing-Dish, In Praise of the	688
Chartreuse	830
Chimneys that Smoke	204
Cider-Making	203
Coal, Smokeless Steam	271
Coal-Saver, a Domestic	351
Conscription	269
Cotton-Growing in the Empire	415
Decimal System, The	143
Dinosaurs, A Great Find of Fossil	768
Discovery, The Return of the	765
Diver's Palsy	558
Divining-Rod, The	63
Dust, Dangers of	205
Dust, Laying the	204
Egg-Packing	271
Eggs, Winter	831
Electric Power	687
Electrical Dangers	686
Electrical Progress	141
Electricity *versus* Steam	413
Electrophone, The	61
Electroplating Aluminium	475
Envelope-Making	61
Eye-Massage	831
Finger-Prints	143
Fire-Escape, Portable	476
Fire-Prevention in Theatres	270
Fires on Shipboard	685
Fisheries, Lake	623
Flannelette	142
Floating Islands	62
Food Adulteration	556
Frogs as Food	624
Fruit, Cold Storage of	831
Gas Committee, The	272
Gas-Engine, A New	205
German Toys	474
Grain from the Yukon	64
Identification by the Teeth	623
Incense	767
Indigo	557
Inoculating the Ground	832
Insect Pests	204
Island, A Mysterious	765
Ivy, Destructive	475
Lamp-Lighting, Automatic	829
Lepers of Robben Island, The	559
Leprosy, The Prevention of	269
Liberia, The Future of	831
Lightning, Vagaries of	688
Lightning-Conductors	352
'Live' Rail, Protection from the	766
Loch, The Deepest, in the United Kingdom	768
Machinery for the Farm	270
Magnetic Attraction	830
Magnets, Lifting by	558
Malaria at Ismailia	351
Mal de Mer	830
Marine Biology	558
Metric System, The	765
Microscopy, Animated	61
Milk, Sterilisation of	686
Motor-Boat, The	767
Motor-Car Industry, The	766
Motor-Cars, Dust-Raising	205
Motor-Lorry, The	271
Motor-Omnibuses	349
Motor Speed-Indicator	558
Mushrooms	205
Musical Education	557
Natural Scenery, Destruction of	204
Newspapers, Ocean Daily	476
Orange Essence	350
Organisms, Beneficent	686
Ostrich-Farming	271
Ozone	351
Panamá, Waste at	474
Passenger-Lifts	62
Pearls	203
Peat-Fuel	62
Peru, Facts about	206
Phonograph, The	61
Photographs in Colour	63, 414
Physical Degeneration	351
Physical Deterioration	687
Pit-Shafts, Disused	206
Platinum	144
Plumbers, Registration of	62
Poisonous Shellfish	63
Printing without Type	477
Radium Cures, Alleged	205
Railway Brake, An Emergency	560
Railway Carriages, Steel	271
Rail-Welding	350
Rats and the Plague	767
Reafforestation	204
Rifle-Clubs, Miniature	557
Rifle, The Cullen	621
Rubber at Lagos	143

	PAGE
Rubber Industry, The	413
Salmon for the Thames	415
Salvage Operations	621
Sanitation, The Pioneer of	687
San Marino	416
Scenic Artists	269
Sculpture by Photography	350
Sea-Sickness, To stop	415
Sharks, An Invasion of	766
Shellfish	203
Shellfish, Poisonous	63
Skipping as an Exercise	414
Sleeping Sickness	141
Smoke-Consuming Apparatus, A New	559
Snails, Artificial	475
Snake-Bite	622
Soldiers, For our	557
Sound-Quencher Wanted, A	476
Sparrow, The Mischievous	142
Steam-Coal, Smokeless	765
Steel-Chain Making	61
Stuffed Animals	623
Submarine Warfare	413
Sunshine, Healthy	623
Tea, A New	143
Telegraphing Extraordinary	144
Thames Lake, A	414
Timber, The Preservation of	63
Tools, High-Speed	142
Torpedo, The Whitehead	349
Tramway 'Points,' Electrical	831
Treasure-Lake in South America, The	352
Trout-Farming	830
Tuberculosis	556
Uganda, Progress in	624
Ullswater	557
Vapour Bath, The	141
Veloxite	205
War, The Arts of	622
Warfare, Submarine	413
Water-Bearing Plant, A	475
Weather-Forecasting Plant, A	414
Weather Forecasts	685
Whitehead Torpedo, The	349
Who's Who in America up to date	416
Wireless Telegraphy, The Future of	142
Woad	766
Wood-Working Machinery	415
World's Fair, The	474
Zebras, Harnessed	351

EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER CONTENTS.

THE UNTOLD TALE	By A. L. Holland	1
SIX SEAMEN AND A MENAGERIE	By John Arthur Barry	16
THE FAVOURITES OF THE REGENT	By Katharine S. MacQuoid	23
THE STORY OF A SOVEREIGN	By Arthur O. Cooke	31
TARNABY'S BARGE	By Thomas St E. Hake	37
CHRISTMAS DAY	By Sarah Wilson	48

Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

By WILLIAM LE QUEUX,
Author of *The Tickencote Treasure*, *Of Royal Blood*, *Secrets of the Foreign Office*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—WHICH MAINLY CONCERNS A HUNCHBACK.

THESE strange facts would never have been placed on record, nor would this exciting chapter of an eventful life have been written, except for two reasons: first, because the discovery I made has been declared to be of considerable importance to scientists, bibliophiles, and the world at large; and, secondly, because it is my dear wife's wish that in order to clear her in the eyes of both friends and foes nothing should be concealed, misrepresented, or withheld.

It was indeed a memorable day when I halted before the white, almost windowless, house of the Prior of San Sisto, and knocked twice at its plain, green-painted door.

The sun-blanched, time-mellowed old city of Florence lay silent, glaring, and deserted in the blazing noon of a July day. The Florentines had fled to the mountains for air. The green *persiennes*, or sun-shutters, were everywhere closed, the shops shut, the people slumbering, and the silence only broken by the heat-song of the chirping cicale in the scorched trees at the end of the Lung Arno.

Like many another Tuscan town, it stood with long rows of high, frescoed, and sculptured palaces facing the brown river, its magnificent black and white Duomo and campanile, its quaint fourteenth-century streets, and its medieval Ponte Vecchio all forming a grim, imposing relic of a long-past glory. In many places its aspect was little changed since the old *quattrocento* days, when it was the centre of all the arts and the powerful rival of Venice and Genoa, although its trade has decayed and its power departed. The Lion and Lily of Florence upon a flag is no longer feared, as it once was even by the bloodthirsty corsairs; and the rich Florentine brocades, velvets, and finely tempered arms are no longer in requisition in the markets of the world.

Save for the influx of leisured Englishmen and Americans, and the scrambling Cookites, it is one of the dead towns of Europe. Modern trade passes it by unnoticed; its very name would be forgotten were it not for those marvellous works of art in its galleries and in its very streets.

I had always loved the quaint old city, ever since a boy, when my father, a retired English naval officer, lived in that ancient house with the brown frescoes in the Via di Pinti in the days before the shrieking steam-trams ran to Prato or the splendid Palazzo Riccardi had been desecrated by the Government. At fourteen I left these quaint, quiet streets, with their cool *loggias* and silent, moss-grown courtyards, where the lizards darted, for the whirl of Paris, and subsequently lived and worked in London. Then, after an absence of nearly twenty years, I found myself living again in my beloved Tuscany, by the Mediterranean—at Leghorn, to be exact—forty miles distant from that medieval city of my childhood. Was it therefore surprising that the mood often seized me to go and revisit the old places I had known as a boy? I found them all unchanged—indeed, nothing changes in 'Firenze la Bella' save the fortunes of her ruined nobility and the increase of garish stucco hotels for the accommodation of the foreigner.

I was something of an antiquary, and through many years had been collecting medieval manuscripts on vellum, ancient charters, diplomas, notarial deeds, and such-like documents, none being of later date than the fifteenth century. To decipher the work of the old scribes is, I admit, a dry-as-dust occupation; nevertheless it is a work that grows on one, and the palæographist is an enthusiast always. In one's hobbies one should always join advantage to amusement, and seek to gather profit with pleasure.

My collection of musty-smelling parchment rolls and folded vellum documents, with their formidable

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seals of wax or lead, of heavy vellum books bound in oaken boards with brass bosses, or tiny illuminated Books of Hours so minutely written that a microscope was almost necessary to read them, appealed to very few people. Most of my friends regarded them as so many old and undecipherable books and rolls, without interest and without value. They wondered that, being continually occupied at my desk writing novels, I should take up such an essentially dry study.

Yet it was this love of collecting that first brought me into contact with Francesco Graniani, a queer little old hunchback, who was a kind of itinerant dealer in antiques. Unshaven, very shabby, and not particularly clean, he dressed always in the same faded drab suit, and, summer or winter, wore the same battered, sun-browned straw hat through all the years I knew him.

Often this strange, rather tragic figure would meet me in the sun-baked streets of Leghorn, raise his battered hat respectfully, and, taking me aside, produce mysteriously from his pocket a parchment charter with its seal, some leaves from a medieval psalter, or perhaps an illuminated codex or a Book of Hours with painted miniatures. Where he obtained such gems I have never to this day discovered. None knew who the old fellow was, or where he lived; he was a complete mystery.

One morning, while crossing the great square, I encountered him, and he informed me, in his strange, mysterious manner, of the existence of a very rare and interesting manuscript in the possession of the prior of the ancient Church of San Sisto, at Florence.

'If the signore goes to Firenze, Father Landini will no doubt allow him to have sight of the parchment book,' he said. 'Tell him that Francesco Graniani wishes it.'

'But what is the character of the manuscript?' I inquired.

'I know nothing of it,' he replied evasively, 'except that I believe it once belonged to the Monastery of the Certosa. I heard of it only last night, and thought perhaps it might interest you.'

It certainly did. Any discovery of that kind always attracted me, ever on the lookout as I was for a single folio of the original Dante.

With the object of inspecting the palæographic treasure, I next day took train to Florence, and an hour after my arrival, knocked in some trepidation at the prior's green door.

The long, gray church, one of the oldest in that ancient city, stood in its little piazza off the Via San Gallo, and adjoining it the prior's house, a long, low, fourteenth-century building, with high, cross-barred windows, and a wonderful old-world garden in the rear.

In answer to my summons there appeared a thin, yellow-faced, sharp-tongued house-woman, and on inquiry for the Father I was at once invited into a big stone hall, cool and dim after the sun-glare outside.

'Body of a thousand anchovies, Teresa! who has come to worry me now?' I heard a man demand angrily from a door at the end of a darkened corridor. 'Didn't I tell you that I was not at home until after mass to-morrow? Plague you, Teresa!'

To the wizen-faced woman I stammered some apology; but at the same moment I saw a huge, almost gigantic figure in a long black cassock and biretta emerge from the room.

'Oh, signore!' he cried apologetically the instant he caught sight of me, 'do pray excuse me! I have so many of my poor people here begging that I'm compelled to be out to them sometimes. Come in! come in!' Then he added reproachfully, turning to his housekeeper, 'Teresa, what manners you have to leave this gentleman standing in the hall like a mendicant! I'm ashamed of you, Teresa! What must the signore think—and a foreigner, too!'

In an instant the Very Reverend Bernardo Landini and I were friends. I saw that he was thoroughly genuine, a strange admixture of good-fellowship and piety. His proportions were gargantuan; his clean-shaven face was perfectly round, fresh, and almost boyish in complexion; his dark eyes twinkled with merriment; his stomach huge, and spoke mutely of a healthy appetite; his hand big and hearty in its shake; and in his speech he aspirated his 'c's,' which showed him to be a born Florentine.

After I had explained that my name was Allan Kennedy, and that I was introduced by the *gobbo* of Leghorn, he took out his great horn snuff-box, rapped it loudly, and offered me a pinch.

'Ah!' he remarked, 'the signore is English, yet how well he speaks our Tuscan!'

I thanked him for his compliment, and went on to explain that I had passed the years of my youth in Florence, and was at heart almost a Fiorentino.

This pleased him mightily, and from the moment I hinted at my antiquarian tastes he began to chatter as an enthusiast will.

The apartment wherein I sat, darkened by its closed sun-shutters, was certainly a strange one: small, and so crammed with antiques of every kind and description that one could scarcely move in it. Upon the old empire writing-table at which he had seated himself stood a small brass crucifix of exquisite design, while all around hung ancient pictures of a religious character: saints, *pietas*, pictures of the Redeemer, and several great canvases reaching from floor to ceiling, evidently from church-altars. The very chairs were of the fifteenth century, heavy, massive, and covered with stamped leather; the tables were of the Renaissance; and the perfect chaos of valuable objects of art stored there was, to me, a collector, absolutely bewildering.

And amid it all, seated at his table, was the ponderous, beaming cleric, mopping his brow with his big red handkerchief from time to time, and leaning back in his chair as he laughed and talked with me.

Yet when I mentioned that I had been sent by the mysterious old hunchback of Leghorn his face instantly grew serious, and with a low sigh he said:

'Ah! poor Francesco! Poor fellow!'

'You know him well, Signor Priore,' I said. 'Tell me about him. I'm very anxious to know who and what he really is. To me he has always been a mystery.'

But the stout prior shook his head, replying in a rather hard voice:

'No, signore. I regret that my lips are closed.'

His response was a strange one, and led me at once to suspect that my new friend was a party to some grave secret. Therefore, seeing that his manner was firm, I dropped the subject, although more than ever interested in the queer, deformed old fellow who had so long mystified me.

My friend the priest took me around his wonderful collection, and showed me a veritable confusion of valuable antiques: a Madonna by Andrea del Sarto, a Holy Family by Tintoretto, a tiny but exquisite specimen of that lost art of della Robbia, and a quantity of old tapestries, medieval ironwork, and old carved furniture.

In a room beyond was stored a splendid collection of Florentine armour: helmets, breastplates, gauntlets, and lances, with a heap of ancient swords, rapiers, and poignards. I took up several to examine them, and found that they were without exception splendid specimens of the Spanish armourer's work, mostly bearing upon the finely tempered blades the well-known marks of Blanco, Martinez, Ruiz, Tomas, and Pedro de Lezama.

Some of the work was wonderfully inlaid with brass and copper; and the collection appeared to be a representative one, ranging from the rusty cross-hilts of the Etruscas down to the thin Spanish rapiers of the seventeenth century.

A third room, still beyond, was the priest's bedchamber, and even this was so packed with curios and *bric-à-brac* that there was scarcely room to enter.

Above the narrow little bed was an antique bronze crucifix, mounted upon a carved wooden background covered with old purple brocade, while the white-washed walls were almost hidden by the profusion of religious pictures. The red-brick floor was carpetless, as were all the other apartments; but the furniture was all old, and upon the chairs were heaped quantities of silks and velvets from the Genoese looms of the seventeenth century: truly an amazing profusion of relics of Italy's past glory.

The prior smiled at my exclamations of surprise as I enthusiastically examined object after object with keen and critical eye. Then, when I remarked upon the value of the objects of art with which his unpretentious house was filled, he answered:

'I am delighted that you, signore, should feel so much interest in my few things. Like yourself, I am an enthusiast, and perhaps by my calling I am afforded unusual facilities for collecting. Here, in my poverty-stricken parish, are quantities of antiques stored in the cottages as well as in the palaces, and the *contadini* from all the countryside, even beyond Pistoja, prefer to bring me their treasures in secret rather than to offer them openly to the pawnbroker.'

'But Graniani told me that you have discovered a manuscript of a remarkable character. I possess a small collection; therefore may I be permitted to examine it?' I asked, carefully approaching the subject.

'Most certainly,' he replied, after a moment's hesitation, it seemed. 'It is in the safe in my study. Let us return there.' And I followed his ponderous form back to the small apartment wherein stood his writing-table with the crucifix and heavily bound Bible and missal upon it.

But as I walked behind him, unable to see his face, I was surprised at the tone of the remark he made as though speaking to himself.

'So Francesco told you of the book, did he? Ah!'

He spoke as though in suppressed anger that the queer old hunchback had betrayed his confidence.

CHAPTER II.—THE PRIEST AND THE BOOK.

THE prior mopped his round face again with his red handkerchief, and taking a key from his pocket, fumbled at the lock of the small and old-fashioned safe, after some moments producing the precious manuscript for my inspection.

It proved to be a thick folio, bound in its original oaken boards covered with purple leather that had faded and in parts disappeared. For further protection there were added great bosses of tarnished brass, usual in fifteenth-century bindings, but the wood itself was fast decaying; the binding presented a sadly tattered and worn appearance, and the heavy volume seemed held together mainly by its great brass clasp.

He placed it before me on the table, and with eager fingers I undid the clasp and opened it. As soon as my eyes fell upon the leaves of parchment I recognised it to be a very rare and remarkable fourteenth-century manuscript, and a desire at once seized me to possess it.

Written by the monk Arnoldus of Siena, it was beautifully executed in even Gothic characters, with red and blue initials, and ornamented with a number of curious designs in gold and colours representing the seven cardinal sins. Upon the first page was a long, square initial in gold; and, although written with the contractions common at the time, I managed to make out the first few lines in Latin as follows:

'Arnoldus Cenni de Senis, professus in monasterio Viridis vallis canon regul. S. Augustini in Zonie silva Camerac. dioec. Liber Gnotosolitos de septem peccatis mortalibus, de decem præceptis, de duodecim consilijs evangelicis, de quinque sensibus, de simbolo fidei, de septem sacramentis, de octo beatitudinibus, de septem donis spiritus sancti, de quatuor peccatis ad Deum clamantibus,' &c.

Across the top of the first page, written in a cursive hand in brown ink of a somewhat later date, was the inscription:

'Liber canonicor. regul. monasterii S. Maynulfi

in Bodeke prope Paderborn. Qui rapit huno librum rapiant sua viscera corvi.'

The introduction showed that the splendid manuscript had been written by the old Siennese monk himself in the Abbey of Saint Paul at Groenendale. The date was fixed by the 'Explicit':

'Iste liber est mei Frīs Arnoldi Cenni de Senis Frūm ordīs B'te Marie carmelo. Quem pp̄ria manu scripsi ī anno dñi M°CCC°XXXIX. die. XXVIII. Maij. Finito libro Reseram' grā X°.'

I really don't know why I became so intensely interested in the volume, for the ornamentations were evidently by a Flemish illuminator, and I had come across many of a far more meritorious character in the work of the Norman scribes.

Perhaps it was owing to the quaintness of the design; perhaps because of the rareness of the work; but more probably because at the end of the book had been left fifty or so blank leaves, as was often the case in manuscripts of that period, and upon them, in a strange and difficult cursive hand, was inscribed a long record which aroused my curiosity.

As every collector of manuscripts knows, one sometimes finds curious entries upon the blank pages of vellum books. In the days before the art of printing was discovered, when the use of paper was not general, and when vellum and parchment were costly, every inch of the latter was utilised, and a record meant to be permanent was usually written in the front or back of some precious volume. Therefore, the sight of this hundred pages or so of strange-looking writing in faded brown ink, penned with its many downward flourishes, uneven and difficult as compared with the remarkable regularity of the old monk's treatise upon the Seven Sins, awakened within me an eagerness to decipher it.

Horæs, psalters, offices of the Virgin, and codexes of Saints Augustine, Bernard, Ambrose, and the others, are to be found in every private collection; therefore it was always my object to acquire manuscript works that were original. The volume itself was certainly a treasure, and its interest was increased tenfold by those pages of close, half-faded handwriting, written probably a century later, and evidently in indifferent ink to that used by the old monk.

'Well, signore,' inquired the prior after I had been bending over the ancient volume for some minutes in silence, 'what is your opinion? You are of course an expert. I am not. I know nothing about manuscripts.'

His frankness was pleasing. He did not seek to expound its merits or to criticise without being able to substantiate his statements.

'A most interesting codex,' I declared, just as openly. 'I don't remember ever having met with Arnoldus before; and, as far as I can recollect, Quain does not mention him. How did it come into your possession?'

Landini was silent. His huge round face, so different from the pinched, gray countenances of most priests, assumed a mysterious look, and his lips pursed themselves up in an instant. I noticed his hesitation, and, recollecting that he had told me how many people in the neighbourhood came to him in secret and sold him their most treasured possessions, saw that my question was not an exactly fair one.

Instead of replying, he merely remarked that if I desired to acquire the volume he was open to an offer. Then he added:

'I think, my dear signore, that when we become better acquainted we shall like each other. Therefore I may as well tell you at once that, in addition to the holy office which I hold, I deal in antiques. Probably you will condemn me, just as half Florence has already done. But surely it is no disgrace to the habit I wear? From the sacrilegious Government I receive the magnificent stipend of one thousand lire [forty pounds] annually;' and he laughed a trifle bitterly. 'Can a man live on that? I have both father and mother still living, dear old souls! Babbo is eighty-one, and my mother seventy-eight; they live out at the Five Ways in the Val d'Ema, in the old farmhouse where I was born. With the profits I make on dealing in antiques I manage by great economy to keep them and myself, and have just a trifle to give to the deserving poor in my parish. Do *you* blame me, signore?'

How could I? His charming openness, so like the Tuscan priest, and yet so unlike the Tuscan tradesman, gave me an insight into his true character. The extreme simplicity of his carpetless, comfortless house, the frayed shabbiness of his cassock, and the cracked condition of his huge buckled shoes all spoke mutely of a struggle for life. Yet, on the other hand, his face was that of a supremely contented man. His collection was such that if sold at Christie's it would fetch many thousands of pounds; yet, an antiquary himself, he clung, it seemed, to a greater portion of it, and would not part with many of his treasures.

I told him that I had admiration rather than reproach at his turning dealer, when he frankly explained that his method of selling was not to regard the marketable value of an object, but to obtain a small profit upon the sum he gave for it.

'I find that this method works best,' he said, 'for by it I am able to render a service to those in straitened circumstances, and at the same time gain sufficient for the wants of my family. Of the real value of many things I am utterly ignorant. This manuscript, for instance, I purchased for a hundred francs. If you give me a hundred and twenty-five, and you think it is worth it, I shall be quite contented. Does the price suit you?'

Suit me! My heart leapt to my mouth. If he had suggested fifty pounds instead of five I should have been prepared to consider it. Either Quaritch in London, Rosenthal in Munich, or Olschki in Florence would, I felt certain, be eager to give at the least a hundred pounds for it. Such manuscripts were not offered for sale every day.

'The price is not at all high,' I answered. 'In-

deed, it is lower than I expected you would ask; therefore the book is mine.' And taking my wallet from my pocket, I counted out and handed to him a dozen or so of those small, well-thumbed notes that constitute the paper currency of Italy, for which he scribbled a receipt upon a scrap of waste-paper which he picked up from the floor—a fact which showed him to be as unconventional as he was frank and honest in his dealing.

Dealers in any branch of antiques, whether in pictures, china, furniture, or manuscripts, are—except the well-known firms—for the most part sharks of the worst genus; hence it was pleasant to make a purchase with such charming openness of purpose.

When he handed me the receipt, however, I thought I detected a strange, mysterious look upon his big beaming countenance as he said, 'I thank you, my dear Signor Kennedy, for your patronage, and I hope that you will never regret your purchase —never.'

He seemed to emphasise the words in a tone unusual to him. It flashed across my mind that the manuscript might, after all, be a clever German forgery, as a good many are, and that its genuineness had already been doubted. Yet if it were, I felt certain that such a man would never disgrace his office by knowingly deceiving me.

Still, the mystery of his manner puzzled me, and I am fain to confess that my confidence in him became somewhat shaken.

His refusal to tell me anything of the ugly old hunchback whose orders he had obeyed in showing me the book, and his disinclination to tell me whence he had procured it, were both curious circumstances which occupied my mind. It also occurred to me as most probable that Graniani was merely an agent of the clerical antique-dealer, which accounted for his pockets being ever filled with precious manuscripts, bits of valuable china, miniatures, and such-like odds and ends.

Nevertheless, if the *Book of Arnoldus* were actually genuine I had secured a gem at a ridiculously low price. I did not for one moment doubt its authenticity; hence a feeling of intense satisfaction overcame everything.

He showed me several other manuscripts, including a fifteenth-century Petrarca *De Vita Solitaria*, an illuminated Horæ of about the same date, and an *Evangelia quatuor* of a century earlier; but none of them attracted me so much as the heavy volume I had purchased.

Then, at my request, he took me along the dark corridor and through a side-door into the fine old church, where the light was dim and in keeping with the ancient, time-mellowed Raphaels and the dull gilding of ceiling and altar. The air was heavy with incense, and the only sound beyond the echo of our footsteps was the impudent chirp of a stray bird which had come in for shelter from the scorching sun. It was an ancient place, erected in 1089 by the Florentines to commemorate their victories on 6th August, the day of San Sisto.

For more than twenty years I had not entered there. I recollect going there in my youth, because I was enamoured of a dark-eyed little milliner from the Via Dante who attended mass regularly. The past arose before me, and I smiled at that forgotten love of my ardent youth. The prior pointed out to me objects of interest not mentioned in the red guide-books, they being known to him alone. He showed me the splendid sculptured tombs of the noble house of Cioni and of Gherardesca, whereon lay the armoured knights in stone; the Madonna of Fra Bartolommeo; the curious frescoes in the sacristy; and other objects which to both of us were interesting; then, taking me back through his house, we passed out into the tangled, old-world garden—a weedy, neglected place, with orange and fig trees, broken moss-grown statuary, and a long, cool *loggia* covered with laden vines.

Together we sat upon a bench in the welcome shadow, and at our feet the lizards darted across those white flagstones hollowed by the tread of generations. Father Bernardo took the long Tuscan cigar which I offered him; and, on his calling old Teresa to bring a candle, we both lit up, for the ignition of a 'Virginia' in Italy is, as you know, an art in itself. He confided to me that he loved to smoke—the only indulgence he allowed himself—and then, as we lolled back, overcome by the heat and burden of the day, we discussed antiques, and he told me some strange stories of the treasures that had on various occasions passed through his hands to the national galleries or the wealthy American visitors.

A dozen times I tried to obtain from him the history of the fine old parchment codex I had just bought, but without avail. He made it a rule, he told me frankly, never to divulge from whom he obtained the objects he had to sell, and had he not been a cleric I should really have suspected him of being a receiver of stolen property.

Old Teresa, in blue apron and shuffling over the stones, returned to her master presently, informing him that some one was waiting for confession; therefore my friend, excusing himself, flung away his cigar, crossed himself, and hurried back to his sacred duty. He was a strange man, it was true; charming, yet at moments austere, reserved, and mysterious.

Alone, still smoking, I sat where he had left me. Opposite, the overgrown garden with its wealth of fruit and flowers was bounded by the ancient stucco wall of the church, around which, in a line above the windows, ran a row of beautiful della Robbia medallions hidden from the world.

When I had remarked upon their beauty to Landini he had sighed, saying:

'Ah, signore, if I only might sell them and pay for the restoration of my church! Each one is worth at least a thousand pounds sterling, for they are even finer specimens than those upon the Foundling Hospital. The Louvre Museum in Paris offered me a year ago twenty thousand francs for the one to the right over there in the corner.'

Yes; the old place breathed an air of a bygone age—the age of the Renaissance in Italy—and I sat there musing as I smoked, trying to fathom the character of the ponderous, heavy-breathing man who had that moment entered the confessional, and wondering what could be his connection with Francesco Graniani.

Across, straight before me, was a small, square, latticed window of old green glass, near which, I knew, stood the confessional-box; and suddenly—I know not why—my eye caught it, and what I noticed there riveted my attention.

Something showed white for a single instant behind the glass, then disappeared. But not, however, before I recognised that some person was keeping secret watch upon my movements, and, further, that it was none other than the forbidding-looking little hunchback of Leghorn.

In Italy one's suspicion is easily aroused, and certainly mine was by that inexplicable incident. I determined then and there to trust neither Graniani nor his clerical friend. Therefore, with a feeling of anger at such impudent espionage, I rose, re-entered the prior's house, and walked up the dark passage to the study, intending to obtain the precious volume for which I had paid, and to wish my host a hurried adieu.

On entering the darkened study, however, I discovered, somewhat to my surprise, a neat-waisted, well-dressed lady in black standing there, evidently waiting, and idling the time by glancing over the vellum pages of my newly acquired treasure.

I drew back, begging her pardon for unceremonious intrusion, but she merely bowed in acknowledgment. Her manner seemed agitated and nervous, and she wore a veil, so that in the half-light I could not well distinguish her features.

She was entirely in black, even to her gloves, and was evidently the person to whom Father Bernardo had been called, and after confession had passed through the little side-door of the church in order to consult him upon some matter of extreme importance, the nature of which I could not possibly divine.

In all this I scented mystery.

AMERICAN METHODS.

By Sir EDMUND VERNEY, Bart.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

FEW more significant events have taken place lately than the visit of the Mosely Industrial Commission to America. At the end of 1902 twenty-three representative trades-unionists were personally conducted by Mr Alfred Mosely, at his sole expense, to investigate the conditions under which the people work, and to inquire into the social aspect of their lives. The report of this Commission has attracted some attention, but not nearly as much as it deserves; we are all too busy to take up a quarto book and delve into its three hundred pages for the many precious facts and suggestions it contains; most of us like our facts tidily served up. Each of these twenty-three gentlemen has written an account of the impressions left by his flying visit, and has more or less answered some forty searching questions put to him. To sum up the total result is what is here attempted. A summary is open to the objections of all generalisations; but its main object is to see in what direction our American cousins are finding their best chance of successful rivalry, and whether we should be wise to adopt any of their methods. Mr John Foster Fraser has also published a book on *America at Work*, dealing with questions of the same kind; and it is not too much to say that these two works must be helpful to all employers who care to study them. Both suggest methods by which the commercial supremacy of England may be maintained. Mr Foster Fraser draws this curious contrast between the two lands: 'In Britain,' he says, 'the healthy, fresh-faced man is usually the employer, and the weary, sad-eyed man is the employé. In America the employé is filled with frolic. It is the employer who is tired: just tired, just worn out, just living to work, racked with worry, as many a man confesses.' Mr Fraser's book ranges over many phases of American life, while the Mosely reports are mainly concerned with the industries represented on the Commission.

It is worth while to see on what lines American commerce and manufactures are being run that differ so widely from our own and appear to be carrying them rapidly beyond us.

Retail business is on a much larger scale than anything we can show in London; possible customers, and particularly ladies, are encouraged to come and walk about whether they buy anything or not. The Siegel Cooper Company in New York is a good deal bigger than any of our London stores. Besides moving staircases for customers, there are twenty-three lifts. There are seventy-two different departments. In the groceries department butter is made 'while you wait.' In the busy season there is an army of from five to six thousand employés. *How Department Stores are carried on in America* (Grant Richards) is a little book giving very full information on the subject.

Time is everything in New York. You fly about horizontally on tram-cars and the elevated railway, or else vertically in lifts travelling six times as fast as English lifts—stopping lifts or express lifts to

the twenty-eighth floor. Rapid transit New York will have. A new railroad just below the surface of the street is in course of construction. The roof over the railway, carrying the street traffic, is only thirty inches thick. There are four lines of rail; two for slow traffic and two for express.

In almost every manufacture the Americans beat us in quantity; they can seldom compete with us in quality. Baldwin's locomotive works at Philadelphia turn out some six locomotives a day. As an experiment a locomotive was ordered on Saturday, 22nd June 1886; on Tuesday, 2nd July, it was delivered and tried under steam—eight clear days. Said a sarcastic American referring to the high finish of our engines, 'English engines are fit to hang on a lady's watch-chain if only they were a little smaller.' But, then, in these works the deplorable sweating-system, pure and simple, prevails; consequently the pace is fierce and the work scandalously finished. The success of this firm is due to cheap labour and rapid production.

It was remarked to an English manufacturer that American steel had a large market in Russia, and British steel a very small market. He replied, 'My firm could have had as much of the Russian steel-trade as they wanted; but we're full up. We've constant work; we cannot keep pace with our orders. Why should we bother ourselves with seeking fresh markets?' The American manufacturer looks at things quite differently; he deliberately builds works of enormous capacity, because he is long-sighted, and intends to have all appliances ready to pit his magnificent resources against the resources of the rest of the world. Then he steps in and secures the market we have despised.

The difference between the American and English manufacturer is well illustrated in the shoe-trade. When your new boots pinch the instep the Englishman tells you they will be all right in a few days; the foot has to fit the boot. Not so the American: if his ready-made sizes are none of them comfortable, he has half-sizes and varying widths, and he gives you a boot to fit the foot. In America so specialised is the shoe-trade that in many factories only one kind of shoe is made; while the different operations are so divided and subdivided for the various machines that a pair of shoes can be made in seventeen minutes. The laced shoe of a full-grown man passes through the hands of three hundred and seventy-one workpeople, many of them girls and boys. A machine for sewing on the buttons will sew eight thousand eight hundred buttons in a day.

Less than twenty years ago the Bureau of Labour in Washington was established; this office collects and reports on every conceivable aspect of labour; it publishes articles and reports written in a bright, attractive style. Its labours are not confined to America; it reports on subjects so remote as the municipal restaurant at Grenoble, the public baths of Europe, and the British Workman's Compensation Act and its operation. Any American can have any of its publications free; he has but to send a post-card giving the number and subject of the report wanted, and it is at once sent to him without charge. The Government at Washington prints all returns and books ordered by Congress; none are sold, but all are for gratuitous distribution. In this country we have nothing at all of the kind; our blue-books and official reports are mostly the dreariest and dullest reading, and have to be ordered and paid for through a bookseller. The American Labour Department issued a report on marriage and divorce; and when its appropriateness to the Labour Department was questioned, the superintendent replied, 'If there is any subject in which labour should be actively interested, and which concerns the happiness of the working-man, it is the sacredness and the permanence of the home relations.' To this department Congress votes fifteen thousand pounds a year, exclusive of printing and other expenses; the Post-Office carries all such matter free.

The determination to succeed which characterises private enterprise in America becomes, both in agriculture and in education, a national enthusiasm. The Department of Agriculture is above all things practical. It is divided into eleven departments, in all of which original inquiry and research are being conducted. It costs one hundred thousand pounds a year; besides this, most states have an annual grant of five thousand pounds, which has to be spent within the year upon the local agricultural colleges. Each college has a huge tract of farming country; all the farming done is on scientific principles, and specially suited to the district. The colleges are greatly appreciated; the Agricultural College of Minnesota, for instance, has between three and four thousand pupils. These colleges mean money to the farmer. Thus, one farmer in a remote district, reading the pamphlets sent out from his college, makes money by the scientific fattening of hogs. The experiments carried out spell dollars. By the scientific hybridising of wheat, the yield, once sixteen bushels to the acre, is now forty.

There is a Weather Bureau. Every day weather maps are published in the great centres. Forecasting has risen to the dignity of a science. From three hundred and sixty-five centres, forty-two thousand farms are, by the co-operation of the Post-Office, supplied gratis with forecasts. Everything that may be brought within the range of agriculture is systematically and thoroughly investigated. When it is seen that a local agricultural 'institute' means business, a useful thousand pounds or so is sent from the Agricultural Department. Last year two thousand institute gatherings were held, attended by half a million farmers to hear lectures and to discuss agricultural questions. We do nothing of the kind; but in Canada Dr Saunders, the head of the Canadian Experimental Farms, is successfully carrying out a very similar work.

It did seem as if Mr R. W. Hanbury was about

to do a great work for English agriculture; but his gallant devotion to duty cut short a career of much promise.

The appetite of the American farmer for information is prodigious. Last year the Agricultural Department received nearly three hundred thousand letters asking for information; and six hundred and six publications were issued, of which eight millions were distributed.

Mr Fraser does not conceal his admiration for the American farmer, whom he describes as 'a good fellow, industrious, and absolutely sober.'

Scientific agriculture is regarded somewhat contemptuously by the sturdy, broad-shouldered, bright-cheeked, bluff-mannered Briton. In America there is quite a rage for scientific training. Every state in the Union has its agricultural college well filled with eager lads, keen to learn. In 1901 there were upwards of forty thousand agricultural students. Congress grants one hundred and forty thousand pounds a year to be spent in experiments alone.

At the college in Iowa there is no charge for tuition even for the four-years' course; students living in the college pay less than their food costs. All expenses need not exceed thirty pounds a year. The college buildings cost one hundred thousand pounds. Besides local income, the Government gives seven thousand pounds a year. Last year a new experiment was tried: a fortnight's instruction was offered to practical farmers; four hundred came and attended the course, some being old gray-bearded men, who worked from six A.M. till half-past nine P.M.

At the Ohio Experiment Station may be seen an object-lesson of an unfertilised plot of ground yielding ten and a third bushels of wheat to the acre; adjoining plots are scientifically treated with various manures, until at last a yield of thirty-seven and a third bushels to the acre is secured. With her sixty agricultural colleges and experiment stations, all State-supported, America is seriously competing with the British farmer.

It concerns us closely to see what it is that makes the Americans such formidable rivals. Much is due to the vast natural resources of the country, not yet half-developed or even explored; much is also due to the invigorating climate, and a good deal to racial and social conditions. But there are other causes at work which we can with advantage copy or adapt. In most trades and factories it rests with the employer to determine whether any and what changes will advantage his business; but in agriculture the impulse must come from the Government, who alone have the means and the facilities to acquire and spread agricultural information. Voluntary effort has done bravely so far; but it is clear that far more should be done immediately if we are to hold our own against the highly organised and enthusiastic rivalry of the New World.

The population of America is nearly double that of Great Britain; but they have ten times as many miles of railroad. It is not an unusual thing for one train to bring ninety thousand bushels of grain, a large proportion of which comes to England. Automatic couplings are in America by law compulsory; in England, where they are not in general use, the injury and loss of life to shunters were almost double those of the troops in a year of the South African war. The London and North-Western Railway Company owns to a proportion of one man in seven injured in a year. The average of railway employés in this country killed or injured is forty-two per day. The latest annual return shows fifteen men killed and five hundred and one injured in shunting. The Board of Trade is authorised by law to compel the adoption of automatic couplings, which in America led to an immediate saving of eight men out of ten. But there are (or were) eleven railway directors in the Cabinet, sixty-three in the House of Commons, and fifty-eight in the House of Lords, besides shareholders innumerable; so the annual slaughter, mutilation, and suffering have to go on. During the last nine years this ghastly dividend has doubled. Railway directors in America are men who know their business. Most of them began as cleaners, firemen, drivers, or clerks, and have won their way by industry and ability. No one needs to be told what the English railway director usually is. The average cost per ton per mile in America is a third of a penny; in England it is a fraction over a penny.

The Americans can show us a trick or two in advertising; they advertise more than we do, and with greater finish. The head of the advertising department of a great business may get a salary of even two thousand pounds a year. Advertisements are meant to be read, so they have to be interesting and entertaining. It is seldom that the same advertisement appears twice; it is usually varied from day to day. There are firms who have no shops and no goods, trading wholly by advertisement; they freely circulate their interesting illustrated catalogues, and procure from the manufacturers whatever is ordered. Thousands of letters are received daily, and dealt with by a large staff of girls, perhaps a couple of thousand or so, working hundreds of typewriters and some fifty or sixty telephones.

In the two books that have been referred to, nothing comes out more strongly than the fact that for improved conditions of commerce we must look to the employers; the workers, whether in trades-unions or not, can alone do little. One of the commissioners says: 'The British employer has more to learn from America than the British workman.' Another writes: 'When our employers will pay more attention to elementary matters of manufacture they can be assured of results equal to, if not better than, those of America.' Employers are everywhere accessible to their men to a degree unknown with us; there is free personal intercourse, and this is repeated and emphasised by several members of the Commission. It is where the employer freely expresses appreciation of good work that the best in a workman is brought out.

The American employer is not satisfied with mere words of praise; he invites suggestions for the general conduct of the business as well as for improvements in machinery. If a suggestion is adopted, the originator is given a portion, or perhaps even the whole, of the resulting profit. A recent article in the *Contemporary* by Major C. C. Townsend relates how an average of eleven pourings is obtained at certain great steel-works near New York; that by close attention and scientific stoking twelve pourings may be sometimes managed, and that then the wages of the men are doubled.

Foremen or managers in this country generally resent suggestions from even their most practical workmen; but in America prizes of perhaps one hundred and twenty pounds a year are given in most works for the best suggestion. The introduction of a labour-saving device or improvement by a workman means to him a great personal advantage. At the National Cash Register Company's works three inventors are kept to work out the suggestions made. At the stores of Messrs Marshall, Field, and Company, of Chicago, upwards of seven thousand persons are employed; the manager took the Commission over the works, and laid particular stress upon the inducement held out by a system of rewards for suggested improvements, which every employé was encouraged to make. At a meeting of the local Trades Council at Pittsburgh, held to welcome the Commission, emphasis was laid upon the fact that even the poorest-paid labourers are encouraged by the employers to exercise mental activity. If a man has a notion for an improvement he may make his experiments on the employer's premises and in the employer's time without deduction from his wages. One of the commissioners reports: 'While we in this country use machinery to decrease wages, in America it means more wages and shorter hours, and workmen are encouraged by their employers to make any suggestion for improvement, for which they are amply paid; whereas here they would be told to mind their own business.' If a man suggests an improvement in a machine so that it can do twice as much work when the contrivance is applied, it is not expected he will turn out twice as much at the old pay. He will be met by the manufacturer, and given half the benefit. The British manufacturer has a curious contempt for all new-fangled notions. Even when he gives them a trial it is hesitatingly. He is rather pleased with himself when he can pooh-pooh the thing as useless, and say with a complacent smile, 'I thought so.'

America is *par excellence* the land of machinery and of every labour-saving invention. The men welcome every fresh invention, because 'experience has shown them that in reality machinery is their best friend.' We know that in our own country the introduction of new machinery is often regarded with suspicion and animosity.

Mr Westinghouse, the inventor of the brake that bears his name, is always on the alert for improved machinery or method. He often buys an unworkable patent that has been condemned, and hands it over to a body of men who do nothing but experiment; and they *have* to make it workable and practicable. The success of his works is due to standardisation, labour-saving machinery, good pay to good workers, and the enthusiasm of the men.

Nothing so surely kills invention in this country as our patent laws. It costs at least a hundred pounds in fees to take out a patent. No search is made by the Government authorities, and therefore no reasonable guarantee of novelty is given. British inventors are mulcted in heavy sums by the Government in addition to payments to agents for search and other services; and so, when patents have been granted as the result of much time and money, they are often found to be useless. In America the Government fees are about seven pounds. A complete register is kept of existing patents of all countries within the Patent Union, and no patent is granted which is found to infringe upon any previous patent. The fact of an American patent being granted at all is, therefore, in itself reasonable proof of novelty. The State appoints experts to examine into the merits of each application, thereby materially assisting the inventor, and there is no Government charge for search. The English Patent Office actually wrings from the brains of wretched inventors a surplus income of one hundred and twenty-one thousand five hundred and eighty-two pounds a year; and, naturally enough, there are not half as many applications for patents as in America, where there are about one thousand applications a week. American patents have given employment to enormous numbers of workpeople and led to the adoption of much labour-saving and productive machinery. Our Patent Office ought to be at once remodelled; there should be simple and cheap registration, with free Government search.

At Schenectady the Commission visited the shops of the General Electric Company, and was impressed with the exceptional arrangements for the comfort and well-being of the workpeople. Wash-houses and shower-baths were on an extensive scale, and every workman had a separate locker for his clothes. It was a common practice for the workman to make an entire change of clothing when leaving the works. One of the features of factory and workshop life in America is the lavish manner in which air and light, sanitary, bath, and lavatory arrangements are carried out. 'Better than our best London hotels provide,' was the remark of a delegate competent to judge. The National Cash Register Company provides roomy and perfectly lighted and ventilated workshops, heated in winter and cooled in summer, the atmosphere constantly freed from inevitable dust and machine odour. There is no pretence of philanthropy. It is all done from pure business motives, and in the belief that the surest way to the dollars is through the efforts of healthy, happy, and contented workers. A practical gardener is engaged to

educate the boys in gardening. Girls leave the works half-an-hour before the men that they may get to the trams before the rush comes.

The town of Vandergrift is a garden city, surpassing such places as Port Sunlight and Bourneville; it is entirely the development of Mr M'Murtry, president of the United States Steel Corporation. Over 80 per cent. of the workmen own their houses, which are detached, and consist generally of a veranda, entrance-hall, three or four reception-rooms, kitchen, three or four bedrooms, and a bathroom. They cost each from two hundred and eighty pounds to six hundred pounds or eight hundred pounds, according to the requirements of the workmen. All are noted for their artistic design, which lends a picturesqueness to the whole town. The streets are wide, with plenty of foliage. The only forbidden thing is the public-house.

THE MYSTERY OF THE DALOON RIVER.

By Arthur H. Henderson.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART I.

THE quiet Admiralty Buildings in Whitehall are a wonderful place. From behind those walls has issued news to stir the hearts of the British race scattered throughout the world. Through those doors have passed bulletins to the greatest maritime nation on earth of victory over powerful foe, of endurance through fiercest storm and peril, of disasters to ships whose owners were the whole people. The *Victory* at Trafalgar, the *Captain* in the Bay of Biscay, the *Calliope* at Samoa, the *Cobra* on the North Sea banks—their stories will be told to generations yet unborn. Often, also, could those stones murmur of other sights, when faces stricken with the sudden grief of those who have lost their dearest in the great waters of the sea went hopelessly out to face their world again—alone. They cannot speak, those buildings; they are but mute witnesses alike of sorrow and rejoicing—and it is best.

Also, they have their secrets. Confidential documents are locked away there by no means for publication. The First Sea-Lord may know of them; the Parliamentary Secretary of State probably does not. Reports which, if issued, might have set the world ablaze are tied up with commonplace pieces of tape and secured in dusty pigeon-holes, never to be revealed. That there is one such I know. Carr Elliston wrote it. Violet and I witnessed it. Leading-seaman Wilton has a snug berth in Devonport Dockyard, and, being unmarried, can keep his mouth shut concerning it. Abdul Nevi, pilot, is dead, and the Daloon River will know him no more. Therefore the profound peace of international relations is unjarred by knowledge of unseemly incident. This, too, is well.

When the steamer *Hamburg* was lost off Cape Lopez few of the general public knew of the fact or concerned themselves about the details. She was the German mail-boat from the Cameroons to Europe, and was reported as having gone ashore on that comparatively unknown part of the West Coast of Africa. The exact causes of the disaster were most obscure, as all hands were lost, and nothing was saved of her cargo. Some short time later the monthly Belgian steamer from the Congo foundered after having, it was said, struck a reef near the same spot, and again precise details were absent. Then sundry merchants and underwriters shook their heads portentously and talked of the insufficient lighting of the coast. But when two months afterwards the British mail-liner *Sahara* from Liverpool was wrecked near the mouth of the Daloon River, a little to the south of the scene of the previous disaster, there was a general outcry. She carried a valuable cargo and some thousands of pounds in specie. On this underwriters had to pay a loss, and forthwith put up the insurance premiums. Worse still, three boatloads of passengers and crew trying to escape from the wreck were upset in the surf and the occupants drowned. Then Liverpool and Lloyd's combined to bring pressure to bear on the Admiralty. Some one was put up in the House of Commons to ask questions and disturb the serenity of Government departments. At first it appeared, however, that the greatest navy in the world had no warship handy to proceed to the scene of the disaster. Then the matter was taken up by an evil-disposed set of newspapers. After more delay, the official mind was brought to realise that something must be done. It took longer to decide what that something should be. Finally, the deep-sea cables conveyed urgent orders to a second-class gunboat in the West Indies to proceed to the scene of the disaster and report on the same at once.

H.M.S. *Buzzer*, Lieutenant-Commander Carr Elliston, duly proceeded. She found the wreck sunk in shallow water, and her diver reported that he thought the specie could be salved. Before this could take place, however, the gunboat apparently ran on top of the wreck herself, badly holed her bottom, and barely managed to stagger into Sierra Leone half-full of water and all pumps working hard. Such was the official version given to the outside world. The court-martial sat with closed doors, and Lieutenant Carr Elliston was severely reprimanded and dismissed his ship. A subsequent salvage expedition failed to locate the wreck, and the next edition of the 'Sailing Directions' recorded

a solemn warning to shipmasters to give a wider berth to that ill-omened portion of the West Coast of Africa.

About a month after the verdict of the court-martial, I went by appointment to lunch with my sister Violet at her flat in Kensington. Some people call us Merediths a curious pair. We are almost alone in the world; but that is not unusual. We come of a seafaring race; and our one relative, an uncle, after flying a broad pennant on various foreign stations, now reigns in state over a department at the Admiralty. I began life on the *Britannia*, and served in the Mediterranean and Pacific for a time. Now I am a gentleman at large, and the owner of as smart a little steam-yacht as heart of man can desire. Violet is as good a sailor as half the men who call themselves by that name, and many a good time have we had together in my yacht *Lorna* on the sea. Also, Violet is twenty-four, tall, rich, pretty, and unengaged as yet.

'I have had a letter from Carr,' said my sister after a while. 'He is still at Sierra Leone, doing nothing, and very down-hearted.'

'It is a bad business,' I agreed. 'I can't think how he managed it.' And I scrutinised Violet's face somewhat curiously.

Carr Elliston and I had been cadets of the same year in the old *Britannia* days, and ever since then the greatest of friends. So, too, had he and Violet; but the last time he had been home something had gone wrong between those two—this much I knew, but no more. We Merediths are not given to confidences.

'I wanted you here,' said she, 'because one of his crew who is just back in England time-expired is coming to see me this afternoon to tell me about the disaster. Carr's letter hints at circumstances connected with the affair which have not been made public.'

'That is often the case,' I remarked as I lit a cigar reflectively.

'Now, look here, Harry,' said my sister decidedly; and when she speaks in that tone I generally pay attention. 'The *Buzzer* was said to have run on the sunken wreck of the mail-boat?'

'That is so,' I assented, 'according to the papers.'

'If she didn't do that she must have struck a rock or reef or something.'

I nodded. The gunboat was certainly said to have holed her bottom badly.

'Well,' said Violet, 'first I got Uncle George at the Admiralty to give me the exact latitude and longitude. Then I bought a chart and looked up the position as you taught me to do. There is no rock or reef marked there at all. There is plenty of water.' And the speaker triumphantly produced a roll from her writing-table and spread it before me. Her small white finger travelled across the paper and stopped.

'Fifteen fathoms,' I read aloud.

'Just what Carr says in his letter,' said the girl significantly.

There was a pause, and we both stared at the white chart with its wavy outlines. 'The court-martial must have gone into that,' I objected dubiously.

'Courts-martial are not infallible,' replied my sister calmly. 'Their finding was to the effect that the *Buzzer* was sailed clean on top of the wreck. Carr swears she wasn't. Who should know best—the man who was there or the men who were not?'

Before I could answer this conundrum the maid came in to say that the expected seaman had arrived. He was a clean-shaven sailor, sturdy and hard of limb. He said his name was Wilton, and seemed at first rather embarrassed by his surroundings. Violet, however, soon put him at his ease—it is a way she has with all manner of men—so that he accepted a cigar and a glass of beer. Settled in a chair by the fireside, he presently launched out into his story.

''Bout this 'ere accident to the *Buzzer*, miss, as you told me you wanted to 'ear o', I'm afraid I 'ain't got much to say. Wot do you know o' it—on'y wot's been in the papers?'

Violet nodded. It was curious how the sailor practically ignored me throughout, and addressed all his remarks to the girl. But that often does happen, I find, when Violet and I are together.

'Them papers ain't o' no use,' said he scornfully. 'There was lots wot 'appened they knew nought o', an' other things as they went an' printed out o' their bloomin' 'eads.'

'Was the damage caused by her striking the wreck?' asked my sister, coming straight to the point, as is her wont.

'No, miss, certainly not!' averred the sailor emphatically. 'She weren't never damaged by runnin' up again' the wreck o' the *Sahara*. We was anchored well clear w'en the night come on, an' I don't b'lieve we dragged as them orf'cers at the court-martial made out. 'Twas the middle watch from midnight to eight-bells when there comes a bit o' a shock or two, an' we finds as 'ow we was takin' in water fast.'

'Well?' said my sister as he paused. 'What was it?'

'Lord bless an' save your pretty face, miss!—beggin' your pardon for the expression—that's wot we can't guess no'ow. I 'as my own idea like, though maybe you won't b'lieve it.'

'Tell me what you think, anyway?' said Violet eagerly.

'Somethin' 'it 'er!' said Mr Wilton with mysterious solemnity; ''it 'er 'ard, an' 'it 'er more nor once. That's wot made them 'oles. 'Twas night-time as we 'ad the shocks, an' pitch-dark as could be. But that ain't all wot's queer 'bout this Daloon River business.

'We on'y 'ad one diver on the *Buzzer*, bein' wot we was, an' one set o' divin'-gear. Tomkins as was diver 'ad been left at Bermuda in 'orspital consequent on 'is goin' under too far or stayin' down too long on 'is last job, I reckons. I 'ain't never been

borne on the ship's books as diver; but I've done a bit o' most things—torpedoin', divin', an' submarinin'—an' I knew summat 'bout wrecks an' sich-like. It is on'y one man in four or five, miss, 'as the 'ead or the nerve, as you might say, for divin'. So w'en we comes to the wreck o' the *Sahara* my orders is to go under water an' 'ave a look at 'er.

'There weren't no 'orrors—bodies an' sich—w'ich I can't abide; but my 'eart was in my mouth for fear o' sharks. 'Owsoever, I didn't see none 'cept a dead shark a-mixed up wi' some wreckage on the fo'c'sle. 'Ow it come there dead an' jammed by the capstan was wot first set me puzzlin' in my mind. Next I 'as a look round the hull o' the wreck, an' I opens my eyes inside o' my divin'-'elmet. There was a great rendin' tear in 'er side forard o' the engine-room as you could 'most sail a captain's gig through. "That's rum damage to be made by rocks," says I to myself. "This 'ere packet didn't never get that ashore." She was lyin' easy on level sea-bottom, wi' a list to port.'

At this point in the story Violet suddenly interrupted. 'What did happen to the *Sahara*, Harry?' she asked me.

I could not very clearly remember. To the best of my recollection the ill-fated liner was reported to have struck some hidden rock and been beached to avoid sinking in deep water.

'Yes, that 's the yarn, sir,' cried the man-o'-war's-man. 'I 'ad it so arterwards direct from one o' 'er firemen as was put ashore at Sierra Leone—'im not bein' in the boats 'as was upset. But I didn't know it at the time I was divin' at the wreck. Me an' that fireman 'ad a few words unpleasant like. "Beached to perwent sinkin'?" says I to 'im. "You tell that to your young woman next time you're courtin'," says I, "w'en, both bein' fools at sich times, maybe she 'll b'lieve you. If your tub were beached 'ow come she quarter o' a mile from shore wi' fifty feet o' water over 'er? Answer me that," says I; an' 'im bein' unreasonable in 'is langwidge, I lays 'im out gently to think it over.' The reminiscence brought a reflective smile into Mr Wilton's face.

'You surely do not mean you hurt him?' said Violet reprovingly.

'Oh no, miss,' answered the sailor genially. ''E wor in 'orspital for a space, an' the town police a-searchin' for the offender an' usin' their brains more nor was good for 'em; but that 's neither 'ere nor there, so to speak. To go back again to the subject o' the wreck, my orders was special for to see about salvin' o' the specie in 'er strong-room, an' they 'ad wired out from 'ome most partic'lar, wi' a plan o' the vessel to 'elp. So I knows w'ere to find it; an' w'en I gets below there I fair gasped, like as if summat 'ad gone wrong wi' the divin' air-tube. That there strong-room 'ad been busted open—busted clean. It was full o' water, an' I mind a great fish o' a breed new to me a-swimmin' out o' it an' givin' me a fine start.

''Tain't for me, not bein' a proper diver like, to do wot they calls theorise over-much. Some o' the boxes was there, but the number didn't tally wi' wot I 'd been told for to expect. Some was missin', an' one was broken open an' the sovereigns lyin' about loose on the floor o' the strong-room in the water. Now, who 'ad done that?—that 's wot I wants to know.

'Evenin' was comin' on, an' there ain't never much light at that depth. I 'ad left my lamp in the boat above, an' the queerness o' it all kinder upset me sudden-like, so I signals to be 'auled up to the surface. Glad I was to open the 'elmet an' sniff the free air again. There wasn't no more divin' that day, an' wi' the mornin' we was all too busy savin' o' the *Buzzer*, an' shovin' 'er for port wi' the water pourin' in faster nor the pumps could keep it out, to think much o' aught beside.'

'And nothing more happened then?' asked Violet as the narrator stopped, sat back in his chair, and regarded us steadily.

The man-o'-war's-man hesitated. His eyes travelled from my sister's questioning, girlish form to mine, as if making sure of our sympathy.

'I don't 'xactly know,' he said irresolutely. 'I 'aven't told scarce a soul 'bout it either.'

'About what?'

'Wot I thinks I saw—as I was bein' 'auled up—just in a flash, as may be.'

Again the speaker paused. He spoke as if he had been scared, I thought.

'You need not be afraid to tell us,' said Violet quietly, leaning forward to catch his lowered tones.

She can be very winsome, can my sister; and the contrast at the moment between her fair, eager face and the seaman's rough, tanned features was striking. He looked her straight between the eyes half-defiantly, as if not expecting her to believe him.

'Somethin' went past quick through the water not far off. First I thought 'twas a shark—the biggest one I 'd ever set eyes on. Thinks I, "Your time 'as come at last, my lad." I couldn't see clear; but 'tweren't a shark, though.'

'What was it?'

''Twas more like a submarine boat than ought else I knows o',' said leading-seaman Wilton. 'An' yet you know, miss, it 's impossible—ain't it?—out there.'

We three sat back and looked at each other solemnly for quite a long time as the full significance of the thing dawned on us. 'Did you say anything to Captain Elliston of this?' I asked, breaking the silence.

'Yes, sir, just to 'im; an' 'e said as 'ow the blood must ha' gone to my 'ead a bit wi' the divin', an' made me silly. But I knows it 'adn't.—You see, miss, it 's this way,' continued the sailor argumentatively. 'I puts it to you them things as wants explainin'. 'Ow was them three big steamers all lost there close on top o' each other? 'Ow, if the *Sahara* was beached, did she get back all that there way from the shore wi' 'er side ripped open? 'Ow comes a dead shark wedged under a pile o'

deck 'amper? 'Ow comes the strong-room open an' some o' the specie-boxes gone? Wot was it as knocked them 'oles in the *Buzzer* 'erself? Them is the riddles, like.'

'What's your own idea?' demanded Violet suddenly.

The man-o'-war's-man got on to his feet and twisted his cap in his hands.

'An explosion could do some on 'em things,' he opined cautiously. 'Submarinin' an' divin' could do others, 'sides makin' the blow-up. But the 'ole bus'ness beats me clean! Beggin' your pardon, miss, but I must be goin' now for to catch the train back 'ome.'

Mr Wilton partook of more beer, and modestly bestowed further cigars in safety in his cap. Violet and I were left alone. The afternoon firelight lit up the cosy room.

'Is the *Lorna* ready for sea?' asked my sister abruptly.

'Yes,' I answered in some surprise. 'She is at Southampton now.'

'Let's go for a yachting cruise to the Daloon River, Harry,' said Violet calmly, with a light laugh not only in her eyes but in her soft voice.

I was somewhat taken aback. 'Think of the climate of the West Coast and the fever!' I objected.

'Think of Carr!' murmured Violet coaxingly. She paused and blushed slightly, and then laughed again. 'We might discover the mystery,' said she.

There was another pause. My sister stared gravely at the fire, her face half-hidden from me. I watched her thoughtfully and pondered many things. 'What went wrong between you and Carr?' asked I at last, with more discernment perhaps than delicacy.

'Some people never make allowances for mistakes,' was the irrelevant answer.

'He always was rather an owl,' I agreed cheerfully.

'It wasn't Carr,' the girl flashed out; 'it was I. He heard me say something at a dance which I didn't mean.'

'Nothing unusual in that,' I interposed, 'at a dance.'

'I was chaffing—some other partner—and Carr came up, and I said—oh, well! something silly about never marrying a man who was not rich.'

My sister was blushing violently. She looks especially charming when she blushes.

'Carr sailed next day. I've got money, and what *does* it matter really if he is poor. Be a dear, Harry, and wire at once to Jackson to get ready to sail.'

Jackson was skipper of the *Lorna*.

Violet produced a telegraph-form and a pencil. She was smiling, and there was a light in her delicate face that was not for me. 'I don't intend to make any more mistakes,' she murmured.

From which I gathered we should have to go. So I wrote the telegram.

'We will take Wilton with us,' cried my sister triumphantly. 'You can cable Carr, to say we are coming out on a yachting-trip to look him up, on your way to dinner at the club.'

Which I did.

Four days later the lighthouse-keepers at the Needles, lighting up on a wild and stormy evening, remarked a steam-yacht come speeding out to westward. She passed full into the smother of the angry Channel seas, and faded speedily hull down on the dark gray waves under the lowering winter sky. On the bridge a girl was standing facing the sullen sunset. One hand clung to the rail; the other held a telegram from Sierra Leone. I never saw all the words on that flimsy paper. But the look in Violet's eyes told me the news was good.

ABOUT CHESS-PROBLEMS.

AN unfortunate idea exists that chess is 'dry.' To begin with, appearances are all against it. We see two elderly gentlemen glaring fixedly at a board; they do not talk; they do not laugh. Once every five minutes, perhaps, they move a piece half an inch forward or backward; and sometimes they say, 'Check.' This sort of thing goes on for two or three hours. 'Good gracious!' we exclaim, 'this is not a game; it is work. Chess may be all very well and entertaining for people who want to go to sleep; but, if the worse comes to the worst, we would almost rather go and hear a lecture on art.'

Or perhaps, in a weak moment, we consent to take a first lesson in the game. It is like learning German: everything seems crooked and left-handed and irregular. Even the pawns, whose apparent simplicity we had relied on, are eccentric and unreasonable in their movements. The first game is a trying affair. With infinite patience, pieces are got into a hopeless muddle. A long interval of inaction ensues. We yawn, and think of rational people. At last the tutor looks up, and says grimly, 'Go on; it's your turn.' This is unexpected, and adds considerably to the bewilderment. We have at least some distant, some hazy idea how the men ought to move; but why they should be moved, and what it is all about, not the least idea in the world. Our only hope is that the game may come to a speedy end. And when it actually is finished we come away with no very great enthusiasm for chess.

If the above applies to the game proper of chess, it applies with double force to the case of chess-problems; for the majority, probably, of efficient chess-players know very little about this distinct development of the game; while, as to outsiders,

it is not likely that they will be attracted by something so suggestive of Euclid, abstruseness, and tediousness. It occurs, consequently, that the diagram chess-board, so familiar a feature in periodicals of all kinds, is hastily passed over by all but a select and fortunate band of confirmed problemists.

To appreciate chess-problems a certain amount of drudgery is necessary—just as to play the flute you have first to learn the notes and go through the exercises; but, once beyond this stage, it will be quickly discovered that a chess-problem is not necessarily a long-winded, tedious, obscure, and heavy affair. Exactly on the contrary, they cater for a certain briskness and agility of mind. Of course I do not mean to say there is the physical exhilaration of football or horse-riding in a chess-problem. This is not a treatise on dumb-bells, but a suggestion to those who occasionally like to take their mental faculties out for exercise. To all such, problemists would say, 'Undeceive yourselves as soon as possible that our recreation is obscurely difficult and stolid; because in effect you will find it light and racy and diverting.' At the same time, it is not to be recommended to those excessively energetic persons who are impatient of being still and being alone, who dislike reading and quiet amusement of every kind. The sort of people who would find entertainment in chess-problems are the opposite to this type: people, for instance, who are curious and inventive, who care for reading, who are interested in machinery; ingenious, observant, argumentative people, and those of other similar turns of mind.

Speaking roughly but intelligibly, chess-problems are puzzles; and, like any other good puzzle, there is an attraction, a piquancy, a fascination about them which it is better to experience than attempt to explain. In common with the simple toy-puzzle, the riddle, the buried name, the missing word, and so on, they give a silent challenge to our dexterity and ingenuity. Beneath an innocent exterior they conceal some unusual, astonishing, elusive idea. As with Columbus's egg, there is some clever thought, some cunning move, some scheme which must first be divined and grasped before the combination can be mastered. Herein precisely lies the fascination; for when a solver is once interested in a puzzle, it is a match or a championship for honours between the two. The solver's self-respect is assaulted, and as long as the puzzle remains undone a certain incapacity is proved against him. This is especially the case if the proposition is on the face of it apparently a very easy one.

A chess-problem, it should be understood, is something quite different from a game at chess; although to appreciate the former a rudimentary knowledge of the parent game is necessary. The two departments have been styled respectively the poetry and the prose of chess. A long game between evenly-matched opponents playing for honours may be compared to an essay on political economy, for instance; it is very deep and correct and learned no doubt, but often also a trifle tedious and monotonous. A two-move problem, on the other hand, is as witty and as pointed as a French epigram. Problems, by their nature, do not allow any redundance. Everything but what is telling is left out. They exhibit chess strategy in essence; and this in a graceful, sparkling, lively manner. We might, in fact, call problems civilised chess. In a game the principal thing is to win; in a problem the principal thing is to be entertaining. To checkmate an opponent we do not hesitate to use rude force; but in problem-society we are always polite and elegant, and employ policy in place of force. Half the chess contests played end by something like brutal murder. The winning side, with a superior piece, whips off isolated pawns remorselessly, and then swoops down upon a defenceless king. It is like shooting down savages with a Maxim gun: very effective no doubt, but very coarse and clumsy. The refined and civilised problem-world will not tolerate for an instant any such barbarity. Here, for some time now, a strict code of chivalry has been laid down; and this etiquette is tacitly followed by all composers in the art. It is in just this particular that misapprehension exists. Beginners and even good chess-players only too often attempt to force the lock of a problem, just as they might in a game, where sheer strength and weight are likely to tell; and the result of this perhaps is the hasty conclusion that there is nothing in problems. But in order to be at home in cultured society a person must in the first place learn good manners. Exactly the same demand is made upon those who would really enter into the spirit of chess-problems. For in these polished and brilliant circles, where amusement rather than victory is the end, force is second to tact, and logic to vivacity.

At the end of a game of chess there may be several ways of giving the *coup de grâce:* one sure and obvious, for instance, and another difficult but brilliant. A cautious player, whose object it is not to be brilliant but to win, will choose of the two the easy and obvious way, and thus bring the game to a tame conclusion. In problems no such option is allowed: to be miserly and tame is prohibited. As in any bright and satisfying puzzle, it is of the very first consideration that there should be only the one intended solution, for otherwise the whole point is destroyed at once. Let us imagine a parallel case to illustrate this particular. A man invents a very ingenious and perplexing door-catch, fixes it to his front-entrance, and then challenges us to get into his house within two hours. The place is examined. One person finds the scullery window open, and gets in there; another finds a wide chimney, and gets in there. 'No, no,' says the challenger; 'this is not fair. I meant you to come in by the front-door.' 'Oh, did you?' we retort. 'Very well, then, you should have shut the scullery window and stopped up the fireplaces.'

The problem-composer is told to exercise the same care. And it is by enforcing this principle in every important connection—by making it practically imperative to close up all back-ways and unintended entrances—that chess-problems are made so effective and terse.

In the history of this admirable pastime, which is one of continued tranquillity and amity, there is no Babel. Problemists cater for each other, appreciate and understand each other, the civilised world over. This is very different, for example, from cricket, say, which is a game so peculiar to the English genius that no other nation will have anything to do with it. The art we are speaking of, on the contrary, is truly cosmopolitan; and this fact may be sufficiently clearly appreciated by a glance at the prize-list of any open tournament for problems. The recent competition promoted by *La Stratégie* is a case in point. In one section alone the awards went respectively to composers in Spain, Austria, Russia, Denmark, and the United States; while, taking the whole list, England, Germany, France, Holland, and Australia were also represented. This, surely, is wonderful testimony to the attractiveness and solid value of the problem art. Like painting and music, it is universal.

In the tournaments alluded to, however, the regular chess-masters—Lasker, Pillsbury, Janowski, and so on—are conspicuous alone by their absence. As I pointed out above, chess and chess-problems are distinct; and it occurs that few, if any, first-class players form first-class problemists as well, and *vice versâ*. So the universe of problems has its own bright particular stars. There are B. G. Laws of London, Pradignat of France, Marin in Spain, Max Feigl and a distinguished coterie in Vienna—these, to mention a scant few among a host of names familiar and respected in problem-circles. Samuel Loyd of New York, too, must be cited; for although one has missed the signature in more recent years, as far as new work is concerned, it will always retain an outstanding significance to problemists. If others may be preferred for finish, delicacy, and address; as regards originality, versatility, and invention, this composer has hardly been surpassed. The spirited conceptions emanating from this fertile source, speaking quite literally, have perplexed and amused millions. For it is to this same Mr Loyd—the Edison of Puzzledom—that we are indebted for some enormously popular brain-worries; and among these especially the fifteen-block puzzle and the pony puzzle. Of the latter more than a thousand million were sold or distributed for advertisement purposes. Barnum the circus proprietor, it is said, ordered them in ten million lots at a time.

Another problem-maker of great repute is Mr A. F. Mackenzie of Jamaica. Afflicted by the loss of his eyesight some few years ago, this author has since then not only maintained but greatly increased his prestige. It is, indeed, becoming rare to find his name omitted from the honours list of international tourneys. Mr Mackenzie acknowledged recently that he had done much better work since losing his sight than before. He composes mentally; and he said in this connection that a board and men should be regarded as a distraction rather than an aid, for mental composition allowed much freer play to the imagination—a quality very essential in all invention. These facts in themselves are sufficient evidence of Mr Mackenzie's exceptional powers.

Lady-composers are ably represented by Mrs Baird, who unquestionably stands at their head. This talented authoress has just issued a collection of seven hundred original problems, exclusively the product of her own skill. Mrs Baird's work is recognised by problemists of all countries; and she has frequently carried off prizes in open competition.

These competitions, or tourneys, as chess-people call them, are held from time to time in one or another of the journals that devote space to chess. Matters are so arranged that positions shall be adjudged without reference to authorship, and this prevents in a large degree any undue partiality for known or native composers. The prizes given are invariably of small and insignificant value. In this art, as a consequence, there are no professionals, but only artists. Problem-making and problem-solving demand both time and trouble; yet the pursuit must be taken up solely, as we say, for love. There is no other reward.

Individual as well as national characteristics are distinctly traceable in chess-problems—in other words, they exhibit style. Those of the British school, for instance, plainly reveal the dominant puritanism of the nation. Here the accepted canons of taste enjoin a severe and dignified exposition of ideas, a chastity of style; what is known as the Bohemian school, on the contrary, is less exacting, less correct, and more genial, original, and easy-going; while the democratic and informal spirit of the American may be said to have been exemplified by Loyd in chess-problems much as it was by Whitman in poetry.

Finally, let me mention one of the most convincing advantages of chess-problems as a recreation. For half-a-crown you can snap your fingers at everybody. A set of serviceable men and a board may be had for two shillings, and a book of selected problems for sixpence. Sixpence may not be the usual price; but at any rate there is one set of volumes no dearer than this. Excellently printed, judiciously selected, these are published by Reclam in Leipzig, who for this liberal provision deserves the thanks of all problemists. Besides, if two or three periodicals are taken, book collections need not be troubled about, for so many journals cater for chess-players now. At this trifling expense, then, and given the right inclination, one is armed interminably against solitude and *ennui*. If a problem bores, it may be sent away. The chess-men, on the other hand, never get tired; there are no readier servants or more good-humoured.

In conclusion, should any one on reading these lines feel some desire to join the ranks of chess-problem solvers, I can assure him that a chosen band of the most alert intellects are not merely willing but actually begging the opportunity to beguile him, gratis, with the wit of their choicest conceptions.

THE POLICE TELEGRAPH-CODE.

SINCE the introduction of the telephone, telegraphy has been comparatively little used in the police departments; but when, as in some cases, the telephone is not considered quite safe, telegraph-messages are sent, a private code being used. It is that code we now briefly explain.

When the police wire from one station to another, the code-words are used in a certain order; in fact, it is strictly enjoined that 'to prevent confusion this order should be adhered to'—namely, (1) the offence, or reason of the message; (2) the person wanted; (3) the age, height, and build of the person; (4) the complexion, hair, eyes, whiskers, moustache, and shape of face; (5) personal peculiarities and distinctive marks; (6) description of clothing; (7) where person wanted is likely to be found; (8) instructions as to what is to be done; (9) the registered number of office or chief-officer sending the wire.

Of these nine divisions, Nos. (3), (4), (5), and (6) are expressed not by code-words but by figures. Thus, if a certain person wanted by the police is forty years of age, five feet six inches high, and of slender build, the description would be expressed by five figures: 40,56,3; the first two represent the age, the next two the height, and the last one the build. For official purposes, the build is thus described: 'stout' by the figure 1, 'proportionate' by 2, 'slender' by 3, and 'medium' by 4. The official instructions state that the figures for 'each distinctive mark must be divided by a comma.'

It is well known that by codifying such messages a saving is effected. The five figures given above (40,56,3) represent twelve words, but are reckoned as one; thus many abbreviations are effected by the use of a code. But besides the economy there is the far more important consideration of secrecy involved in this method. Of course the full code as given in the police instructions cannot be published here; one or two specimens will suffice:

(1) The nature of the offence for which a certain person is wanted, and special items of information regarding him or her. We give two examples of the words under this heading. For the phrase, 'Wanted at this office on a charge of murder,' the code-word is 'Capital;' 'on a charge of fraud' it is 'Combat.' There are also many other items of valuable information given in this division of the code—for example, for the phrase, 'Missing from his home in this Borough [City, Division],' the code-word is 'Erudite;' and for 'Description of a man found drowned,' &c., the code-word is 'Filter.'

(4) The description of head and face is represented in the message by five figures: the *complexion*—fresh, represented by figure 5; the *hair*—flaxen, 7; the *eyes*—hazel, 8; the *whiskers and moustache*—clean shaved, 9; the *shape of face*—irregular, 3. There are nine examples under each of the five headings here italicised.

Suppose the person wanted is of fresh complexion, has flaxen hair, light-hazel eyes, is clean shaved, and of irregular features, then the figures used are 5,7,8,9,3, which, as shown above, exactly express the description. The fifth division, 'Distinctive Marks and Peculiarities,' is based on the same principle. There is another division with code-figures describing the clothing in which the person wanted may be dressed; but this is not of much importance for identification.

(5) The distinctive marks and peculiarities are represented in the message by five figures. We give two specimens: 'Cut-mark on right cheek' is represented by figure 1; 'Cut on chin,' 35; 'Deaf (very),' 36. In all there are one hundred of these code-words in this division.

We give a specimen police telegram in full, and also the same message codified. In full it reads:

'To X.—Wanted at this office, on a charge of housebreaking, a man of the following description—namely, age forty-two, five feet four inches high, stout build, dark complexion, dark-brown hair, hazel eyes, black whiskers and moustache, full face, has a cut-mark on corner of right eye, and abscess-mark left side of neck. Please cause inquiries to be made at common lodging-houses; and, if found, apprehend and wire.'

The code message is: 'Banana | Goblet | 42,54,1 | 2,4,3,1,1 | 2,69 | Mantlet | Nutmeg.'

The advantages of such a form of telegram are obvious. In the words of the official instructions: 'The list of code-words, which have been adapted to the phrases most frequently used in the transmission of telegraph-messages relating to police business, has been compiled with a view of effecting a saving in the cost of this branch of the service. It is not expected that the code can be utilised for every class of telegram; but the intention is, as far as practicable, to give the fullest description of persons who are wanted, &c., at a minimum cost, and the advantages are more apparent where a large number of telegrams have to be transmitted in cases of emergency. The saving thus effected may also be an inducement to a more liberal use of the telegraph than heretofore.'

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ANCIENT WELLS IN ST ANDREWS AND ELSEWHERE:

ECCLESIASTICAL AND SECULAR.

By W. T. LINSKILL.

MOST old abbeys, monasteries, castles, and churches possessed remarkable wells of great depth, and differing very much in shape and construction, used for various purposes. St Andrews, the ancient ecclesiastical metropolis of Scotland, abounds in the remains of its old churches, monastic buildings, nunneries, singular caves, underground passages, and deep wells.

Old wells are of much greater antiquarian interest than most people at first sight would imagine, and are well worthy of careful investigation. Some were simply for domestic purposes; many existing near the west end of churches were for filling the font or the holy-water 'stoups;' others were holy or healing wells, like those at Lourdes, Holywell, and the like. I have seen many such wells abroad, but they are too numerous to specify; and their healing powers to my mind seem undoubted. Others have subterranean connections, which I will refer to later on. It is quite a possible and plausible theory that persons when in concealment underground, for whatever reason, might have some means of access to neighbouring wells and springs.

One of the most interesting of the many explorations we have made in St Andrews was the careful examination of the singularly situated old well in the centre of the nave of the Cathedral. In this I was assisted by Mr George Bruce and Dr Hay Fleming. By kind permission, on 11th September 1886, a descent was made into the well by means of two long ladders roped together. For some considerable distance it is constructed of rubble; but the lower portion was found to be hewn out of the solid rock. The entire depth of this well is forty-nine feet four inches, the top measures three feet eleven inches in diameter, and at the bottom it measures three feet ten inches.

By many persons it is considered extremely doubtful whether this place was ever intended to be a well to contain water for necessary purposes, since there exists no spring either in it or near it. However, it is a well-known fact that in some churches, as also in some abbeys and cathedrals, wells formerly did exist, and even now there are instances where they are still remaining. For example, I have read that there is a most remarkable well within the walls of the church at Marden, Herefordshire. This interesting old well is situated near the west end of the nave, and is supported by circular stonework. It is said to be supplied by a spring of pure water, supposed to arise from the spot where the body of King Ethelbert was first buried, and is known as St Ethelbert's Well. No doubt this well was used for the font and holy-water 'stoups.' There is another well within the Cathedral of St Patrick, Dublin, with a never-failing supply of water; and, if I recollect aright, there is a well at old Fountains Abbey called Robin Hood's Well. Within the more modern Collegiate Church of St Michael, near Tenbury, in Worcestershire, there is a well that supplies the splendid font with water. In the south-east corner of the crypt of St Joseph of Arimathea's Chapel in the ruins of Glastonbury there is also a well. In St Wilfred's Chapel at Brougham Castle, in the county of Westmorland, there is a well and a spring of water which at one time bubbled up into the bowl of the font.

I have heard it reported that in Carlisle Cathedral there exists a fine well partly situated under one of the centre pillars, and it has been thought that Carlisle, like Berwick, having been a Border city open to inroads in earlier times, it is not at all improbable that the scared inhabitants may have fled to the Cathedral or sanctuary, in which case a well of water within the holy precincts would be of incalculable value to them.

On the Continent I have heard the saying, 'It is as cold as the chain of the well of St Elvi.' In the Church of St Elvi, at Rouen, there was once in the

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choir a well, now filled up, from which the pure water was drawn by a bucket and chain; no doubt this is the origin of the curious saying.

In a crypt at Bury St Edmunds there is a well of pure spring-water, or fountain, beneath the sacred shrine of St Edmund, in the chapel of St Mary in Cryptis. William of Worcester, writing about 1479, states that this crypt was one hundred feet long and eighty feet broad, and had twenty-four pillars of marble (probably Purbeck marble) to support the vaulted roof. When at Bury St Edmunds I was informed that this wonderful crypt still remained, full of rubbish and stones.

That something of a similar nature exists below St Andrews Cathedral I feel convinced. Regarding this well in the nave (now a gravel-path) of the Cathedral, it may be observed that when wells are in or near the nave of such a building—which circumstance, I am inclined to think, is rare—they are usually surmounted with a richly ornamented stone cover or canopy. Such an arrangement, however, excepting in cases where the nave is very wide, would greatly interfere with festal processions; and considering, with the other circumstances, the extreme narrowness of the nave of St Andrews Cathedral (which in this respect resembles Ely Cathedral), it has been suggested that the so-called well may have been a sort of sump, and intended as a means of keeping the Cathedral dry, as also possibly a means of drainage for some subterranean structure adjacent. I have carefully examined the ground-plans of most of the principal churches in Scotland and elsewhere in Britain; but in no case save that of St Andrews can I find that a well is so situated. The interior of this well was most carefully examined, but we found no subterranean inlet or outlet; and the stones and iron door were placed over the well precisely as before. Close at hand in the Priory is a very deep well, but much wider.

There was, without doubt, yet another well inside the walls of this grand church; it seems to have been at the west end, on the north side of the nave. This, too, was probably for the font and holy-water vats at the great entrance or Golden Gate. My friend the late Sir Lambert Playfair told me more than once that he remembered it perfectly, and also a doorway in the side a few feet from the top, into which as boys he and his playmates used to pitch stones and hear them rumble away. Mr Skinner, of St Andrews, a keen antiquary, who was rector of the Episcopal church about 1869, writes to a friend: 'I have a recollection that some feet beneath the top of a well [in the Cathedral] there was a door and opening in the masonry looking west, which might be the termination of a passage.'

In the new cemetery of the Cathedral is situated the once celebrated Holy Well, with its ancient stone canopy and niche for a statue of a saint, the latter, alas! long since gone. It can be entered by a few modern steps of stone, and is now made a receptacle for all kinds of filth, rubbish, and old wreaths; it is, moreover, desecrated by the overflow pipe from the town's well above being turned into it, the back wall of the old masonry having been cut through to admit the pipe. About 1887 I asked for permission to clean it out thoroughly, and to put a light railing around it for protection. I did not get permission to put up this necessary railing; but I got it cleaned out, and placed a board on the wall requesting people not to put refuse in the well or its vicinity. This board was torn down after a year, and the well became dirtier than ever. It was, doubtless, a most holy place in the days of faith, and possessed powers like the sacred wells of Lourdes, Holywell, &c.

There are many such holy wells in Scotland. St Ninian's Well, St Andrews, is often referred to in the old accounts of the ancient city, and seems to have been at the foot of the brae, below the present Episcopal church. Possibly there was a chapel there dedicated to that saint, as St Andrews was once rich in churches; but the sites of many of them have utterly disappeared. At Melrose Abbey there were several sacred wells, such as St Helen's, St Robert's, and St Dunstan's. Mr J. A. Wade refers to these holy wells in his *History of St Mary's Abbey* (Melrose).

About 1888 we turned our attention to an old covered-up well situated in a garden in North Bell Street, St Andrews. This well had in former days belonged to the Greyfriars' or Franciscan Monastery, and was no doubt situated in the courtyard or cloister-garth. Until we obtained permission to open it out no idea had been formed of its size and great depth. This was a monastic draw-well pure and simple. The workmen descended this well by the same means as at the old Cathedral—namely, by two ladders; and several days were spent in getting rid of the water, which was a very slow process. We then removed the accumulated rubbish from the bottom of the well, and in so doing came upon the remaining fragments of two very old oak buckets. Of one practically only the ironwork remained; but the other, bound together by three iron hoops, was in a much better state of preservation. The chains are very peculiar, having an S-shaped link and a singular twist very rarely seen in these days, I fancy; and the length of time that they have been thus embedded has so oxidised them into large knots or lumps that they could only have been disentangled by means of fire. No doubt these old buckets and chains are those which the monks of the Franciscan Monastery used before the time of the Reformation, and therefore the discovery is somewhat interesting. There may be some persons who would disparagingly say, 'What interest can there be in the remains of two old buckets and chains?' For such persons I neither write nor make research, although I would gladly have them share the interest with me.

This well differs materially in size and construction from all the other wells, and is certainly the finest yet known in St Andrews, being fifty feet

deep and five feet in diameter. In places it is cut through the solid rock, and is otherwise constructed of well-dressed stones. It is now open to view, and has been surrounded with a parapet of two courses of ashlar stone. The top is surmounted by a high iron guard-rail similar to that which guards the old well in Archbishop Hamilton's Castle, but higher. Unfortunately the parapet could not be made as large as the mouth of the well, as it would thus block up the garden-gate, so it was made one foot smaller all round. The old buckets and chains hang inside the top of the well.

The splendid old well in the courtyard of the famous Castle must also as soon as possible be cleared out and explored.

Unfortunately I cannot as yet find out the site of the well in the Dominican or Blackfriars' Monastery, where the Madras College now stands, nor the famed well of St Leonard's College and Church. There must be one, also, in connection with St Salvator's, the great and good Bishop Kennedy's church and college.

The wells, whether considered holy wells or not, have long been a matter of great interest to antiquaries and others. Like the tombs of the dead, they often contain objects long since lost sight of, and have been used to conceal most astounding facts. Not very many years ago, at Westfield, Birchington-on-Sea, while a bucket was being lowered down a very old well, the proprietor, the Rev. H. A. Thorne, noticed that the bucket, which was swinging, suddenly disappeared in the side of the well. He at once descended, and discovered extensive subterranean passages. The entrance to these curious places is in the side of the ancient well, thirty-two feet below the surface. They are very large, and are eight feet high and upwards, their cubic measurement being twenty thousand feet. One very long subterranean passage leads off in the direction of the seashore, but stops before reaching it, the constructers having evidently intended to make a sea-escape, but abandoned the attempt in despair. It would be most interesting to know whether this well be not situated near the former site of some old ecclesiastical building, as there are so many cases where ancient wells have been found to afford an entrance to subterranean chambers, cells, and passages. In an old cavern here, on the cliffs, now known as the Smugglers' Cave, there is a well carefully hewn out of the rock containing a constant supply of cool, refreshing water. Farther to the west, on the cliffs, old inhabitants aver there was a passage with two branches, one of which seemed to run into a well, the passage continuing on its way beyond it—a dark, fearsome place.

At Hawthornden Castle, below which are the noted caves or places of security in times of great danger, there is in the King's Guard-room a well which Mr Grose alludes to in his *Antiquities of Scotland*, and which he imagines was constructed to let down valuables, &c., to secure them from an enemy; as from the narrow entrance to the Castle, by steps and along a plank-bridge, property and valuables could not readily be conveyed elsewhere.

The Well-house Tower at Edinburgh Castle is also a place of interest, being so named, without doubt, from a stream of water that ran beneath it, and surely it must have been at one time connected with the upper buildings. James Grant, in dealing with this subject in his *Old and New Edinburgh*, writes: 'Eastward of this tower [the Well-house Tower] of the fifteenth century, are the remains of a long, low archway, walled with rubble, but arched with well-hewn stones, popularly known as "the Lions' Den," and which had evidently formed a portion of that secret escape or covered-way from the Castle (which no Scottish fortress was ever without), the tradition concerning which is of such general and ancient belief. This idea has been still further strengthened by the remains of a similar subterranean passage being found below Brown's Close, on the Castle Hill.' This, again, strengthens my idea that wells and springs had underground connections. In one of the very lowest crypts of St Mark's Church, Venice, is an interesting old well. This crypt is three and a half feet below the level of the water outside, and it seems to date from about the ninth century.

At my old 'varsity of Cambridge there are still strange tales told of underground winding passages and sacred old wells. From St Radegund's Nunnery, now Jesus College, passages are said to diverge to ruined Barnwell Abbey and Stourbridge Chapel; and I have often heard stories of their connection with the river Cam, Chesterton Church, and an old well in the above-mentioned abbey. I know not what the truth of it may be, as I never went into the matter very closely; but I have seen the reputed end of the built-up passage down some steps in an old tool-house at Jesus College.

In the churchyard of the old kirk of Crail—it is so old that many believed King David I. worshipped there—is a well known as the Scholar's or Baptismal Well, and steps led down to it from the church. There is a singular old baptismal well hewn in the rock below Dunino Church, in the same neighbourhood.

But what of 'unexplored St Andrews, the Rome of Scotland'? Visitors are far too apt to look on the St Andrews of the present day as the Scottish Brighton, with its handsome houses and villas, broad, well-paved streets, its bathing-ponds, three golf-courses, and *al fresco* concerts. All is modern. They do not realise what it once was, and how much there is yet to discover and explore. My mind constantly goes back to the St Andrews of bygone days, with the old ports and walls, when the Cathedral, its many churches, chapels, and monasteries filled the air with the music of sweet bells, when the 'Angelus' was rung, and when the ecclesiastical buildings were filled with the plain-song chants of bishops, priests, monks, and white-robed

singing men; when the altar candles and jewelled lamps flooded the holy buildings with their soft light, and when clouds of fragrant incense ascended to the lofty roofs. Then were there also the old three or four storied wooden houses, each story projecting a foot or two beyond the other; the lattice windows; the quaint red-tiled roofs; the creepers on the walls; and the old booths or shops beneath.

Then, of a sudden, the dark pall of destruction fell on the old city, her churches and monastic buildings were desecrated and laid low, and she, the ecclesiastical capital of Scotland, dwindled down gradually into a mere insignificant fishing-town, if it even deserved such a name. Her former fine old buildings became quarries open to all, and her once beautiful streets became grass-grown, deserted, and smothered with refuse. Not until Sir Hugh Lyon Playfair became Provost did the once famous old city arise from the ashes of its great past. In the metropolitan cathedral the rubbish lay where it fell until about 1826.

There is, sad to say, very little of the past left above ground now; the ancient St Andrews lies below, in her old cells, vaults, passages, and wells, still awaiting exploration.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER III.—IN WHICH THE PRIOR IS MYSTERIOUS.

THE prior entered his study behind me with a hurried word of excuse, expressing regret that he had been compelled to leave me alone, and promising to join me in a few moments.

Therefore I turned, and, retracing my steps along the stone corridor wherein antique carved furniture was piled, went back again into the garden, glancing up at the window whereat I had detected the hunchback's face.

Landini had closed his study door after I had gone, thus showing that his consultation with his visitor was of a confidential nature. I regretted that I had not passed through into the church and faced Graniani, for I could not now go back and pass the closed door, especially as the keen eyes of the reverend's house-woman were upon me. So, impatiently I waited for the stout priest to rejoin me, which he did a few moments later, carrying my precious acquisition in his hand.

Perhaps you are a collector of coins or curios, monastic seals or manuscripts, birds' eggs or butterflies? If you are, you know quite well the supreme satisfaction it gives you to secure a unique specimen at a moderate and advantageous price. Therefore, you may well understand the tenderness with which I took my treasured Arnoldus from him, and how carefully I wrapped it in a piece of brown paper which Teresa brought to her master. The priest's house-woman, shrewd, inquisitive, and a gossip, is an interesting character the world over; and old Teresa, with the wizened face and brown, wrinkled neck, was no exception. She possessed a wonderful genius for making a *minestra*, or vegetable soup, Father Bernardo had already told me, and he had promised that I should taste her culinary triumph some day.

Nevertheless, although the prior was politeness itself, pleasant yet pious, laconic yet light-hearted, I entertained a distinct distrust of him.

I referred to my intrusion in his study while he had a visitor, but he only laughed, saying:

'It was nothing, my dear signore—nothing, I assure you. Pray don't apologise. My business with the lady, although serious, was brief. It is I who should apologise.'

'No,' I said; 'I've been enjoying your garden. Enclosed here by the church and by your house, right in the very centre of Florence, it is so quiet and old-world, so full of antiquity, that I have much enjoyed lingering here.'

'Yes,' he answered reflectively; 'back in the turbulent days of the Medici, that remarkable figure in Italian history Fra Savonarola owned this garden and sat beneath this very *loggia*, on this very bench, thinking out those wonderful discourses and prophecies which electrified all Florence. Nothing changes here. The place is just the same to-day, those white walls on the four sides, only the statuary perhaps is in worse condition than it was in 1498 when he concluded his remarkable career by defying the commands of the Pope as well as the injunctions of the Signoria, and was hanged and burned amid riot and bloodshed. Ah! this garden of mine has seen many vicissitudes, signore, and yonder in my church the divine Dante himself invoked the blessing of the Almighty upon his efforts to effect peace with the Pisans.'

'Your house is a truly fitting receptacle for your splendid collection,' I said, impressed by his words and yet wondering at his manner.

'Do you know,' he exclaimed a moment later, as though a thought had suddenly occurred to him, 'I cannot help fearing that you may have acted imprudently in purchasing this manuscript. If you wish, I am quite ready to return you your money. Really, I think it would be better if you did so, signore.'

'But I assure you I have no wish to return it to you,' I declared, astonished at his words. If he believed he had made a bad bargain, I at least had his receipt for the amount and the book in my hand.

'But it would be better,' he urged. 'Better for you—and for me, for the matter of that. Here are

the notes you gave me;' and taking them from his pocket, he held them out towards me.

I failed utterly to comprehend his intention or his motive. I had made a good bargain, and why should I relinquish it? Place yourself in my position for a moment, and think what you would have done.

'Well, Signor Reverendo,' I exclaimed, 'I paid the price you asked, and I really cannot see why you should attempt to cry off the deal.' Truth to tell, I was a trifle annoyed.

'You have paid the price,' he repeated in a strange voice, looking at me seriously. 'Yes; that is true. You have paid the price in the currency of my country; but there is yet a price to pay.'

'What do you mean?' I asked quickly.

'I mean that it would be best for us both if you gave me back my receipt and took back your money.'

'Why?'

'I cannot be more explicit,' he replied. 'I am a man of honour,' he added, 'and you may trust me.'

'But I am desirous of adding the codex to my collection,' I argued, mystified by his sudden desire to withdraw from his word. 'I asked you your price, and have paid it.'

'I admit that. The affair has been but a matter of business between two gentlemen,' he replied, with just a touch of hauteur. 'Nevertheless, I am anxious that you should not be possessor of that manuscript;' and he pointed to the parcel in my hand.

'But why? I am a collector. When you come to Leghorn I hope you will call and look through my treasures.'

'Treasures!' he echoed. 'That is no treasure—it is a curse rather.'

'A curse! How can a splendid old book be a curse in the hands of a palæographical enthusiast like myself?'

'I am a man of my word,' he said in a low, distinct tone. 'I tell you, my dear signore, that your enthusiasm has led you away. You should not have purchased your so-called treasure. It was ill-advised; therefore I urge you to take back the sum you have paid.'

'And on my part I object to do so,' I said a little warmly.

He shrugged his broad shoulders, and a pained look crossed his big features.

'Will you not listen to me—for your own good?' he urged earnestly.

'I do not think that sentiment need enter into it,' I replied. 'I have purchased the book, and intend to retain it in my possession.'

'Very well,' he sighed. 'I have warned you. One day, perhaps, you will know that at least Bernardo Landini acted as your friend.'

'But I cannot understand why you wish me to give you back the book,' I argued. 'You must have some motive?'

'Certainly I have,' was his frank response. 'I don't wish you to be its possessor.'

'You admit that the volume is precious, therefore of value. Yet you wish to withdraw from a bad bargain!'

His lips pursed themselves for a moment, and a look of mingled regret and annoyance crossed his huge face.

'I admit the first, but deny the second. The bargain is a good one for me, but a bad one for you.'

'Very well,' I replied with self-satisfaction. 'I will abide by it.'

'You refuse to hear reason?'

'I refuse, with all due deference to you, Signor Reverendo, to return you the book I have bought.'

'Then I can only regret,' he said in a voice of profound commiseration. 'You misconstrue my motive, but how can I blame you? I probably should, if I were in ignorance, as you are.'

'Then you should enlighten me.'

'Ah!' he sighed again. 'I only wish it were admissible. But I cannot. If you refuse to forgo your bargain, I can do nothing. When you entered here I treated you as a stranger; and now, although you do not see it, I am treating you as a friend.'

I smiled. Used as I was to the subtleness of the trading Tuscan, I was suspicious that he regretted having sold the book to me at such a low price, and was trying to obtain more without asking for it point-blank.

'Well, Signor Priore,' I said bluntly a moment later, 'suppose I gave you an extra hundred francs for it, would that make any difference to your desire to retain possession of it?'

'None whatever,' he responded. 'If you gave me ten thousand more I would not willingly allow you to have it in your possession.'

His reply was certainly a strange one, and caused me a few moments' reflection.

'But why did you sell it if you wish to retain it?' I asked.

'Because at the time you were not my friend,' he replied evasively. 'You are now—I know you, and for that reason I give you warning. If you take the book from this house, recollect it is at your risk, and you will assuredly regret having done so.'

I shook my head, smiling, unconvinced by his argument and suspicious of his manner. Somehow I had grown to dislike the man. If he were actually my friend, as he assured me, he would certainly not seek to do me out of a bargain. So I laughed at his misgivings, saying:

'Have no fear, Signor Reverendo. I shall treasure the old codex in a glass case, as I do the other rare manuscripts in my collection. I have a number of biblical manuscripts quite as valuable, and I take care of them, I assure you.'

My eye caught the ancient window where I had seen the white, unshaven face of the old hunchback, and, recollecting that there must be some mysterious connection between the two men, I tucked my precious parcel under my arm and rose to depart.

The prior knit his dark brows and crossed himself in silence.

'Then the signore refuses to heed me?' he asked in a tone of deep disappointment.

'I do,' I answered quite decisively. 'I have to catch my train back to Leghorn; therefore I will wish you *addio*.'

'As you wish, as you wish,' sighed the ponderous priest. Then placing his big hand upon my shoulder in a paternal manner, he added, 'I know full well how strange my request must appear to you, my dear signore, but some day perhaps you will learn the reason. Recollect, however, that, whatever may occur, Bernardo Landini is a friend to whom you may come for counsel and advice. *Addio*, and may He protect you, guard you from misfortune, and prosper you. *Addio*.'

I thanked him, and took the big, fat hand he offered.

Then, in silence, I looked into his good-humoured face and saw there a strange, indescribable expression of mingled dread and sympathy. But we parted; and, with old Teresa shuffling before me, I passed through the house and out into the white sun-glare of the open piazza, bearing with me the precious burden that was destined to have such a curious and remarkable influence upon my being and my life.

AMERICAN METHODS.

PART II.

THERE is a 'housing question' in many American cities, but nowhere is it so formidable as in New York. In 1900 a new department was started called the Tenement-House Commission. Large sums were spent by owners of houses, builders, and estate agents in fruitless attempts to defeat the Bill establishing this department. A tenement-house is one occupied by more than three families. Some houses of four floors contain fourteen families. In one large block were found living three thousand people. Under the new law the number of inspectors acting under the Medical Officer of Health was at once doubled. The evils of overcrowding and uncleanliness were found to have assumed quite dangerous proportions. Strenuous efforts are now being made to lessen these evils; the work already accomplished by the commissioner and his inspectors constitutes a record of which they may well be proud. They do not wait for garden cities or municipal dwellings, but adopt speedy and drastic methods which may be commended to the notice of some of our own Boards of Health.

The determination of young Americans to secure a university education is inspiring. The fees are about sixty pounds a year; so some do odd clerical work at night, some work as labourers in the vacation, others earn money by waiting on their fellow-students, or they go as car-conductors; one is known to have acted as an undertaker's assistant, and another earned money by selling iced drinks at some big building-works. On the other hand, a youth who squandered four thousand pounds in his first year at college was cut by his fellows as a 'cheap sport.' As a rule, the technical schools and colleges are admirably staffed and equipped; but their success is due to the sterling enthusiasm of the pupils. We can provide as good schools in this country; it is in the enthusiasm that we fall short. An American would no more think of offering children prizes for regular attendance at school than for regular attendance at dinner. In the Northern states no child is allowed to leave school before the age of fourteen, and most of the children remain a year or two longer; then they generally go to technical or evening schools. It is at this stage America's supremacy comes in with her splendidly equipped continuation-schools. Technical education is recognised as a necessary factor in developing and securing the national prosperity. Americans have seen clearly enough that education is the greatest force to enable them to win their way in the world's markets. There is no religious education in America as we understand the term; yet there is a remarkable absence of bad language in the streets, particularly noticeable in the Saturday-night crowds. Americans laugh at our Education Act, and twit us with caring more for dogmatic teaching than for the intelligence of the children. The religious difficulty is unknown in connection with the education of the young; in spite of this we have yet to learn that they are less Christian than we are.

One of the Mosely Commission writes: 'No expense is spared in developing and training the young mind in the United States. The willingness to learn displayed by the student is a pleasure to see. The outlay must, in the end, give a grand return to the people of that country; the example given might well be copied by the authorities of our own country, for it cannot be denied that we are lacking in technical knowledge. If we are to be in the race for supremacy we shall have to be up and doing; our young men will have to throw more energy into the subjects mentioned, or otherwise we shall soon be in the rear.' Another member reports: 'It is a humiliating fact that the children of our industrial population receive an education very much inferior to that given to the children of the United States of America. Not only is education in that country free, but it is continued up to the age of eighteen, and in some states even university education is free. So far as American law is concerned, every boy and girl starts life with at least a high-school education.

With us the poverty of parents means compulsory ignorance for the children. In America poverty of the father is only another reason why his children should receive the best education the nation can give. If that is so in a country the natural wealth and resources of which are almost beyond the limits of human conception, how much more necessary is it for the people of these small islands to see to it that the children, upon whose shoulders rests the future, are in education and trained intelligence at least equal to those of the nation which promises to be their keenest and most masterful competitor as much at home as in the marts of the world!' Education with us has become the sport of politicians and the toy of theologians. America is at least a quarter of a century ahead of us, and unless we wake up and fit our children for the burden which will inevitably fall upon them, the day of hobbling senility will surely overtake us. A full and interesting survey of the American schools will be found in Mr Charles Zueblin's book, *American Municipal Progress*, published by Macmillan.

Young America is awake and thinking in millions. It is seldom indeed that youths or girls are employed under sixteen years of age. It seems to be the desire of American parents to give their children as full an education as possible, so as to equip them for their struggle for existence. The educational system of the United States gives the lad an opportunity to start at the public school and finish up at the university, with no fees of any kind to pay, the son of the workman being on an equality with the son of the millionaire. In the question of education the Commission insists that the Americans are far ahead of us, not only in the fact that it is free, but that it is carried to a higher grade in the ordinary day-school than is the case in this country, with the result that it arouses the interest of the scholars and creates a desire and a determination to further continue their studies by attending the evening technical classes after they have left the day-school and commenced work.

In the City of New York the average yearly increase in the number of children at school is twenty-five thousand. There is no limit of age in evening-school work. There is a remarkable bodily uprightness and freedom of movement characterising the school children, both girls and boys, due to the excellent system of physical training prevailing in American schools. Most wisely, the high schools and technical schools are just as well equipped for girls as for boys. The hunger for education is a great contrast to the prevailing feeling in this country. When a large London establishment recently notified the boys of the printing and binding departments that if they wished to attend the classes at either polytechnic or continuation-school the firm would allow them the necessary time and pay half the fees, the response was most discouraging; not more than three out of a possible thirty showed any wish to avail themselves of the offer.

One member of the Commission after another comments on the greater sobriety of the American workman; the consumption of liquor per head is not much more than half what it is in this country. One member writes: 'In no one firm or establishment we visited was drinking intoxicating liquor permitted. Even a luncheon would be served without beer, wine, or spirits, the usual drinks being iced water, milk, coffee, or tea.' Another reports that he only saw two intoxicated persons during the month he spent in the country; an unsteady man is regarded with contempt, and shunned by his comrades. Betting on horse-racing is practically unknown to the American workman.

America is the country of the *young* man. In the great factories and workshops the managers, heads of departments, and foremen are generally very young indeed for their responsible positions. When asked where these men had gained the necessary experience an employer replied, 'Well, you see, it isn't experience we want, but *go*.'

Now, it is constantly asserted that the high-pressure of life in America shortens a man's days, and that he breaks down at a much earlier age than in our own country. It is interesting to find that this view is not adopted by the Commission. One writes: 'We failed to find ocular evidence of the American workman running at high-pressure. The machinery runs at a high speed; but the man showed no signs of over-exertion. We looked in vain for the extraordinary "hustling" of which we had so often read, or for evidence of men aging rapidly and being cast aside.' Another reports: 'I was led to believe that hustle and rush permeated and actuated all kinds of workmen in every department of labour. I have seen no exceptional energy displayed by American workmen.' Again another: 'Much has been made of the statement that men are so rushed in American works that only the young and strong can stand the strain, and that only for a short time. No statement could be wider of the actual truth.' Another reports: 'Upon what grounds this statement has been based I confess entire ignorance. It struck me that the balance of evidence was in favour of the American working-man. Hard work, as it is understood in England, only finds a hiding-place in industrial America; as soon as it is discovered, a machine is patented which drives it out. American capitalists do not want hard work; if they do, they know a machine will work harder and longer than a human being, and cost less.' This body of evidence may be accepted as conclusive. It is the sweat of the brain rather than the sweat of the brow that is in demand.

An organisation exists called the National Civic Federation of New York. It makes largely for peace in the industrial world of America; and it brings capital and labour into closer touch, providing a practical solution of many of the difficulties and vexed questions that arise between the two. One of its most important features is to get information of the first sign of impending trouble, and in the earliest stages of a dispute to step in for the purpose

of bringing the contending parties together at a round-table conference before any breach has actually taken place, and before either side has assumed a position from which it can recede only with difficulty. The Civic Federation exists not so much for the adjustment of troubles after they have arisen as for their prevention. At its meetings the industrial problems that usually lead to misunderstandings and disputes are debated. Papers are read giving the views of both employers and employed, and are discussed not only by the interested parties but by highly educated men totally independent of either. 'A similar institution in this country would save many thousands of pounds to both capital and labour, and many a bitter tear.' The committee of the Civic Federation is composed of an equal number of leading trades-unionists and leading employers, as well as a section equal to each of the others, composed of well-known public men who act as a leavening influence.

By escorting this little band of representative British workmen through American workshops, Mr Mosely has conferred a benefit on both countries; by printing and circulating the full reports gathered in he admits us to his company and enables us to judge for ourselves whether any of the conditions and principles of industrial life that obtain across the water are suitable for us and may with advantage be either adopted or adapted by ourselves. Kindly feelings towards England are incidentally revealed, and it must be admitted that Mr Mosely has performed a public service in uniting still more closely the 'cute Daughter and the Mother-Country to whom, after all, she owes so much.

THE MYSTERY OF THE DALOON RIVER.

PART II.

PICTURE a broad river creeping greasily into the tropic sea from a delta of creek, swamp, and forest. Rank vegetation tangled the banks and spread in unending vista to the small hills of slight elevation on the distant horizon. A low coast-line stretched on either side of the river-mouth. The slow current of the Daloon poured muddily through a complicated network of shoals, and the skipper of the *Lorna* swore uneasily — under his breath, because Violet was standing beside him. In the bows a sailor with the lead sounded incessantly, and announced the result in a series of hoarse shouts. I myself was at the wheel, and I was unfeignedly anxious. None of us liked the navigation a wee bit.

'Dis bad water!' said a voice from the other side of the bridge. 'T'ink you better stop, cap'n.'

Abdul Nevi, sole genuine pilot for the West Coast of Africa according to his own account, expressed the general feeling. The *Lorna* swung round promptly in a graceful circle till her nose pointed out again towards the healthy open ocean. She was far too dainty a little craft to risk unnecessarily among those treacherous sandbanks on that forsaken coast.

'First time the black heathen has spoken the truth since he came aboard, sir, I do believe,' commented the skipper to me in a low tone.

But then, Jackson was always suspicious of natives. Not but what he had some grounds for his dislike in this case, I was fain to admit. I did not altogether trust the chap myself. On our arrival at Sierra Leone two things had happened. First and foremost, Carr Elliston had gone—to our utter consternation. He had left a short note with the agents for me, and a longer letter for Violet. What the latter said I don't know to this day. The former explained that as the date of our arrival was uncertain, he felt he could not wait any longer, but had gone back to revisit the scene of the *Buzzer's* mishap in a trading-schooner that had offered him a passage. He suggested we should cruise down the coast towards Loanda, where he should presently arrive in the aforesaid sailing-boat. Secondly, he commended to our favour one Abdul Nevi as an intelligent individual with considerable local knowlege of the coast in general and the Daloon River in particular.

'A bit casual, isn't it?' said I in some disgust to Violet as I read the note. 'Just like old Carr to go off and leave us to hunt for him half-across the Equator.'

Violet read her own letter and then mine, and her face was white with anxiety. 'We must go after him at once,' she said, her small lips closing after the words with a look of decision.

'There is coaling to be done first, anyhow,' I answered. 'Hullo! who is this?'

This was Mr Abdul Nevi, who was hastening along the deck and promptly introduced himself with much salaaming and waving of arms. He produced a letter of identification from Carr, which smelt abominably from too close contact with his (the pilot's) person. Therefore I opened it gingerly. Our would-be friend and guide then explained with profuse reiteration that he had hastened to obey the great war-captain's orders to present himself to our honoured selves immediately on our arrival. No other man in Sierra Leone could with such absolute safety pilot so magnificent a ship to any conceivable place from Senegal to the Cameroons. And what did we propose to pay him for his services, with a trifle in advance for his destitute brother on shore before sailing? Thus it befell that we took him along with us on our cruise, fateful of so much, little though we knew it at the time Now, off the mouth of the Daloon River, we presently rode at

anchor in the loneliness of a hazy sea and an apparently deserted shore.

I was roused shortly after midnight by the skipper. 'There is a bit of a boat drifting out from riverwards with some one in it striking matches to attract our attention. I have sent the gig to pick it up. It will be alongside directly, sir.'

I dressed roughly and ran up on deck in haste, nearly knocking over Abdul, who was prancing wildly by the davits. Wilton the sailor caught him unceremoniously by the arm and shoved him aside. ''E's 'alf off 'is 'ead, sir, since 'e seed that 'ere boat, an' the cap'n wouldn't let 'im board 'er.'

A voice came out of the darkness overside. 'Is Mr Meredith there?' it asked rather faintly.

'Hold up your lanterns,' said I to the sailors hanging over the bulwarks. They did so, and the light fell on the haggard face of Carr Elliston.

'Thank Heaven you've come, old chap!' he said. 'How is Vi?' and then he reeled as he reached the deck, and would have fallen but for Wilton's sudden, sturdy grasp. Next moment his glance fell on Abdul's swarthy form, and a gleam of fierce recognition came into his eyes.

'Quick, Harry!' he called to me, 'secure that chap; clap him in irons, or something. Now we have got the scoundrel we'll keep him tight. Have you got steam up? Then get well out to sea till morning.' The speaker fainted.

'Bring Captain Elliston below,' said my sister's voice quietly from the darkness, while the skipper and I grabbed simultaneously at our friend the pilot. That gentleman fought like a wild-cat for a little, and there was a considerable hubbub before we succeeded in tying him up scientifically in a perfect maze of ropes. As we had not any handcuffs on board, we ran him forward and locked him in the bo'sun's paint-store till daylight. Later I found Violet, with a rosy colour in her cheeks, feeding Carr in the saloon. He was eating ravenously, and he greeted my appearance—somewhat dishevelled after my exertions with Mr Abdul—with a cheery grin.

'Sounded like a bit of a scrimmage on deck,' he said. 'Vi has been trying to stop up her ears so as not to hear the expletives.'

Now, I hate to be roused suddenly from my bunk in the middle of the night at any time. Moreover, the native had clawed my neck viciously, and my own engineer had kicked me accidentally on the shin in the scuffle. Wherefore I spoke crossly.

'Must we put out to sea at once? And why?'

Carr sobered into sudden gravity. 'Never mind the reason for the moment,' he said abruptly. 'But the *Lorna* must be just out of sight of land by sunrise, Harry.'

Not for nothing have Carr and I knocked all round the world together and weathered through many a scrape. His eyes met mine squarely, and I read my orders there.

'All right!' I said shortly, and I returned to the bridge.

Two days later, at daybreak, the *Lorna* was back at the Daloon River. Early morning saw her small steam-launch proceeding cautiously up the stream, smelling of mud and fever, with green-stuffs shooting where its waters shallowed. Carr Elliston sat in the bows, and by means of a loaded revolver assisted Abdul Nevi the pilot to remember the navigable channel. Wilton stoked the boiler and greased the engines affectionately, proud of his engineering capacities. Violet held the tiller, and her eyes, under a jaunty little yachting-cap, watched for Carr's directing hand with all a sailor's skill. Beside her I lounged on the cushions, a rifle across my knees, and watched the banks as they narrowed inwards. Our launch will not hold more than five with any comfort.

Violet's presence in the launch at all had not come about without a breeze at starting. As the little craft bobbed alongside the yacht the girl, whom we had intended to leave behind, had quietly taken her place there. Carr expostulated vehemently; Violet retorted that the launch did not belong to him. The naval officer urged that we might possibly get into a tight corner, which was no place for a woman; my sister, glancing at him demurely from under her drooping lids, remarked illogically that in such case he had no business there either. Carr obstinately refused to cast off till she had returned to the *Lorna;* Violet defiantly declined to move. Carr appealed heatedly to me.

This was a stupid thing to do on his part, as he ought to have known quite well that my young sister generally gets her own way in the long-run; if he has not discovered the fact yet, he will do so soon. So I merely shrugged my shoulders and proposed to start as we were—which of course we did.

Now, as we steamed up the sullen river, between its green, unhealthy banks, I was thinking once again over Carr's story, testing its details, and wondering what our luck would bring.

It was a queer, unaccountable tale, to put it mildly: How the little French trading-factory up the Daloon, ostensibly for the collection of rubber and ivory from the interior, was merely a blind; how its present owner—ex-engineer and skilled mechanic from far-away Marseilles—had other and darker occupations; how Carr himself had been purposely trapped on to the trading-schooner, from which he was probably never meant to land alive. On board her he was recognised by a man who was a deserter from our own navy, whose life Carr had saved in earlier years in China. This man had roughly protected him on the schooner, and later had forced him to escape in the boat in which he had drifted down the river, to be picked up half-starved by us. How Abdul Nevi was one of the gang, though Carr had not known it when he recommended him to us. The pilot's reluctance to take us up the Daloon on the night of our arrival was probably due to his doubt as to whether his French master was ready to receive us. The *Lorna's* hurried departure from Sierre Leone had

outstripped the news that we were coming. Still, there were many details unexplained, and in the meantime we were steaming into this hornet's nest.

'I hope to goodness you are right that your friends at the factory will all be up-river to-day,' I called anxiously to Carr.

'Oh yes; don't you worry, Harry,' he answered, with a cheerful nod, from the bows of the launch. 'They were all to start two days ago on the warpath against some tribe that has been interfering with them lately. My deserter pal told me so, and I fancy Abdul knows it too. That is why he is so sick to-day. He is in a mortal funk—look at him! I call this trip a new kind of cutting-out expedition.'

'All the same, I shan't be sorry when it's over,' I muttered; and then I added crossly, 'You know, Vi, it's absurd your being here—it really is.'

'Don't begin to squabble again,' said my sister calmly. She glanced quickly from me to Carr, laughed a little low laugh, and blushed. 'If it had not been for me the *Lorna* would have been laid up at Southampton now.'

'You are a brick, Vi,' said Carr earnestly. 'I shall never forget'——

'Oh! attend to the navigation, you two,' I interrupted rudely. Love-making in the launch at the minute was so entirely inappropriate, I considered. And silence fell again upon us all.

It was broken by the sharp crack of a distant rifle-shot. Then on the stillness of the early morning came a faint savage yell, followed by a splutter of musketry. Carr gave a sharp, low order to reduce speed, and the launch's way slackened. At the same time we edged in nearer the bank.

AUSTRALIA IN THE 'THIRTIES.'

By Philip Laurence Oliphant.

AUSTRALIA has ever been the Continent of Pioneers. To-day it leads the way in advanced legislation and democratic ideals, with all their glaring inconsistencies. Yesterday it was discovered—a land of trackless wastes and a degenerate race, but with boundless possibilities. The British Government annexed this land of promise, and turned it into a penal settlement, presumably with a view to counteracting the degeneracy of the population; for the aims of the British Government are always to benefit the countries annexed.

But there were others besides convicts who went to Australia to seek their fortunes; and though it is probable that very few found them before the discovery of the goldfields in 1851, yet these early settlers may claim to be regarded as the pioneers of Australasia. An example of their experiences is furnished by the diary of a lady now living, who was one of a party of colonists in 1836. The sailing-ship *William Glen Anderson* left Gravesend on the 5th of May 1836, for Sydney, with the following passengers on board: Mr William Saxon, Mrs Saxon, his wife, and their two children; Miss Caroline Stone, sister of Mrs Saxon, and the keeper of the diary; a nurse, a page, a gamekeeper, a clergyman, a doctor, half-a-dozen other men passengers, a few steerage passengers, and the crew. For obvious reasons, the names have been altered.

Their adventures appear to have begun at an early period. The captain, who was a cautious man, made a speech to the assembled passengers soon after leaving port, expressing the hope that they were all willing to go on the voyage; whereupon the doctor stepped forward and declared that he was not willing. It was the mate who held the key of the situation. He informed the captain that the doctor had been brought on board by his father, who had handed him and a case of medical requisites over to his care, with strict injunctions that on no account was he to be allowed to go ashore until the ship reached Sydney. Those were the days when obedience to parents was held in great respect, especially when they were other people's parents. The captain appears to have taken not the slightest notice of the unfortunate doctor's objection; for the ship continued on her voyage until off the coast of Madeira, where the luckless doctor went overboard and was drowned.

The *William Glen Anderson* had been chartered by Mr Saxon, and carried a cargo of wheat and rum for the Sydney market. The odd corners of the ship were filled up with cattle, poultry, pheasants, and partridges, all under the care of the gamekeeper. There was something patriarchal in this migration of the sturdy English squire to the Antipodes with his wife and his little ones, and all that appertained to him, down to his very partridges—a suggestion of Noah and a touch of 'Masterman Ready.'

The remainder of the voyage appears to have been uneventful. The usual shark was captured; the inevitable whale spouted; there were flying-fish and porpoises. We can manage all these in the twentieth century, as every traveller knows and notes in his diary, if he keeps one, even as Miss Stone noted them seventy years ago. 'There go the ships, and there is that leviathan,' and that was recorded even more than seventy years ago.

To while away the tedium of the voyage, Mr Saxon and Miss Stone occupied themselves in making a net 'with a purse in the middle.' This net was later destined to achieve a record: it was the first that was put into the waters of Port Phillip—unfortunately the diarist does not mention with what success; but the event found its way into the newspapers.

Sydney was reached on the 25th of October 1836,

and here a fresh and shocking surprise was in store for the passengers of the *William Glen Anderson:* the captain put into Pinchgut Island, and landed there a large consignment of gunpowder, which he had concealed amongst the cargo, presumably for his own advantage. If ignorance had fallen short of absolute bliss during the six months' voyage, at least it had saved the passengers a great deal of anxiety.

From Pinchgut Island the *William Glen Anderson* proceeded to a wharf in Sydney Harbour, and it was then that Mr Saxon was to experience a two-fold disappointment. In the first place, no sooner were the hawsers made fast to the shore than hundreds of rats scrambled down them to land, leaving behind them gnawed and depleted sacks of wheat, from which the grain had escaped in large quantities and had been pumped with the bilge-water into the sea. But worse even than this calamity: another ship had arrived just before the *William Glen Anderson*, also with a cargo of wheat, and had completely spoiled the market.

The colonists landed, and took up their abode in the only vacant house in the place. It went by the name of 'The Hole in the Wall' from the fact that it was excavated out of the side of the cliff. The front door opened into the sitting-room, and this was the top of the house, all the other rooms being below. It would be interesting to possess a picture of this unique dwelling; but unfortunately none of the party made a sketch of it, and we are left to guess at the style of this example of early Australian architecture. They were supplied from the penal settlement with a lady to act as cook and general servant, but she does not seem to have been a success. Miss Stone relates difficulties about her 'permit,' without which she was not allowed out. When this was refused her, she took to terrorising the ladies of the party. Finally she attacked Mrs Saxon's nurse and tore out her hair, and was returned to the police with thanks.

The party remained in Sydney for three months whilst Mr Saxon was negotiating for the purchase of a station. The arrangements being completed, they started for Yass, some two hundred miles from Sydney. The journey was made in a large tilted cart, fitted up with lockers, and drawn by two horses. The servants, with the baggage, followed in a dray. At night the women and children slept in the carts and the men on the ground.

At Yass the only labour available was convict labour, and this was allotted by the authorities to landowners only in proportion to the size of their holdings. The domestic servant question had evidently reached an acute stage even in those early days. Both the servant-girls who went with the party from Sydney gave notice a week after their arrival at Yass, and left in a fortnight; and Mrs Saxon's nurse, in spite of a written agreement to stay with her for two years, married the mate of the *William Glen Anderson.*

The defection of the nurse was a matter of considerable anxiety to Mrs Saxon and her sister not long afterwards. For there was to be another little colonist added to the party, and there was no nurse to assist him into the world or tend him in his early days. With difficulty one was procured; but as she sat and watched by Mrs Saxon's bed she pulled out a pipe and began to smoke. Neither of the ladies seems to have considered this proper behaviour on the part of a nurse, and she was sent away. Another came in her place, but left the day following the birth of the baby, saying that her husband wanted her back. So the duties of nurse devolved on Miss Stone, who acquitted herself admirably in that position, not only to the new arrival but to both the other children as well.

There are many allusions in Miss Stone's diary to the subject of convict labour. There can be no doubt that the privilege was often abused by the settlers, and their treatment of the convicts was frequently cruel and unjust. She mentions, among other things, a practice that some indulged in of aggravating the men who were near the expiration of their sentences, in the hope of provoking them to acts of insubordination and thereby forfeiting their tickets-of-leave.

She tells a story of Mr Saxon, who, when paying a visit to a neighbouring station, found the owner on the point of starting for Sydney with a convict whom he was taking back to the police as unmanageable. Mr Saxon happened to be short of a man himself, and asked his neighbour to assign the convict to him. The transaction was completed, and Mr Saxon returned to his station with the man, who for several days was unable to do any work owing to the flogging he had received at the hands of his late master. The story ends in the orthodox Sunday-school prize-book fashion, for the convict's gratitude to Mr Saxon was so overwhelming that he became his best and most trusted man. These things happened in the 'thirties.'

But there was another element besides the settler and the convict to be reckoned with in the Australian community of that day—namely, the 'blackfellow.' In these stirring times of a 'White Australia,' 'labour representation,' and 'Commonwealth,' one is apt to forget the decadent aborigine and the vanished convict. Indeed, you may now scarcely mention the latter; and it is in better taste to speak of Sydney Harbour (the finest in the world) than of Botany Bay. But had the convict and the 'blackfellow' possessed votes in the first half of the last century, the legislature of the colony would have consisted chiefly of braves and burglars.

The 'blackfellow' was a simple child of nature. He wore no clothes, he stole what he dared, and he picked up English words with an astonishing facility. There are many stories about him in the pages of Miss Stone's diary. She records the terror manifested by a party of them when Mr Saxon's little daughter brought her large Dutch doll for their inspection. Nothing would induce them to go near it. The 'blackfellow's' idea of a future state was

primitive: he believed that after death all black people become white people, and all white people black. A woman used this argument as a reason why Miss Stone should make her a present of one of her (Miss Stone's) gowns. She assured Miss Stone that when, in the natural course of events, their colours were exchanged, she would then be delighted to present her with many dresses. This argument prevailed, and the woman took her departure with the arms of one of the diarist's gowns tied round her neck, the remaining portion of the garment being draped becomingly behind her.

There is an account of a *corroboree* to which Mr Saxon took the ladies of the party. When the dance was at its height a spear hurled from the darkness struck one of the dancers in the breast. At this point of the proceedings Mr Saxon retired with his ladies; the subsequent events of that evening are therefore not recorded. But there is an account of the treatment of the wounded man by his friends: they tried to cure him by blowing into the wound. Strange to relate, the man died!

For reasons which are not stated in the diary, Mr Saxon determined to leave Yass and go to Melbourne. The station and stock were sold, and the whole party returned to Sydney, where the schooner *Edward* was chartered to take them to Port Phillip.

The voyage was a terrible experience. They started in company with another ship, and for three days they kept together. Then bad weather came, and in the evening the ships lost sight of one another. The night passed, but the storm continued. There was no sign of their companion ship, and she was not heard of again. The storm lasted for many days, and the schooner *Edward* fought her way in the teeth of it with broken boom and damaged rudder. The ship was short-handed, and Mr Saxon worked with the crew. The horses—there were two on board—were washed out of their boxes; one, a mare, was carried overboard. For a short distance she swam after the ship, shrieking piteously, and then sank. But to the unfortunate women and children, battened down below, the chief terror was the voice of the man at the wheel, who cursed the sea and the God who raised it; then fell to hideous peals of laughter, and cursed again; then sobbed in anguish through two long days and nights, until he was led from the wheel a blaspheming lunatic.

In Sealers' Cove they fell in with two whalers, and Miss Stone records that the ship suddenly ran into calmer waters, due to the refuse oil of a couple of whales which they had recently killed. They were short of provisions, and applied to the whalers for stores, but could only obtain a small quantity of salt pork. In this plight they put into Sealers' Cove, where Mr Saxon and some of the crew went ashore with a barrel of flour to make dampers and cut timber to repair the damage to the boom and rudder.

Another vessel carrying sheep to Tasmania also sought the protection of Sealers' Cove. Mr Saxon opened negotiations with the captain for the purchase of sheep as provisions for his party. He succeeded in buying one; but the captain declined to sell any more, as, he naïvely remarked, they were not *his* sheep.

Once more they put to sea, and made for Wilson's Promontory. But the storm continued, and it was not until the fourth attempt that the *Edward* succeeded in rounding the headland and making Port Phillip Bay.

They were now almost starving, all their provisions being exhausted. The port-officer came on board, and they implored him to send them food. He took his departure with a promise to do what he could for them, and eventually sent them—half a loaf of bread!

Mr Saxon decided that the only course open to them was to get ashore, and to chance procuring provisions from Melbourne. A raft was accordingly constructed, and the passengers, together with a strange assortment of baggage, were placed on it and taken to land. Among the articles on the raft were the horse-box, a packing-case containing various necessaries for camping, and a sofa. No provisions arrived that day from Melbourne, and the family finally disposed themselves for the night—Mrs Saxon and the children in the horse-box, Mr Saxon and the captain of the ship on the sofa, and Miss Stone in the packing-case!

Thus ended an eventful voyage from Sydney to Port Phillip, which had lasted fifty days.

The overland journey to Melbourne was fraught with difficulties. To begin with, there was no road, and the bush had to be cut to make way for their bullock-wagons. Neither was there a bridge across the Yarra, but only a clumsy ferry-boat. This led to a fresh disaster: one of the wagons overturned as it left the boat, and its load was deposited in the bed of the river. Two days elapsed before the 'blackfellows' succeeded in recovering all the submerged property, despite the fact that their efforts were stimulated by frequent bribes of tobacco and sugar.

Melbourne was reached at last, and the party moved into the first brick house that was built in that city. It had no windows and no doors, and the staircase lacked balusters. But the apertures were closed with blankets; and, as usual, the whole family set about to make the best of it with that spirit which has made the British race famous as colonists. The absence of doors and windows certainly had its disadvantages, for on one occasion a man armed with a knife thrust aside one of the blankets and made his way through the empty window-frame into the room in which Miss Stone was sitting with the baby on her knee. Three times he chased her round the table. Then she made for the doorway, calling for help. The cook, a man, was fortunately at hand, and the intruder was secured. He proved to be a dipsomaniac in the throes of *delirium tremens*.

The Saxons did not remain long in Melbourne. Mr Saxon had purchased a station seventy miles

distant in the bush, and thither the whole party went. Mrs Saxon and Miss Stone were the first ladies who went from Melbourne into the bush, and their presence there aroused a great deal of interest and curiosity among the aborigines.

On the first day of their journey from Melbourne a 'blackfellow' and his two *gins* approached the party as they were sitting down to lunch by the side of a creek. Mr Saxon signed to them to be seated, and gave them food. After the meal signs were resumed once more. It was the 'blackfellow' who took the initiative on this occasion. He had a proposition to make to Mr Saxon, the nature of which he unfolded in graphic gestures. It was to the effect that Mr Saxon should exchange Miss Stone for one of his *gins*. Unfortunately the faithful *gin* also gathered the nature of the transaction that her lord and master proposed, and her righteous indignation found vent in words—a clicking, gibbering torrent of them—until Miss Stone was glad to mount her horse and ride away from her rival's wrath.

At the station they were met by the overseer who had been left in charge. He had erected a hut for the party, constructed of logs, with a shingle roof; earth formed the floors, and holes in the roof the chimneys.

The overseer had many complaints to make about the 'blackfellows.' Thrice had they robbed the huts; and he hinted that the sheep on the station were none too safe from their depredations. His suspicions were soon confirmed, for the shepherd came in a few days later with a tale of woe. A band of fifty 'blackfellows' had appeared upon the scene and demanded a sheep. Yielding to superior force, he had given them one. But the 'blackfellows,' with an insatiable desire for knowledge, had insisted on the shepherd's killing and skinning it for them, to show how it was done. Needless to relate, the aborigines of the neighbourhood acquired a taste for mutton. They came again, and took five sheep; and yet again, and drove off a whole flock of wethers.

Something had to be done.

Mr Saxon summoned his nearest neighbour, who lived twenty miles away, to his assistance; and a plan of campaign was organised. They started in pursuit of the 'blackfellows' and the lost sheep, and came up with them after seven days. They endeavoured by peaceable means to regain possession of the flock; but a spear hurled into the thin ranks of the pursuers brought the negotiations to a speedy close. It was answered by the rifle—a new experience for the 'blackfellows,' who had never before heard the report of a gun. One of them sprang to the front and brandished his shield in defiance; but a well-directed shot pierced the flimsy wooden protection and laid him out dead. More were killed before the sheep were recovered; but eventually the 'blackfellows' were driven off and the flock secured—many of them lame and disabled from the hard driving of their captors. The 'blackfellows' never stole any more sheep or molested the colonists in any way. But Miss Stone relates many amusing experiences in which they played an important part.

There is a description of a visit to their camp. On that occasion the men appeared in their full war-paint, with feathers, armlets of human flesh, and bodies painted to resemble skeletons. Mr Saxon ventured to ask one of them what human flesh tasted like, and received the expressive answer, 'Like him pig.'

There is also an instructive story of a 'blackfellow' who was imprisoned in Melbourne for some offence. On his release, he was told, by his friends of course, that his two wives had been misconducting themselves during the period of his incarceration. His remedy was almost Gilbertian in its simplicity: he lighted a fire and sat his two faithless wives down on the glowing embers.

Eventually Mr Saxon and his family returned to Melbourne, as life in the bush was too exacting for the ladies and children of the party. Like the majority of pioneers, he failed to make a fortune out of his adventures, and the whole family returned to England in 1842. But, had he only known it, his horse was turning up nuggets of gold as he cantered across the wide acres of his station. Ten years later the goldfields were discovered, and his successor reaped the rich fruits of Mr Saxon's enterprise, and his grandsons are probably millionaires to this day.

The homeward voyage, *viâ* Cape Horn, seems to have been uneventful; but they were to experience all the disadvantages of sailing-ships in the neighbourhood of the Equator. For three weeks they lay becalmed and helpless, like a chip of wood on the surface of a pond. The sun beat down upon them in pitiless splendour till the tar on the yards and shrouds melted and dripped upon the decks, and the water in the cisterns turned brackish. Think of it, in these days of water-tube boilers and condensing-engines! Think, that not seventy years ago we were less helpless in the face of the storm than in the sullen stillness of the calm!

. . . . . .

With eyes still alert and with pretty snow-white hair, Miss Caroline Stone sits daily in her cheerful room at Brighton, looking out upon the sea. She is no longer Miss Stone. She changed her name a great many years ago; but the pilfering fingers of time robbed her of the companionship of the husband who induced her to change it. She and the sea are old friends; she knows him in every mood, and likes to watch him from her window shimmering in the rays of the sun. We all like our friends best when they are complaisant.

Of the other members of the party: Mr and Mrs Saxon have long since travelled to the bourne from which they will never return to us; but their three children are still here—the two boys in Australia to this day, and the little girl—— Well, the little girl is a very close relative of the writer.

THE MAIDEN'S SHOE.

By Alfred Colbeck, Author of *A Bedawin Captive*, &c.

FOSTER, a civilian with a soldier's heart, was to the fore during the terrible two months when the Boxers, aided by the Imperial troops, tried to break through the defences and overwhelm the 'foreign devils' in the hated legations. He gave a good account of himself. I knew he would. But he was very reticent about it, and I had to glean the information from others. We met in Peking after a separation of five years. I was anticipating the pleasure all the way up from the coast, but he was unaware of my approach; and as we grasped hands he looked at me as if I had dropped from the sky.

The astute Dowager-Empress, realising that the game was up, had gathered the Court about her, taken the Emperor with her, and flown away to Si-ngan-fu. The olive-hued Japs (whom the Pekingese were fairly familiar with), the altogether unfamiliar darker Indians of our own contingent, the big Germans, the inquisitive Americans, and the smart Cossacks were posted in the streets, and kept order; others rambled about from city to city, in no way abashed at the huge walls and gateways. From the Chinese city to the Tartar; from the Tartar city to the Imperial; from the Imperial city to the Purple Forbidden, where even the Celestials themselves were not allowed to go; and from the Purple Forbidden city into the now-deserted palaces of the Son of Heaven—they went everywhere, and saw everything, and picked up many a choice morsel without so much as 'by your leave.' And, as if the Court were still there, the blue air was filled with glorious sunshine. Neither did the firmament fall nor one yellow tile turn colour in horror at the unwonted desecration.

Foster and I were among the ramblers. He was very well acquainted with these cities—formed like a Chinese puzzle, box within box—except with the Purple Forbidden city, and of that he had only caught a glimpse of the yellow roofs until we strolled through the courts and squares together. I was very fortunate in having such a guide as Foster, who knew as much as most European residents about the curious life of the place, and could tell many an interesting tale, when once you got the right side of him, about the Chinese and their rulers the Manchus, and about the Tibetans and Mongols who made their home in the Tartar city.

'They 're a bad lot, Foster,' said I as we lounged in his room discussing the sights and sounds we had met with in our stroll that day. It was late, but we were not inclined for sleep—perhaps we were a trifle excited by our visit to the secluded quarters recently vacated by the most exclusive Court in the world.

'No worse than others,' returned Foster. 'You can soon reach the human substratum under the yellow skin of a Manchu.'

'And the devilry too, Foster, if we may take recent events as a go by.'

'Yes,' said he musingly; 'but they are not monopolists in that line. I have met with a few men and women among the Pekingese who have about as little of it as you would care to find in any composition called human. The best of us are not without.'

'"The heathen Chinee is peculiar,"' said I, falling back upon a stock quotation.

'Certainly,' retorted Foster, 'that 's just it; and you 've got to understand him. He *is* peculiar. He could give the serpent points in subtlety and beat him at his own trade; but he 's not all serpent. There 's something else in him.'

'Tiger, I should say.'

'Well, yes—tiger when he 's roused. But I was referring to something milder and more congenial—something that makes it well worth the while of the missionaries to bother with him as they do, and shut themselves up in the interior of the country, even with the risk before them of an upheaval like that which has just turned everything topsy-turvy. Mind you, Dick, these missionaries are not to blame. They didn't start the volcano. But hearken!'

A bell was striking the midnight hour. There was a sibilant sound in the hum of it which compelled attention.

'What an eerie tone it has, Foster! I heard it the other night, and it made me feel quite creepy.'

'It is like a spirit crying out for something it has lost and cannot find, and yet refuses to be satisfied without it.'

'So it is. You have described it exactly, Foster.'

'*Hsie! Hsie!*' sang my companion, drawing the sound out plaintively in imitation of the bell. 'There is a story about it, Dick, if you care to sit up and hear it.'

'I should like nothing better.'

'It will show you the other side of the heathen Chinee—the side I was speaking about. You remember the bell-tower we saw to-day as we walked from the northern gate of the Imperial city toward the Tartar wall?'

I nodded my affirmative.

'The intermingled moan and sigh we heard just now, with the question in it, came from the bell which that tower contains. It is one of five cast for the Emperor Yung-lo, who reigned from 1723 to 1735. He had a *penchant* for big bells. There 's another of them—a monster, completely covered, inside and out, with Chinese ideographs, extracts from the sages of Buddhism, all clearly and cleverly cut—in the Great Bell-Temple about two miles

away. This nearer one, the bell of the midnight watch, is no pigmy. You could accommodate a tolerably large dinner-party within it. It is fourteen feet high, twenty-four feet round at the rim, with a uniform thickness of nine inches, and weighs about fifty-four tons.'

'You are very exact, Foster.'

'I give the measurements and the mass of metal to disarm beforehand any suspicion you may have as to the truth of the story, and to conquer your innate scepticism—for you are a born sceptic, Dick: there's no doubt about that.

'The casting of this particular bell was entrusted to a mandarin called Kuan-yiu. There was one perpetual drawback to this mandarin's happiness: he had an only child, a daughter.'

'But you wouldn't call that a drawback, Foster?'

'Didn't I agree with you just now that the heathen Chinee *is* peculiar, and didn't I say that you've got to understand him? Yes, the daughter, beautiful though she was—and there was no maiden in Peking so beautiful as she—was the one bitter drop in the life-draught of Kuan-yiu. A son would have made all the difference in the world to him—in the Chinese world of course: he knew no other. Yet, under the bright button of his officialism, this peculiar mandarin was human enough; for, despite the bitterness, he loved his daughter—loved her dearly—and in the privacy of his own home he lavished upon her an affection which in public he was exceedingly careful to disguise. A daughter! Oh no! he could not mention such a *thing* in public, or give the slightest hint even that any such inconvenient relation existed; but the winsome Ko-ai, notwithstanding all this, was the joy of his heart and the light of his life.

'The mandarin Kuan-yiu had an inveterate enemy in Peking—Chou-tzu, an astrologer of great repute, who was believed to be able to foretell important events and to forewarn against dangers. The astrologer was a basely cunning fellow even for a Chinaman; his deceit was like the deep sea: no sounding-line could fathom it, and no white-bellied shark shooting to the surface and turning to grab his living prey was more treacherous or more cruel than he. Kuan-yiu had thwarted the astrologer's attempt to carry out a nefarious scheme which would have involved the disgrace and ruin of several city people, thereby exposing that man's villainy and greatly restricting his ill-gotten gains. That was years before the casting of the bell. However, Chou-tzu subsequently more than recovered his affluent but evil position, and he emerged into a notoriety even more widespread and more firmly established than that he had enjoyed before the exposure; but he never forgave Kuan-yiu, but cursed him and nursed in his black heart the desire of a terrible revenge. He had not yet been able to transform his curses into deeds, nor to launch his vengeful shaft at the mandarin's head and heart; now the casting of the bell gave him his opportunity.

'The metal was glowing in the furnace, and the mould was prepared for its reception. Everything had been arranged with the utmost nicety. Kuan-yiu had personally superintended the preparations, and he was anticipating an achievement that would raise him a step higher in the esteem of his Imperial master. When the metal had cooled, and the mould was broken, and the bell was struck—oh, that a son were his, whose soul would thrill to the sound of it, and who could share with him the honour of the great occasion! But there was only Ko-ai! The night before the casting a muffled figure crept toward the clay-pit, disappeared for a few minutes, came again like a flitting shadow, and was gone. The bell was cast; but lo! when it was brought forth from the matrix there was a flaw in it, a most unaccountable crack that stretched nearly a third of its length, and utterly spoiled its tone.

'The mandarin was keenly disappointed—more disappointed with the failure of the casting than afraid at the displeasure of the Emperor Yung-lo, notwithstanding that this displeasure might probably have cost him his life. But Yung-lo was considerate enough to allow the mandarin to try again. The second time Kuan-yiu was exceedingly cautious, and bestowed very great pains upon the fashioning of the mould; night and day he set a watch about it until the molten metal was ready, and carefully examined it just before the fiery stream was run in. He was certain there would be no flaw this time. Nor was there. But he did not know that one night, while the furnace-man slept, overcome by a powerful potion prepared and administered by Chou-tzu, the cunning astrologer had tampered with the metal. The fusion was perfect, but the ingredients were spoiled; and when the second bell was struck no clear tone issued forth—only a dull, harsh sound that went to the mandarin's heart like a death-knell.

'With a gleam in his dark-brown eyes that could not be mistaken, Yung-lo intimated that a third failure would be accompanied by the removal of the mandarin's superfluous head, for what possible good could his head be to him if he could not successfully carry out his master's orders? Such an intimation would have disarranged the thinking-apparatus of many men; they would have dispensed with the useless attempt to cast the bell a third time, and elegantly bowed to the inevitable. But not so Kuan-yiu. For Ko-ai's sake, although he would never have made so humiliating a confession, he pulled his wits together, and resolved to try again. New metal was collected, another furnace was built, the mould was prepared in more suitable ground, and under his own eyes everything was prepared with the most extreme caution. A cordon was drawn around the furnace from the very commencement of the operations. The mould was guarded so closely that not a single straw was blown into it, and it was carefully dusted and examined minutely every day. The mandarin became haggard with sleepless vigilance. He appeased and propitiated

with numerous sacrificial offerings the spirits of the earth, the spirits of the air, the spirits of the fire, and the presiding genius of the metals; and he implored the help of his ancestors of many generations. He had a lurking suspicion that a much more tangible enemy was working against him, but he never once thought of Chou-tzu.

'Ko-ai was greatly distressed at the fate which awaited her father. She was fearfully anxious that the bell should come forth sound and whole. She thought of Chou-tzu, not as her father's enemy—for she knew not that Chou-tzu so bitterly hated him, or, indeed, hated him at all—but as a renowned astrologer who could show her how success might be assured and the threatened decapitation averted. Secretly she sought out this wonderful magician, and tremulously consulted him. With a dissembling smile he received her. She was too much concerned about her father to notice the craftiness of his little black eyes, and she loved her father too dearly to question the motive of the man who was ready to make use of this very love as the most effective weapon to pierce her father's heart. A devilish joy thrilled the spirit of Chou-tzu as he pounced upon the chance which Ko-ai had innocently given him to wreak a revenge so cunning in its refinement and so certain to strike the mandarin in a most vulnerable place that decapitation was as nothing to it. His evil soul gloated in anticipation over the mandarin's discomfiture. The demon had delivered the mandarin into his hands.

'When Ko-ai placed the case before him, and with tears in her eyes told him of the Emperor's threat, beseeching him to reveal to her how the dreaded decapitation might be averted, he slowly shook his head, and said that he must have time to consult the stars. To-morrow he would tell her. Back she came after a sleepless night, and Chou-tzu said yes, her father might be saved, but only in one way. She implored him to tell her. He hesitated, worked upon her fears, played with her like a great gray cat with a tiny mouse, all the while revelling in the anguish he was causing her, and yet with a fine pretence that it was very painful to him to reveal the remedy, and that her father had better be left to his fate. His deep design in all this was to secure the more certain accomplishment of his diabolical plan. He gave way at last, and told her that the only way to save her father was to mingle with the seething metal as it ran into the mould a maiden's blood.

'He watched her narrowly as he said it. Her face became suddenly calm. A deadly pallor chased every particle of colour from her cheeks. Her eyes seemed to grow larger in their solemnity as she realised to the full what the remedy meant. But she dried her tears, thanked him, paid his charges, and returned to her home.

'When the time for the casting drew near, she besought her father to allow her to witness it; and he, poor man! although he at first refused, overcome by her pleadings and ignorant of her intention, finally gave his consent. To see that mass of molten metal pour in a coruscating stream through the conduit into the mould was a spectacle she might well desire to witness. Other visitors would be there, and why not she? A raised platform was to be provided for the visitors' accommodation. He was so certain of the result, too, that he was pleased with the idea that Ko-ai should look on, and so remember the scene, when, after the bell was brought forth, it should sound his triumph. Therefore Ko-ai came, in her bravest attire, to do honour to her father and herself: a sweet little figure, swathed in gay silks, and sitting in the middle of the front row with her eager face bent forward.

'The furnace was tapped. The glittering, molten metal began to flow. It gathered volume, and elicited shouts of admiration, when, suddenly, swiftly, just as the tide was at its fullest, Ko-ai darted across the platform, flung up her arms, cried with a loud voice, "For my father!" and, to the inexpressible horror of the spectators, leaped headlong into the seething, fiery stream. It was all over in a moment. A young man, the only one with presence of mind to do it, sprang forward and tried to save her; but he only succeeded in catching her shoe as she went over to her doom. The shoe came off in his hands. The father, stricken with madness at the sight, would have leaped in after her, but strong hands held him back. It might have been better to have let him go, for his madness never left him, and he died calling upon his darling Ko-ai, who had given her life for his.'

'What about the casting?' I ventured to ask after a long silence; for the end of the story had impressed me too deeply to call forth either question or remark about the maiden herself.

'Oh, the casting was perfectly successful,' returned Foster; 'only, as you have heard, there is a singular sibilant, penetrating appeal in the tone of the bell, which the Pekingese explain by saying that the maiden is crying for her shoe. *Hsie!*' he sang again in imitation of the bell: 'that means shoe.'

'Are there other Chinese women, do you think, Foster, who are capable of a sacrifice like that?'

'Yes. I have known one myself; but that is another story.'

ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

THE moon is throned in queenly state;
The stars, like pages, round her wait;
And clouds, drawn out in solemn mass,
Before her face in silence pass.

See! Time leads out the Old, Old Year
Without a pause, without a tear;
And, midst our welcome's joyful din,
Now brings the New one, smiling, in.

The moon looks down on us in state;
The stars, her pages, round her wait;
Time passes on just as before,
And leaves his blessing as of yore.

SARAH WILSON.

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CONCERNING THE MOLE AND ITS NOW FASHIONABLE SKIN.

By Canning Williams.

'THE most pronounced vogue in furs this autumn,' says a daily contemporary, 'is not for the stately sable or the elegant ermine, but for the common mole, whose soft little skin has hitherto been thought good enough only for gamekeepers' coats and sometimes for the waistcoats of country squires.' This humble and erstwhile despised creature has, therefore, suddenly sprung into importance, an importance which, alas! may but presage its total extinction.

The mole is to be found from the north of Scotland to Japan; but, strange enough, it is not met with in Ireland. Owing to the greater part of its life being spent beneath the surface of the ground, there are comparatively few people who have seen a mole in its native haunts, and not a very large number who have seen one at all; so a few words descriptive of its appearance may not be out of place. The length of the creature (including a half-inch tail) is about six inches; its body is plump and nearly round; it has very short legs, the front ones being beautifully adapted for digging; eyes so minute as to escape casual observation; a long, pointed, and extremely strong muzzle; and a numerous and efficient set of teeth. It is covered with a close, soft, and velvety fur, usually of a black or blackish-brown colour, with a grayish tinge in certain lights. Pure white moles (albinos) have been observed, but they are exceedingly rare.

The food of the mole consists principally of earthworms; but it is not at all dainty in its tastes, the larvæ of insects, mice, lizards, frogs, snails, snakes, and even birds being sometimes included in its bill of fare. It is also even guilty of cannibalism, weaker members of its own species being killed and eaten in times of scarcity of other food. The quantity of food which a mole consumes is enormous. It is said that, for its size, the spider is the most voracious and ferocious of creatures; probably the mole would make a very good second. One that was in the possession of Professor Lenz destroyed and devoured in the course of twenty-four hours 'a large slow-worm, a large snail, two chrysalids, and a snake about thirty-two inches long. Of the reptiles he left nothing but the skin and the bones.' M. Geoffroy St Hilaire states that in the capture of birds the mole displays considerable skill in stealing upon them without being seen, and when sufficiently near his prey, makes a sudden and violent attack, seizing the bird by the belly, tearing it open, and thrusting his muzzle therein in a sort of frenzy of hunger.

In searching for its living food, the mole is probably guided chiefly by the sense of smell. On one occasion the writer captured a mole and subsequently placed it in a box of earth, the animal quickly making its way beneath the surface. An hour or two afterwards he put a worm in the box, and a few seconds later was astonished to see the earth beneath the worm raised, the snout of the mole protrude, and the creature seized and swallowed with a rapidity that was nothing less than startling.

As is well known, the mole makes elaborate subterranean passages and chambers, and is in this respect an accomplished engineer. Each mole has his own domicile or 'fortress,' which is constructed under a little natural mound of earth. The dwelling consists of two circular galleries one above the other, 'the lower one considerably larger than the upper, with which it communicates by five nearly equidistant passages running slantingly upwards.' The roof of this structure is dome-shaped, 'the earth composing it being pressed into a solid mass by the mole while excavating the internal passages and chambers.' Leading into this dwelling is a road, or highway, usually four or five inches below the surface, and generally running from one end of the animal's hunting-ground to the other. The passage is just large enough to enable him to pass easily along it, and after a time becomes smooth from the friction

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of the creature's body. In the construction of this highway, instinct teaches him to leave no trace which would lead to the detection of the whereabouts of his domicile; so, instead of forming his tunnel by removing the earth and forcing it outwards (which would be far the more expeditious way), he obtains the space required by compressing the adjacent soil. In some cases two or more highways are formed, each leading in a different direction; sometimes, too, several moles will make common use of the same tunnel; but should two of them meet and neither be inclined to 'back' into a branch-road, a combat ensues which does not terminate until one is killed.

It is through these passages that the mole proceeds to and returns from his hunting-grounds. In searching for his food he does a large amount of digging, and as the loose earth rapidly accumulates, he is obliged to get rid of it. This he does by making his way to the surface from time to time, breaking through, and pushing out with his powerful snout the obstructing material. Thus are produced the mole-hills or mole-casts which are so common a sight in the country.

In the summer-time, when food is plentiful, the mole often makes in fields and heaths long trench-like runs immediately above the surface of the ground, but hidden by the grass or other growth. These temporary channels are probably very quickly made, rendering comparatively light his work in the warmer months of the year; but in the winter, when the frost drives the worms downwards, his task in providing himself with the large amount of food necessary for his comfortable existence becomes extremely laborious.

Moles naturally prefer light soils for their burrowing operations; and through these, by means of their strong, shovel-like forefeet, they make their way with surprising rapidity. Indeed, a close student of these creatures has likened their progress through such earth to *swimming*.

Being a great carnivorous eater, the mole is also a great drinker, and therefore he always takes care to construct a tunnel to a water-supply. Where there is no ditch, pond, or stream available, it is said, on the authority of several mole-catchers, that he sinks a perpendicular shaft into the earth, at the bottom of which water is always found. Thus he adds well-sinking to his other engineering accomplishments.

We have referred to the greediness and ferocity of the mole; it is a pleasure to turn to his more worthy side: that of his devotion to his wife and family. It is true that, owing to the males greatly outnumbering the females, many sanguinary battles are fought between the former at that season of the year when their fancy 'lightly turns to thoughts of love;' but having overcome the rivalry of his competitors, and persuaded, not without difficulty, the coy lady of his choice to share his habitation with him, he acts in a most exemplary manner, showing a warm affection for his wife, and great devotion to his family when it arrives. It usually consists of four or five, but may vary from three to seven. The young ones are produced once a year, most commonly in April, being cradled in a nest 'lined with grass, fine roots, dried leaves, and similar materials, collected in a sort of chamber which is formed by the enlargement of the point of junction of three or four of the ordinary passages, always separate from the fortress, and often at a considerable distance from it.'

We have thus seen that the mole is one of the most interesting of mammals; but the farmer hates him with a bitter, implacable hatred. Whether this animosity is deserved or not is a moot question among scientists. Some say that the good he does in the way of ridding the land of noxious creatures counterbalances the harm he perpetrates; but the practical agriculturist, who is nothing if not opinionated, pooh-poohs this theory, and will have none of it, for does he not see with his own eyes the damage the 'vermin' do to his fields and pastures, and is that not enough for him? What do scholars and folks who live in the towns know of such things? Let them mind their own business! So, when he is troubled with the burrowers, he bargains with a professional mole-catcher to reduce their numbers. Several methods of capture are employed, but they are nearly all in the nature of a metal trap, which is inserted in the ascertained runs of the animals. The traps are placed in position when the moles are on their foraging expeditions, which is said to be principally in the morning and evening, the middle of the day being aristocratically passed in sleep. On returning to their dwellings the moles unsuspectingly enter the traps, and so compass their own destruction.

In days gone by wooden traps were used, and in the successful placing of these considerable skill was required. Indeed, a man experienced in this work was considered a personage of no small importance. 'He was not infrequently,' says Richard Jefferies in *The Gamekeeper at Home*, 'a man who had once occupied a subordinate place under a keeper, and, when grown too feeble for harder labour, supported himself in this manner; contracting with the farmers to clear their fields by the season.'

The number of moles that are annually trapped and massacred is enormous, and it is no uncommon sight in the country to see rows of dead moles hanging from a string stretched between two sticks placed in the ground, or fastened to the branches of trees. The writer was once walking through an avenue of trees some miles from Scarborough, when he noticed a lot of small black objects suspended, festoon-fashion, between the trees, and on examining them, discovered that they were moles. The strings extended on both sides of the road for fully a quarter of a mile, so that, at a moderate computation, there must have been five or six thousand of the late busy burrowers thus conspicuously exposed.

During the prevalence of the present fashion such a sight as this will probably not be seen, for the raw (undressed) skins—which measure about three inches by two and a half inches—now fetch remunerative prices. A few weeks ago a London firm of furriers offered a farmer 'from eighteen shillings to twenty-five shillings a hundred for them (twopence to threepence each skin, according to quality, colour, and size), to be forwarded in quantities of not less than one hundred or two hundred.' For a large cover-all motor-coat as many as seven hundred skins are necessary. 'Moles by the million are therefore required,' to again quote from the newspaper, 'by all the great furriers, not only in London, but in the capitals of Europe.' If the moles but knew of this, surely the poor things would quake in their fortresses!

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER IV.—BY THE TIDELESS SEA.

WHEN a man secures a bargain, be it in his commerce or in his hobbies, he always endeavours to secure a second opinion. As I hurried across to hug the shadow of the Palazzo Pandolfini I glanced at my watch, and found that I had still an hour and a half before the *treno lumaca*, or snail-train, as the Florentines, with sarcastic humour, term it, would start down the Arno valley for Leghorn. Therefore I decided to carry my prize to Signor Leo Olschki, who, as you know, is one of the most renowned dealers in ancient manuscripts in the world, and whose shop is situated on the Lung Arno Acciajoli, close to the Ponte Vecchio. Many treasures of our British Museum have passed through his hands, and among bibliophiles his name is as a household word.

Fortunately I found him in: a short, fair-bearded, and exceedingly courteous man, who himself is a lover of books although a dealer in them. Behind those glass cases in his shop were some magnificent illuminated manuscripts waiting to be bought by some millionaire collector or national museum, and all around from floor to ceiling were shelves full of the rarest books extant, some of the incunabulæ being the only known copies existing.

I had made many purchases of him; therefore he took me into the room at the rear of the shop, and I displayed my bargain before his expert eyes.

In a moment he pronounced it a genuine Arnoldus, a manuscript of exceeding rarity, and unique on account of several technical reasons with which it is useless to trouble those who read this curious record.

'Well, now, Signor Olschki, what would you consider approximately its worth?'

The great bibliophile stroked his beard slowly, at the same time turning over the evenly-written parchment folios.

'I suppose,' he answered, after a little hesitation, 'that you don't wish to sell it?'

'No. I tell you frankly that I've brought it here to show you and ask your opinion as to its genuineness.'

'Genuine it is no doubt—a magnificent codex. If I had it here to sell I would not part with it under twenty-five thousand francs—a thousand pounds.'

'A thousand pounds!' I echoed, for the price was far above what I had believed it to be worth.

'Rosenthal had one in his catalogue two years ago priced at sixteen thousand francs. I saw it when I was in Munich, and it was not nearly so good or well preserved as yours. Besides—this writing at the end: have you any idea what it is about?'

'Some family record,' I answered. 'The usual rambling statements regarding personal possessions, I expect.'

'Of course,' he answered. 'In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries they habitually disfigured their books in this way. It was a great pity.'

Having obtained the information I desired, I repacked my treasured tome while he brought out several precious volumes for my inspection, including a magnificent French *Psalteriolum seu preces piæ cum calendario*, with miniatures of the thirteenth century, which he had catalogued at four hundred and fifty pounds; and an Italian *Psalterium ad usum ord. S. Benedicti*, of two hundred leaves, written at Padua in 1428, that he had just sold to the National Museum at Berlin for fifteen thousand marks. In addition to being an expert and dealer, he was a true lover of books and manuscripts; and, knowing that my pocket would not allow me to indulge in such treasures, he would often exhibit to me his best volumes and gossip about them as every bibliophile will gossip, handling them tenderly the while.

I caught my train and returned to the white villa facing the sea, outside Leghorn, which was my bachelor home, entirely satisfied with my visit to the Tuscan capital.

Three miles beyond the noisy seaport, close down where the clear waters of the Mediterranean lazily lapped the shingly beach at the little watering-place of Antigniano, stood the square, sun-blanched house, with its wide balcony, and its green sun-shutters now open to the soft breeze that came across the water with the brilliant sundown. The faithful Nello, my old Tuscan man-servant, who was cook, housekeeper, and valet all in one, had been watching for my arrival; and as I rang at the big iron gate before my garden the old fellow came hurrying to admit me, with his pleasant bow and words of welcome on his lips:

'*Ben tornato, signore; ben tornato.*'

I thanked him, carried my precious parcel to the study upstairs, and then descending again, ate hurriedly the dinner he placed before me, anxious to examine my purchase.

My old servitor moved noiselessly in and out as I ate, fidgeting as though he wished to speak with me. But I was looking through my letters, and took but little notice of him. Italian servants are always a nuisance, being too loquacious and too ready to offer opinions or advice. I had suffered for years from a succession of unsatisfactory men, until my friend Fra Antonio of the Capuchin Monastery brought old Nello to me. He had little in exterior appearance to recommend him, for his countenance was that of a Mephistopheles, and his attire neglected and shabby. He was an old soldier who had served Italy well in the days of Garibaldi, and had for years been engaged as steward on board one of the Prince line of steamers between Naples and New York.

Fra Antonio knew him well; therefore I took him on trial, and very quickly discovered that even though he had a wife and family living high up in one of the odorous back-streets of Leghorn, to whom some of my provisions secretly found their way, I had discovered a treasure of a servant.

Although old in years, he was not decrepit. His physical strength often amazed me, and after three years of service his devotion to me was often remarked by my friends. His only vice was smoking; and as he consumed the very rankest of tobacco, which clung about the house for days afterwards, I had set apart an arbour in the garden beneath the vines where he might poison the air whenever he wished.

Having dined, I ascended the wide marble staircase to my study, a big, high room, with frescoed ceiling, that looked out across the open sea. Houses are large and cheap in Italy—mine was far too large for a lonely man like myself. There were half-a-dozen rooms into which I never entered, and I only opened my drawing-room when I had visitors, for I have a man's dislike for silk-covered furniture, mirrors, and standard lamps.

The long windows of my study were open, and the place was at that moment filled with the crimson afterglow. I stood upon the balcony and breathed the pure air from the sea, delightfully refreshing after the stifling heat of the day. Across, in the far distance, the islands of Corsica, Capraia, and Gorgona loomed purple against the blood-red sunset, while up from the beach the evening stillness was broken by a young fisherman playing his mandoline and singing in a fine musical voice the old love-song with that chorus which every one in Italy knows so well:

Amarti soltanto
Non basta al mio cor:
Io voglio parlarti,
Parlarti d'amor!

Love! Ah! those words he sang brought back to me, an exile, all the bitterness of the past—all the bitterness of my own love. A lump arose in my throat when I recollected the might-have-been; but I crushed it down just as I had done a hundred times before, and re-entered the room, closing the windows to shut out the words of the song, and, sighing, seated myself at my writing-table to occupy myself with the book I had bought from the fat prior of San Sisto.

Old Nello—whose correct name was Lionello, although, as usual in Tuscany, every one called him Nello ever since his birth sixty years ago—brought in my coffee and liqueur, setting it down at my elbow, and afterwards crossed to reopen the window.

'I closed it, Nello,' I snapped. 'Don't open it. There's too much confounded music outside.'

'*Bene*, signore,' he answered. 'I forgot to say that the Signor Console called at four o'clock.'

'And what did the Consul want?' I inquired.

'He wishes to see you to-morrow to luncheon,' was the old fellow's response. 'And, oh! I forgot—another man called to see the signore only a quarter of an hour before his return—the *gobbo* Graniani.'

'Graniani!' I echoed. 'And what did he want, pray?'

'To sell you some more old rubbish, I suppose,' was Nello's blunt reply, for he always looked upon my purchase of antiques as a terrible waste of good money. 'He said he would return later.'

I was very surprised at this. He had probably returned to Leghorn by an earlier train from Florence; but why he wished to see me after secretly spying upon my movements I was at a loss to know. One must, however, be clever to comprehend the ingenuity of the Italian, with all his diplomatic smiles and ingenious subtleties.

'If he comes I will see him,' I responded; adding, 'Do you know, Nello, I don't like that man.'

'Ah, signore!' answered the old fellow, 'you should never trust a hunchback.'

'But when I asked you about him you knew nothing to his detriment. I look to you to make inquiries about such people.'

'At the time I was in ignorance, signore,' he said apologetically; 'but I have learnt several things since.'

'Things that are not very creditable, eh?' I asked, regarding his weird, almost grotesque figure in ill-fitting black coat and crumpled shirt-front.

He hesitated as though unwilling to tell me the whole truth. He was always reserved regarding any person of bad character. A Tuscan never cares to denounce his compatriots to a foreigner.

'If I were you, signore,' he said, 'I'd have nothing to do with any *gobbo*.'

'But I've bought several good manuscripts from him,' I argued.

'The signore must please himself,' he remarked. 'I have warned him.'

I really did not desire any warning, for the mysterious appearance of the old hunchback's face at the church window was sufficient to cause me grave suspicion. But Nello for three years past had exercised a kind of paternal care over me, seeming to regard me with wonder that I could scribble piles upon piles of paper and get paid for it. It was really wonderful how I wrote romances, he often declared. He read two of them translated into Italian and published serially in the *Tribuna*, and kept the copies neatly tied in bundles, which he proudly showed to his friends as the work of his *padrone*.

'Well, had I better see the *gobbo?*' I asked.

'No, signore, I would not,' was his prompt advice. 'He has no business to come here. His place is in the piazza, and it is impudence to call upon a gentleman.'

'Then tell him I 'm engaged. I 'll want nothing more to-night. Don't disturb me.'

'*Benissimo, signore; buona notte.*' And old Nello went softly out well satisfied, leaving me to my coffee and my old manuscript.

I had not asked Nello to give his reason because I knew that he would refuse to be drawn. He was a clever old fellow, and would, in argument, get the better of me.

So, the music having ceased, I reopened the window, and in the fading light settled myself to a pleasant hour with my latest acquisition.

Further acquaintance with the splendid volume was not disappointing. It was certainly a treasure; and having glanced casually at the coloured miniatures and gilt initials, I turned to the first page of the record written upon the blank pages at the end.

The cursive writing with its long flourishes was extremely difficult to decipher, and the ink much inferior to that used by the old monk Arnoldus, for it was faded and brown, having evidently been penned by one who had no acquaintance with the Gothic or book-hand. The writing was undoubtedly that of the early sixteenth century.

The first line I was able to make out read as follows:

'*Qui scripsit scripta manus eius sit benedicta,*' while, as far as I could decipher it, the record ended in the following manner:

Qui me scribebat Godefridus nomen habebat
Godefridus Lupellus
de Croylandia
me scripsit anno
domini 1542 in no
no die men
sis Janua
rij.

This final page was so ill-written and half-obliterated by a great yellow damp-stain that I had not before noticed it. But by it my curiosity became further aroused, for, translated into modern English, it showed that the addition had been made to the book by one Godfrey Lupellus, or Lovel, of Crowland, in Lincolnshire, probably one of the monks of that once celebrated Benedictine abbey which is now but a magnificent pile of ruins familiar to many by photographs.

The discovery that it had been penned by a person living in England caused me to set to work at once to learn what was written there, so I took a sheet of plain paper, and, assisted by that valuable little work of reference the *Dictionary of Abbreviations*, commenced to slowly disentangle the calligraphical riddle before me.

The task was extremely difficult; and, whether from the heat of the evening or owing to the fatigue I had undergone, I felt a curious, indescribable sensation slowly creeping over me.

It commenced with small shooting pains that paralysed the muscles of my jaws, gradually increasing in intensity. At first I believed that it was merely a touch of neuralgia, until all in a moment a quick, sharp pain shot down my spine, paralysing me so completely that I could neither move nor utter a sound.

My head swam. My jaws were fixed. I tried to rise, but could not; I tried to cry out for my faithful Nello, but my tongue refused to utter a sound.

A curious drowsiness seized me, and I struggled against it vainly. Never before had I experienced such a feeling. Then a second pain ran down my back far more acute and excruciating than the first, and I believe I must have fainted.

At any rate all became an utter blank. The fat priest's solemn warning was, it seemed, no idle one.

Ah! would that I had heeded it.

ON HIGHGATE HILL

By Oliver Grey.

IN this age of rapid and direct communication, with an ever-growing population flooding the fair hills and fields which girdled the London of an earlier day, it is difficult to identify the modern suburb with the old remoteness of village and bird-haunted woodland. Here and there the fast-decaying picturesque house-front, the chance survival of a broken fountain, a pile of moss-grown masonry, or the storied epitaphs of ancient churches assist imagination. But for the most part it is only the traditions of literature, or perhaps the names affixed to streets and retained by new-built villas, which preserve the dead memorials of the men and women who lived and made history in these sadly transformed

regions. The northern heights of London have hitherto suffered less ruthlessly from the invading torrent, while the dedication of open spaces to the public and the preservation of some remnant of forest-land here at least assist us to conjure up the sights and scenes which were familiar to our predecessors. As we stand on Highgate Hill and look north, the prospect is not much altered. It is only to the south that all is changed, and the intervening relief of meadowland, greenwood, and village spires engulfed for ever in the teeming ways of London.

When the world was young and the ballads of England in the making, we may picture the 'Bailiff's Daughter' and the squire's love-sick son upon the causeway which once linked these slopes with Islington, or hear with weary Dick Whittington, beside his milestone, the encouraging distant chimes of Bow. Alas! the apprentice and his cat, the pretty daughter of Fitzwarren, and all the rest of that cheerful story will not bear the searching light of latter-day criticism. Yet for every person who is conscious of its proud historic fame, its literary celebrities, its crowd of famous men and women, it is safe to say a hundred associate Highgate with the lad who from all time has been regarded as the commercial ideal of British youth, and was assuredly thrice Lord Mayor of London. That he retained a great affection for the place seems incontestable, for the Highgate Almshouses of to-day owe their foundation to the College of the Holy Spirit, which was another and more magnificent outcome of his benevolence.

At this epoch Highgate, with its immemorial toll, was already a chief gateway to the City from the north. Thither came the pilgrims and other pious folk on their way to Our Lady's shrine at Muswell Hill or to the praying-cross of Crouch End; while Ascension-day would bring all sorts and conditions to hear the priest beneath the branches of Gospel Oak. Hardly less an object of veneration would be the Hermitage hard by, tended by the brotherhood whose duty it was to collect the bounty of travellers for the neighbouring leper-hospital. All day an endless procession of coaches, horsemen, herds, and sumpter-mules passed up the weary steep by roads knee-deep in mud; and at nightfall, from Caen and Bishop's Woods, the foot-pads went abroad, and the daring and lawless robbers who were the terror of the king's highway on Finchley Common. Through many centuries these coverts, rich also in acorn-mast and grazing for cattle and for deer, gave shelter to the outlaw and the insurgent. Hither rode Cade's rough bands of Kentish men; here ten years later, in the long struggle of the Roses, Thomas Thorpe, a Baron of Exchequer, met his doom for loyalty to the House of York. Two centuries go by, and the leafless trees are hung with the bridles and accoutrements of the fantastic Fifth Monarchy Men, with whom Sir John Reresby, 'having a mind to see a little action,' engages in a skirmish, not altogether to the advantage of the King's Guards. But before the willows are in flower, Mr Pepys, on his way from Whitehall, meets their leaders, Venner and Pritchard, drawn to Tyburn, there to be hanged with all the hideous ceremony which their death-sentence entailed. A hundred years later, and once more the glades are filled with rebel Protestants. The Gordon rioters, fresh from burning Lord Mansfield's house in Bloomsbury, have come to complete their vengeance upon his splendid palace in Caen Wood. How the landlord of 'The Spaniards' entertained them with much strong ale, and the Chief-Justice's servants succeeded in making the mob drunk by the roadside while messengers were despatched to bring up the soldiers, need not be told. Caen Wood was saved, and with it the many memorials of a distinguished career collected from the time when, as a penniless Scots adventurer, the fourteen-year-old Murray rode over the Border to Westminster, afterwards to be the scene of his brilliant forensic triumphs.

Meanwhile yet another military pageant had passed over the famous hill—passed and returned, bringing with it the prisoners of '45, and among them unwieldy Simon Lovat, whose jests upon the scaffold shocked a proverbially callous crowd. Lovat suffered on Tower Hill for his treason; but the majority of the captives brought through Highgate toll in his time were those 'gentlemen of the road' whose reputation has lost nothing by the gallantry of a few of their number. We all appreciate Duval dancing the *coranto* upon the moonlit heath. The memory of him survives in Duval's Lane; but he probably deserves neither more nor less admiration than his murderous companions, and the innkeepers of Highgate, who were many and prosperous down to the coming of the railways, were perhaps the only people who honestly deplored the final destruction of those North Road pests. Half a century ago, beneath a spreading Highgate oak, were exhumed the bridle-irons, spurs, and weapons of some long-departed 'knight of the road,' left here never to be reclaimed by their owner. For timid folk the journey even from London was not to be undertaken without fear and trembling and an escort. Yet at a very early period Highgate had become the haunt of statesmen and lawyers, poets and literary men, and with them of a race of builders and architects who, deserting traditional sites in the valleys and on the plains, sought for their houses the slopes and breezy uplands where mists are rare, and a fresh, wholesome air breeds health and intellectual activity.

The choice of Highgate in earlier times for a 'lazar' house was due more perhaps to its convenient isolation on the fringe of the City, and the proximity of the religious houses on the London road, than to its salubrious position. Later, in the spacious time of Queen Elizabeth, the attention of the great and wealthy lords and merchants was drawn irresistibly to where 'upon this hill is most

pleasant dwelling, yet not so pleasant as healthful for delicate people.' Prominent among them were Sir Roger Chomeley, the founder of the famous grammar-school for the poor boys of the parish; and Grindall, Bishop of London, who supplemented that foundation with the adjoining chapel, wherein so many of the Highgate worthies have found a resting-place. A few years earlier Elizabeth, as she passed in triumph from Hatfield to the throne, met the Bishops, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, and the thousands of her happy people at the neighbouring residence of the Earl of Norfolk; and many a time did she and her successor, James I., put up there on the way to Theobalds and the pleasant Hertfordshire hunting-boxes of royalty.

In Highgate, too, was confined for a time the luckless Arabella Stuart, whose escape on her removal to Barnet is as romantic a tragedy as 'the age of velvet and bright steel' can show. 'Drawing on a pair of great French-fashioned hose over her petticotes, putting on a man's doublet, a manlyke perruque, with long locks over her hair, a black hat, black cloake, russet boots with red tops, and a rapier by her side,' this pretty Rosalind was brought to Woolwich, where Seymour, himself escaping from the Tower, missed the vessel that bore her to Calais. So the lady was captured and brought home to die in the grim prison where her husband had been shut up; while he, having boarded the wrong ship at the Nore, was carried in safety to Newcastle.

What time this tragedy was in the making, Arundel House received the first of the great names with which Highgate is associated in literature. Bacon, indeed, no doubt assisted his friend the Earl to lay out the grounds there, and must have had them in his mind when he wrote that charming essay which commences: 'God Almighty first planted a garden. And indeed it is the purest of pleasures. It is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man, without which building and palaces are but gross handyworks.' Thither, also—disgraced and stripped of office—came the great Chancellor-philosopher to die in the late and bitter spring of 1626, having taken a fatal chill over a trivial experiment in the snow upon the body of a dead chicken!

The monuments in the chapel of Arundel House recall others who followed in his footsteps. Sir Harry Blount, scholar, king's-man, and Parliamentarian, traveller in Turkey, and author of an epistle in praise of coffee and tobacco, is not here. But his family is represented by his sons: the learned Thomas Pope Blount, who in these green woods imbibed an early passion for nature; and Charles, who at nineteen years of age was defending Dryden in print and preaching the liberty of the press!

At the time of the Civil War Highgate was a favourite country of the Parliamentary notables. Harrington (commander of the City forces, member of the State Council, and afterwards the president), who occupied Caen Wood, Ireton (Cromwell's son-in-law), and Harrison the regicide all were neighbours of Sir Harry Vane at Hampstead. At the same time the charm of Highgate pleasaunces found expression in the verse of Andrew Marvell:

> I have a garden of my own,
> But so with roses overgrown,
> And lilies, that you would it guess
> To be a little wilderness.

But the estates of the old Cromwellian families implicated in the tragedy of the rebellion were either sequestrated or transferred. Sir James Harrington had barely arranged a sale before he was forced to flee the country, and Caen Wood House became the property of John Bill, the father of English journalism, inventor and proprietor of the *Gazette*, which had its birth upon the site in Printing-house Square now occupied by the *Times* offices.

With the Restoration came also a new element to Highgate, and one which the honest, austere poet and noble eulogist of the martyred king may well have resented. Lauderdale House (now used as a refreshment-room for Waterlow Park) stood next door to Marvell's humble cottage, and it was there, to his favourite's house, that the second Charles would bring Mistress Nell Gwynn to flaunt before the stout Puritan whom neither bribes nor frequent threats of violence from the Highgate bravoes could shake in his allegiance to the dead and gone republic. The cruelty of the Parliamentarians, however, if less refined, had been no less pronounced. Carter the incumbent had been ejected from his house and living with such violence and despatch that his wife actually gave birth to a child in the porch of Highgate chapel. Hither, too, about now, and in the cool of the summer evening, would ride sly Mr Pepys, 'not a little proud, God knows, to be seen upon so pretty a beast,' or complacent with my Lord Brouncker in his coach-and-six.

But the associations of Highgate during the Commonwealth are not all of King and Commonwealth. The Marquis of Dorchester ('Wise William') lived here, and in his garden cultivated the herbs and simples which, as a Fellow of the College of Physicians, were his chief delight; and as the times became more settled, a successful City merchant decided upon the splendid edifice which the Marquis had built upon the site of Chomeley's humbler dwelling for what was then a novelty in the way of charity foundations.

William Blake, woollen draper of Maiden Lane, was born at least two centuries before his time. To-day he would be hailed as a fit candidate for Polytechnic presidency. In the reign of the second Charles his philanthropy appeared no less absurd to his generation than the *Silver Drops on Serious Things* which he wrote to further it. Dorchester House, indeed, under happier circumstances, might have become the first of the continuation schools, for here Blake proposed to educate boys in all the

useful vocations of life, even to the art of painting, and to institute a 'ladies' school' where girls might be taught 'to read, write, sew, starch, raise pastry, and dress that they might be fit for any good service.' His appeal to the aristocracy, by whom he was treated as a madman, was a failure; the scheme fell through, and it is sad to think that so enlightened a pioneer died in poverty, having expended the bulk of his fortune to no purpose. The *Silver Drops*, however, is not the only curious literary effort inspired by Highgate at this period, for it is not improbable that Sir Hugh Platt was resident here when writing *The Garden of Eden and the Jewell-House of Art and Nature.*

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Law and Literature continued to be closely associated with the place. Sir Francis Pemberton, who, like Bacon, fell upon evil days at the end of a distinguished career upon the Bench, deserves to be remembered as one of the first judges who discouraged 'Buzfuz' methods of cross-examination and the practice of throwing dust in the eyes of simple jurymen. Nicholas Rowe, the almost forgotten laureate of George I., can hardly be ranked among the bright particular stars of the period. But when the Duke of Argyll was installed in Caen Wood House, and before that historic property had passed to his nephew Lord Bute, perhaps the most unpopular Premier of that or any other age, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu must have been a frequent visitor. The English Sévigné, the one woman of her time whose letters rank as classics, not more by the brilliancy of their style than for the outspoken, trenchant criticism of her contemporaries, reverts to her Highgate days with peculiar affection. 'I well remember Caen House,' she writes late in life to her daughter, Lady Bute, 'and cannot wish you a more agreeable place.' For there it was that she had met her friend and correspondent Pope, whose favourite walk had been beneath Lord Bute's lime-trees, and of whom it is interesting to note that he taught elocution to silver-tongued Murray, in his turn, as Lord Mansfield, to possess and adorn the same estate.

Meanwhile the adjacent woods were not left wholly to the herdsman, the gipsy, and the outlaw. Already the fathers of English natural history were placidly investigating the animal and plant life which had, before them, excited the curiosity and admiration of men like John Evelyn and Lord Dorchester. Ray and Pettiver, the pioneers of entomology and other branches of research, found here a happy hunting-ground for their studies, regardless of the ridicule of the unlearned satirists by whom the civilising power of such knowledge was as little understood as the motives of the men who sought it. Shenstone, whose claim to be remembered as a poet at all above the low-water mark of Hanoverian laureates is based on the single remarkable quatrain of an otherwise ridiculous set of verses, launched out into a savage attack upon poor Benjamin Wilkes when he was soliciting subscriptions for an illustrated work on insects. The great Doctor Johnson himself, who on his way to Topham Beauclerk's at Muswell Hill may have encountered the old 'Aurelians' on their pleasant excursions, was no less scornful of the brotherhood. The encroachments of the builder and, more destructive still, the poison of London smoke have spoilt much of the charm and banished to a great extent the wild creatures of these sylvan retreats. But in retrospect the naturalist of to-day will ever regard them with sympathetic eyes as the haunt of those gentle scientists who found in every leaf and living thing a revelation of the divine order of the universe (Ray's *The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of Creation*).

To the painters and poets of the purely British school the rustic humours of the Highgate roads and the luminous beauty of its upland prospects appealed with singular force. Thither, in the closing years of the eighteenth century, George Morland brought his easel, the boon companion of the town-bound farmers who frequented the Bull Inn, and cheerful comrade of the coach-drivers and guards whose good-nature, according to the artist's canvases, was as great as their capacity for eating and drinking. And as Morland studied human nature at the Highgate ale-house, Crabbe—too poor to buy refreshment on his rambles in search of flowers—would pass, *Tibullus* in hand, to sleep the summer night among the scented hay-fields, and shape the country life of England into verse, prim, orderly, and wholesome as a cottage garden.

With the dawn of the nineteenth century, Highgate was to become the resort of many a singer whose name stands for the second renaissance of English literature. The Robertses, the Gillmans, the Gillieses, and, later, the Howitts, all drew to their houses the leading spirits of their time, delighting in the society of literary men and women, but above all, as it seems, in that of the poets. In 1817 Thomas Moore christened a cottage on the hill 'Lalla Rookh'—'the only one,' as he afterwards wrote of his various residences, 'I do not again see with pleasure;' for there he lost his daughter. At Fitzroy House forgathered Rogers and Keats, the fairy-minded stripling who, from the obscurity of a chemist's shop in the neighbourhood, had astonished the world with *Endymion* and the immortal odes 'To the Nightingale' and 'To a Grecian Urn.' The nightingales still sing in Highgate Woods, and we may well believe that it was there,

> In some melodious plot
> Of beechen green and shadows numberless,

that was conceived perhaps the most wonderful creation of his rainbow-hued imagination. But the name with which the Highgate of this period is even more closely associated is that of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who, at the house of his friends the Gillmans, 'throughout a long-drawn summer day would talk to you in low, equable, but clear and musical tones concerning things human and

divine.' Many were the distinguished men who came to reason with and to hear the poet-philosopher: Charles Lamb (his tenderest friend and panegyrist), Edward Irving, F. D. Maurice, Arthur Hallam, Joseph Henry Green, Julius Hare; and of the critics: Hazlitt, De Quincey, and Leigh Hunt; with ever and again the head and father of the poets of nature, William Wordsworth. From one of them we have a pretty picture of Coleridge wandering in his 'Nightingale Valley' (now Fitzroy Park), or moving slowly down the road which is still called Poet's Lane in his honour, attended by a wandering escort of merry little children. Here, too, by way of contrast, reviving the meaner memories of long-departed royalty, would come the Prince Regent with his boon companions to gamble in the ivied seclusion of a house which afterwards concealed the forger Fauntleroy. That such vagaries should escape the caustic wit of those who knew of and deplored them was improbable. Leigh Hunt, himself embodied in Charles Dickens's 'Harold Skimpole,' was just now resident in Highgate, and it was possibly with some such escapade in his mind that he wrote of his future monarch as 'a fat Adonis of fifty,' and was awarded two years' imprisonment in the Fleet Prison for his pains. Later, again, when William and Mary Howitt were installed at the Hermitage, came Dante Gabriel Rossetti, with Monckton Milnes and the members of that literary coterie which waxed and waned in the early Victorian period, when, with the linking up of London to her suburbs, Highgate began to realise that it was no longer an isolated village, but part and parcel of the great city in whose history and whose development it has played so considerable a part.

In reviewing the historical and intellectual traditions of a locality, it is always interesting to determine how far its surroundings and associations have affected the minds and actions of those who have dwelt there. 'The lives of streets are as the lives of men,' writes Thackeray. How much more is this true when it is the country that weaves itself into the thought and action of successive generations! For centuries and side by side, woodland and garden have made delectable the northern slopes of London. Gradually the enclosures and gardens encroached upon the old primeval forest, until but little remained of the dark coverts that stretched away to the Chilterns in leafy silence, unbroken save by the howl of the wolf, the horn of the hunter, or the leper's warning-bell. Now it is the turn of the gardens and open spaces, the green lawns and the pleasant retreats, whose influence is surely to be marked in the lives, the writings, and the characters of the men and women who move across them as we look back over the days that are no more. Mr J. H. Lloyd, a diligent collector of unconsidered literary trifles, and himself an old inhabitant, has brought together in his *History of Highgate* a mass of details of historical and topographical interest. From the material thus collected, and from the brief review taken in this article of events and personalities, it may fairly be argued that the locality has played no small part in shaping the character, the thoughts, and the doings of those who have dwelt within it.

THE MYSTERY OF THE DALOON RIVER.

PART III.

WHAT followed was the work of an instant. Seeing our attention momentarily distracted, the black pilot flung himself overboard with incredible rapidity, and dived. The distance to the bank was not great. He came to the surface once, and Carr's revolver rang out, and—missed. A minute later he was hauling himself out of the water on to the land.

Hastily I shoved a cartridge into my rifle, rammed home the bolt, and took a careful aim. But as I pulled the trigger Violet deliberately knocked the barrel up, and the bullet skimmed away gracefully into the air and cut the topmost bough of a tree into chips. I swore.

'I won't have the man murdered before my eyes!' cried the girl, with a little catch in her voice; and before I could reload, the pilot had disappeared in the bush.

At that moment I cordially agreed with Carr that we ought to have left Violet behind. I made several remarks to this effect at once with pointed emphasis. In fact, I should probably have enlarged on the subject at considerable length had not a second and greater disaster occurred almost immediately. Ahead was a sharp bend in the river, and for some ever-unexplained reason we saw fit to put on full speed to get round it. I remember Carr shouting with sudden sharp alarm to starboard the helm. I remember Violet putting it hard over; and I shall never forget the mighty heave of the little launch as she crashed and tore with grinding havoc on to the shoal beneath us. She heeled over on to her side, and the sullen water surged through her riven bottom.

'Now we 'ave done it proper!' said Mr Wilton, hastily opening all the steam-valves. The escaping steam made noise enough to rouse the whole river.

Carr was over the side up to his knees in water. 'It is quite shallow,' he cried. 'Don't be scared, Vi. I believe we can wade ashore.'

This proved correct. Half-an-hour later the four of us, heated and bedraggled, were looking ruefully

at our poor abandoned launch. She would never sail the seas again. And talking of tight places, we were fairly in one now.

The noise of the distant shooting had died away. An ominous silence reigned over sullen stream and lowering forest. The morning sunlight amid the tangle of the trees showed a rough, narrow track winding along the bank up-river. What was to be done?

'I will reconnoitre up towards the factory,' said Carr after a little deliberation. 'You have rifles. You must wait here in the bush till I return.'

'Well, what then?' asked Violet gravely.

'What then?' repeated he. 'Then, perhaps, I shall be able to pick up a boat.'

The girl gave a queer little laugh. 'Better stick together!' she said slowly.

Something in her tone made Carr turn suddenly. She was looking thoughtfully over the river, her face half-hidden under the pushed-forward rim of her cap.

'We are in real danger now?' she asked.

'Yes,' was the swift answer.

'Then we will not separate,' said my sister simply.

Heedless of our presence, Carr Elliston put his arm round her and kissed her. Then, without another word, he turned to lead the way towards the factory, with squared shoulders and stern-set eyes that boded ill for the man who first faced his hostile rifle. I felt that the cartridges were loose in my pocket as I followed after Violet. Wilton brought up the rear.

With hardly any warning we came to the edge of a clearing in the forest. A low tin shed stood on the river-bank, and a wooden wharf was built out into the stream. The noise of savage yells and random shooting had broken out again not far away.

Crouching down in the bush, Carr was staring at the wharf as if he could not believe his own eyesight. There was a hasty muffled exclamation from Wilton. Excitedly he pointed out to his officer an object moored alongside the wharf. Carr turned to me, his face ablaze with wonder.

'It is a submarine boat,' he whispered. 'Well, I am'——

As he spoke a man emerged from the other side of the clearing. A blood-stained bandage was wrapped round his head, and he trailed a rifle beside him with difficulty. As he staggered with feeble haste towards the river, Carr jumped to his feet and ran out into the open to meet him. He had recognised the ex-navy seaman who had befriended him on the schooner a few days before.

A minute later Carr rejoined us. Rapidly he explained.

'That fellow is badly hit. I don't think he will last long. He says the blacks ambuscaded their party yesterday, and most of them were cut up. The few survivors are defending the factory, but the building is already on fire and surrounded on all sides. They haven't a chance. He says our only hope is to get away in the submarine—there is no other craft of any sort here.'

'Do you know how to work her?' I asked curtly.

'No,' he answered with equal brevity. 'But that chap will show me—while he lives.'

''Tain't so difficult, sir,' said Wilton eagerly. 'I 'ad a turn submarinin' not long since at Barrow.'

There was no time to be lost. It was the one possible means of escape. We boarded that submarine, and I carried the wounded sailor on to the platform. With ready coolness Wilton swung himself down through the manhole to take charge of the steering of the weird craft; Carr cast off the mooring-ropes and took a sharp look round.

'Come below,' he said to Violet.—'You stay on the platform for a bit, Harry, and keep a look-out. Better lie down in case you are sniped at from the banks. I must see how to work this man-of-war.'

What was happening below I could only guess from the remarks that presently came up through the manhole. At first all was impenetrable darkness; then a light was turned on. The air had the chill of the tomb, sufficient to cause nerves and courage to suffer considerably—it is always so in a submarine. I heard faint directions from the wounded sailor, and talk of valves, ballast-tanks, and batteries. Then at last, after hours of waiting as it seemed, we began to move. A column of black smoke was rising from amid the trees up-river, where the hidden factory was burning fiercely.

Very cautious and slow was our progress. They were steering below by the aid of the periscope; I knew enough to show me that. We were keeping well out in mid-stream, and the mouth of the river was almost in view when two large war-canoes filled with shouting savages came sweeping down on us in chase. In the bow of the leading one was Abdul, whether as chief or as prisoner we never knew.

'Come below, Harry—look lively!' called Carr, and I swung myself down through the manhole. He showed me where to sit, and warned me not to move for fear of endangering the craft's stability. Submarines are extraordinarily cranky at the best of times.

It was a curious scene. The wounded sailor lay in a corner of the little interior, his pallid, bloodless face ghastly in the semi-darkness. Violet was sitting on the floor beside him. Wilton's attention was concentrated on the pointer before the little wheel. Carr closed the manhole and manipulated sundry instruments.

'What are we going to do?' I asked.

'Dive,' was the curt answer. The ballast-tanks

were filling, and the speaker's eyes were riveted on the dial indicating the depth to which the vessel sank. The single light cast queer shadows on our strained, excited faces. The wounded man gasped feebly as Carr bent over him.

'You are sure she will not sit on her tail and plunge to the bottom stern first when it leaves her bow?' queried Carr enigmatically.

'No. There is a forward compensating ballast-tank that fills automatically.

'What are you going to do?' I asked again breathlessly.

'Torpedo the devils!' said the naval officer grimly. With braced nerves and set mouth he crouched, one finger on the fatal button, watching the puzzled canoes on the surface through the periscope reflector. My heart was beating fiercely.

'Now's your time, sir!' called Wilton suddenly. And the torpedo was fired.

There was one terrible minute of suspense. 'Missed? No! Got 'em, by Jove!' There followed the sound of a muffled explosion, and the submarine rocked on her unsteady keel. 'Shows the advantage of a torpedo training,' muttered Carr in a hoarse, unnatural voice. 'Those fellows will not trouble us any more. I think we will have a look round on the surface again,' he added after a little, turning and moving some instrument-handles as he spoke.

Up we went to the surface with a rush like a cork—too fast it was—and I saw God's blessed daylight once more as Carr and I crawled on to the dripping platform. The leading canoe had disappeared utterly. The other was drifting past us empty; we saw the black heads of its scared crew, who were swimming for dear life to the nearest bank. Carr shouted rapid orders down to Wilton, and we manœuvred alongside and took the canoe in tow. All danger was past. We were drifting slowly out to sea. Carr was silent for a time. What was uppermost in his thoughts? I wondered as I watched him. After a while he spoke slowly.

'The *Lorna* is round the point there, Harry. We cannot take the submarine with us, even if it would be wise to do so. We had better sink her and take to the canoe,' he said with an effort.

'We might try a tow to Sierra Leone,' I suggested doubtfully.

'I do not see any good in doing that,' he answered. 'She is French. Think of the blaze that might follow if the full account of these doings were published to the world at large.'

One of the lessons taught in the navy is to know when to keep your mouth shut on occasion. We both had learnt it in the past, and I knew that Carr was right.

'All the same, you will have to tell them at Whitehall,' said I in grudging acquiescence, 'if only to put yourself right after that court-martial.'

'Yes, I suppose I shall have to make a report,' answered Carr reluctantly. 'But I expect, Harry, it will be strictly private and confidential,' he added, with a grim smile.

Wilton's voice interrupted our reflections calling in alarm from below. 'The young lady has fainted, sir.' Carr was down that manhole again in an instant.

The truth was, the physical strain on us all had been stretched to breaking-point. A sudden nervous haste to be quit for ever of that accursed river seized us. Carr brought Violet up on deck, where she soon revived, and he helped her tenderly into the canoe. A box of the *Sahara's* specie that we found below was transhipped as well. 'It will show we 'ain't been tellin' lies,' muttered Wilton coolly as he stowed it forward in the bows. Two beautiful ivory trunks we found and annexed; they adorn Violet's drawing-room to this day. Then we turned to the wounded sailor by whose help and knowledge we had all escaped. Carr bent over him, and then looked up with a sudden exclamation. The man was dead. The real wonder was that the poor fellow had lived so long after his terrible wounds. It was impossible from the first to do anything for him. During that awful time, while we were boxed up in the submarine, Violet had sat beside him bravely whispering the comfort that a woman alone can give. Now he was dead we decided to leave him there sleeping his last sleep on the under-deck of the weird ship he had helped us to navigate in life.

Later, we sank that submarine at the mouth of the Daloon River. Carr, as if making a funeral oration, pointed out in curious monotonous tones that she was built in sections, with engines and mechanism from France, and evidently put together on the coast; that she was of the newest pattern, and designed with the greatest ingenuity; that she possessed a formidable ramming apparatus of a kind new to us, quite capable of causing the holes to H.M.S. *Buzzer*, whose presence at the wreck of the *Sahara* must have seriously alarmed her owner; that the latter, who had met his fate in the burning factory, was simply a pirate of strange submarine variety, waging a deadly war on the unsuspecting merchantmen who passed. What the Frenchman —lunatic or sane—did with his plunder we could only conjecture. Exactly how he towed the stranded *Sahara* from the shore to deep water before blowing her open and looting her we never could tell. And as Carr recited the strange story in the rocking canoe under the burning African sun, the submarine settled gently down for ever to the bottom, and nothing remained to show what had happened save a few white patches of foam scattered over the sullen waters. She is there still, I suppose, with the drifting river-ooze piled around her. Perhaps she could yet be raised; but one thing I know: we shall never return to attempt it.

Carr is serving now on a crack battleship of the Channel Fleet. Violet and he are to be married as soon as his present cruise is over. It was really

settled without any words at all that morning when he kissed her under the steaming tropic trees on the bank of the equatorial river. But once, as we sat after dinner on the *Lorna's* deck in the moonlight, we spoke of everything over again—of the whole strange story, of the *Buzzer* court-martial, and of Carr's despair for the future, now to be righted soon; of Wilton's tale in the flat at Kensington, and of Violet's insistence on a cruise to the coast; of our steam up the Daloon River, of the fight with the war-canoes, and of our first and only voyage in a submarine—till, as the stars rose higher in the heavens, and we grew silent in the beauty of the night, Violet made a sudden, low confession.

'Once you heard me say something—something horrid that I did not mean a wee bit. Do you remember?'

Carr's hand found hers and held it. 'Yes, dear,' he answered quietly, 'I think I do.'

'About not liking to be poor, and unable to go to sea yachting when I liked,' she murmured. 'It—it was just a mistake, you know.'

So I left them there to make allowances for each other's mistakes in the past, and went forward on to the bridge. As I have said before, we Merediths are not given to confidences. But that the future which my sister and Carr Elliston have planned is not a mistake I am sure.

THE SALTO WATER-STONE, OR ENHYDROS.

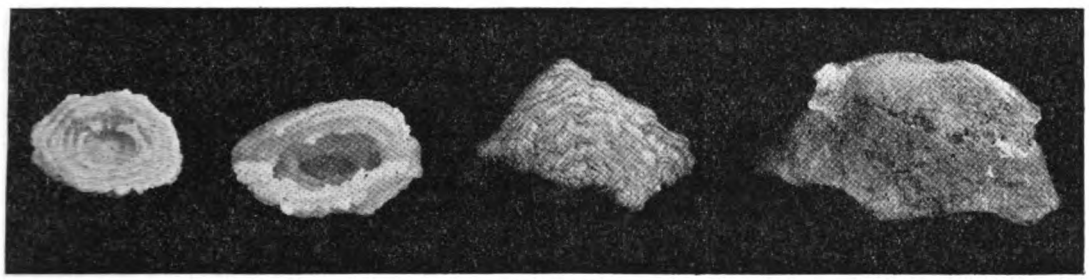
FEW people at home, outside geological circles, have heard of, and still fewer have seen, a specimen of the singular geological puzzle known to the English-speaking community in Uruguay and Argentina as the Salto water-stone. These stones are found in a northern part of Salto, a province of the Uruguay Republic. In the picturesque and quaint little town of Salto the stones are often seen in the shop-windows for sale, and the stranger on the lookout for curios is frequently gulled by the fluent cajolery of the vender as to the extreme rarity of the stone, and induced to pay an exorbitant price for what an expert would pronounce a poor specimen. In fact, the Salto water-stones are by no means rare, as ordinary specimens can always be had; but fine ones, those in which the water can be distinctly seen, are somewhat difficult to procure.

In appearance, an average water-stone resembles a piece of clear glass that has been fused by heat, as shown in illustration No. 3. The stones vary in size from the bulk of a lark's egg to that of a goose; but larger specimens are met with. They are not uniform in shape, are slightly flattened, and all are more or less contorted. Unfortunately the writer cannot give an analysis of the component parts of the stones; but it is very evident that the principal constituent is silica, and the rock in which they are found embedded is a dense black lava. Illustration No. 4 shows a water-stone with part of the lava-rock adhering. Many stones contain no water, and the more or less imperfect stones seem to be numerous. However, these imperfect specimens, in a measure, enable us to throw light—although, it has to be admitted, an uncertain one—on how the water-stone is formed. For example, the appearance of one specimen (illustration No. 1) clearly indicates that the first formation of the stone has been abruptly stopped by some unknown cause. It is shown from the concave side, and presents somewhat the appearance of a conical sea-shell, displaying irregular concentric circles. In the centre of these circles there is a rounded indentation which indicates with comparative certainty that the infiltration of water holding silica in solution is the cause of its formation.

To give a lucid and accurate description of these two causes or factors of its formation we will deal with them separately. As stated, the water-stones are found embedded in a black lava-rock, which at one period was soft and pliant from volcanic heat. Silica in a molten state *may* have dripped on it, possibly falling from a considerable height; and as this dripping continued to bear on one point, the silica, while slightly broadening out, would be depressed in the centre, thus causing the underside to become convex or pointed, and the continued augmentation of material would cause the silica gradually to sink in the lava. Molten silica in cooling has the property of remaining for some time in a soft, gelatinous condition; but in a heated atmosphere it would remain pliant infinitely longer. Thus, as the silica continued to sink, the lateral pressure of the lava on the silica gradually brought its upper edges together, and, by the continued dripping of the molten silica, the closure ultimately became hermetic. This theory is so far substantiated by illustration No. 2, which shows a water-stone well advanced in formation. It has a deeper cavity than the stone depicted in No. 1, and has perceptibly begun to flatten; and it will also be seen that the upper edges show a decided tendency to curve inwards. Water holding in solution a low percentage of silica might have achieved the same results by leaving the silica in a semi-solid condition for the time being. Then, when the silica had deepened and assumed its cup-like form, the cavity may have been filled with more water charged with silica in solution, and in this way the water eventually got sealed up.

Thus we have before us the presumed action of the two agents; but to which of them are we to ascribe the formation of the water-stone? Is it to the action of molten silica, or is it to the more direct action of water? Both explanations deserve careful

consideration; but probably that of water claims the preference, as, at least, it will be seen that it has the merit of giving a theory for the solution of the greatest problem of all—namely, as to how the water came to be enclosed in the stone. If the formation of the water-stones is to be traced to the more direct action of molten silica, the water they contain must have found its way in by some means after the stone was formed. If this be the case, there seems to be only one rational solution of the problem: that the stone after completion must have been submerged in water for a long time—possibly warm water, the heat of which would have caused a slight expansion in the silica; this being united with pressure, in time the water may have filtered through to such an extent as ultimately to fill the cavity.



Water-stone.

No. 1.—In its first stage of formation.

No. 2.—Well advanced in formation.

No. 3.—Complete, containing water.

No. 4.—Containing water, with part of the black lava rock in which they are found embedded adhering.

By some persons the water-stone has been pronounced a fraud, inasmuch as, they assert, if it be left exposed for any length of time the water it contains will gradually evaporate and finally disappear. That there are various cases of this having occurred is undeniable; but the evaporation of the water in all these instances was probably due to a slight fracture in the stone, the result of carelessness or want of skill in the excavation. On the other hand, the fact is well known and authenticated that there are many water-stones that have lain in museums and elsewhere from twelve to fifteen years, and during that comparatively long period the water in the stones has shown no perceptible diminution. That, it is hoped, will be a sufficient proof that the water-stone is not a fraud, but a very singular phenomenon. Finally, although the reader may come to the conclusion that the writer's theories as to the origin of these stones will not, in a metaphorical sense, hold water, they may rest assured that the Salto water-stones literally do.

AN ITALIAN EDISON.

THERE died in Sheffield, early in October 1903, one of the most remarkable of the many remarkable men who have left their native Italy to seek their fortunes in alien lands: a man with a mind worthy to be ranked with that of his brilliant fellow-countryman Signor Marconi. This was Frederick William Martino, whose name is fixed in the public mind by his invention of the breech-action for rifles which bears his name. The Martini-Henry rifle (the name Martini being given to it by accident instead of Martino) was on the block and lever system, which superseded the Snider in the early seventies; but although Martino's name will probably go down to posterity allied with the name of this rifle, his real claim to fame is based on far more important and far-reaching discoveries in the realms of science. Born at Pisa, he claimed to be descended on his mother's side from the Medici. Whatever foundation there was for this claim, his connections were sufficiently influential to secure him an introduction to the powerful Cardinal Antonelli, who was so interested by his brilliant visitor that he introduced him to Pope Pius IX., and of his long interview with this Pope, Martino used to give most interesting accounts. A close friend describes him as a man of extraordinary ability, with an astounding range of interests and knowledge, making him a most absorbing companion. He was thoroughly Italian in temperament: passionate, impatient of restraint, and, though teeming with ideas and suggestions, practical and otherwise, he was lacking in the capacity for business, with the result that, notwithstanding his extraordinary prolific output of valuable ideas and inventions, he died a comparatively poor and obscure man.

He was the discoverer of the process which led to the conversion of basic slag into manure, an invention which has put hundreds of thousands of pounds in the pockets of German manufacturers, into whose hands, owing to the tardiness of British capitalists, the discovery fell.

Martino also claimed to be the inventor of the fluted metal rib for umbrella-covers; but, bubbling over as he was with new ideas, he had not the time to

devote to the development of this, and the fortunes which have since accrued from it have gone into other pockets.

He was well known to most of the greatest scientists of the country, and his development of platinoid, with its superior electrical resistance over any other material, brought him into touch with Lord Kelvin. One of his most serviceable contributions to science was in connection with the extraction of nickel from ore, he having been considered one of the greatest authorities on nickel, in the manufacture of which he was some years ago directly interested.

At the time of his death Martino had been experimenting for a considerable time with a process for the reduction of gold in the cyanide solution by precipitation by means of an injection of gas made by mixing a compound whose component parts are barium, sulphur, and carbon, with water. A considerable amount of money has been sunk in patenting the various processes connected with his discovery; but at his death the experiments were still incomplete. This process is still believed by experts who have had the opportunity of examining it to be not only practicable but of great value; but the whole of the interests vested in the cyanide process have steadily fought against the development of the method, as, if it had been put into practice, it would have revolutionised the extraction of gold from the ore. Another of the patents which have been covered in connection with this invention is one by which gold is precipitated without the introduction of the cyanide process in any form, the gold ore being crushed up in its raw state with powdered barium-sulpho-carbide; but whether or not these several inventions will be proceeded with now remains, of course, to be seen.

Of a restless and energetic nature, Martino had travelled much, and he returned from America only a short time before his death. He could speak six languages. In addition to his connection with celebrities in the scientific world of this country, he was intimately acquainted with President McKinley. At one time he was engaged as analyst in connection with some copper-mines which were being exploited by British capital in Spain, and he told many stories of his adventures there.

BANANAS.

THE banana, one of the most interesting plants yielding a food-product, is one of the curiosities of the vegetable kingdom. It is not a tree, a palm, a bush, a shrub, a vegetable, nor an herb; it is simply a herbaceous plant with the stature of a tree, and is perennial. Some of the illustrations of the banana convey the idea that the plant is a kind of palm; but these have evidently been drawn from rough sketches by artists who had not seen the banana.

Although the banana sometimes attains a height of from twenty to thirty feet, there is no woody fibre in any part of its structure. The soft, succulent stalk rises like an immense stalk of rhubarb, and out of this shoot gigantic leaves, often ten feet or more in length, for the banana-plant has no branches. The dwarf banana, which grows scarcely higher than an average man, yields still heavier bunches than the larger varieties—heavier, in fact, than the stalk which supports them.

No plant yields such a great quantity of food to the acre as the banana. Humboldt the famous traveller was probably the first to call attention to the fact—which has been mentioned by nearly every subsequent writer on the banana—that it yields forty-four times more by weight per acre than the potato, and one hundred and thirty-three times more than wheat. It is often a surprise to travellers in the tropics to see how small is the extent of ground required to support a numerous family in those regions. Still more extraordinary is the rapidity with which this plant comes into bearing. In less than six months after the suckers are planted the fruit begins to form, and is ready to be cut in from nine to twelve months from the date of planting. It is stated that some varieties yield their fruit in so short a time as six months. Such extraordinary precocity and fertility are scarcely credible to the European who has never lived in the tropics, especially when it is added that each plant is capable of bearing three or four crops a year; for in these lands of eternal summer fruit-bearing occurs without intermission, and the fruit is never out of season.

Probably no plant requires less labour in its cultivation and in the gathering of the fruit; indeed, the labouring classes in the countries where it grows are able to live almost without working, or by working only one or two days in the week. The ground must be kept clean where the plants are growing; but after a few months' growth, if properly planted, they keep the ground so well shaded that few weeds grow between them, and little cultivation is necessary. When the fruit is ready for gathering one blow of a cutlass is sufficient to sever the whole bunch of one hundred to two hundred bananas from the parent stalk; and, as this forms one compact mass, it is equally easy of transportation. In fact, in every process connected with the banana—even in the operation of plucking and peeling the fruit—labour is reduced to a minimum.

Nor are these the only advantages which nature has lavished on this plant: no insect will attack it, an immunity which is all the more valuable in those regions where insect-pests are so numerous; nor is

it infested by the parasite growths which are equally troublesome in the tropics. Indeed, it is seldom attacked by disease of any kind. The writer does not, of course, claim to know the conditions under which the banana grows in all parts of the world; but he has made a special study of it in several tropical districts, all widely apart, and has always found the same immunity.

In other respects the banana-plant is a puzzle. The fruit contains no seeds, and the plants must be propagated by suckers; but as that mode of reproduction is artificial, the question arises: How does the banana propagate itself in a state of nature? It can scarcely be assumed that the plant has been cultivated by man from the commencement, though there are some who believe that it is the original 'forbidden fruit' of the Garden of Eden. According to report, wild varieties of the banana which propagate themselves by seed are to be found in some parts of Eastern Asia; and the writer has also heard of fully developed seeds occasionally appearing in the cultivated fruit elsewhere when left to ripen on the tree. In the ordinary course the fruit is cut before it is fully mature, and left to ripen on the stem, which improves the flavour. It is probable, owing to the cultivation of the plant for many years, that the seeds have become atrophied, in virtue of the law by which an organ diminishes by disuse and in the course of time may disappear altogether if not allowed to exercise its functions.

A grove of bananas has another valuable quality in a tropical climate: it acts as a cooler of the atmosphere. This is evident to any one who places his hand on a banana-leaf; when the sun is not shining directly on it the leaf will be found to be sensibly cooler than the surrounding air; because of this it is often bound round the forehead in cases of fever, and gives great relief by its refreshing coolness. Thus the leaves act as natural condensers of the moisture in the atmosphere. On a calm night the continual patter of drops of water on the leaves is heard, as though a slight shower were falling; but this is caused by the dew condensing as it comes in contact with the cool surface of the leaves. This property is not, of course, confined solely to the banana, although that plant possesses it in a high degree; it is notably exemplified in the so-called 'traveller's-tree' of Madagascar, which is nearly related to the banana, and owes its name to the fact that at the base of the leaves there exists a natural reservoir which is always filled with cool, limpid water in the driest and hottest weather, supplied by the condensation of moisture on the broad leaves, whence it trickles into these natural cups, which furnish the thirsty wayfarer with needed refreshment. Even in dry weather the ground at the foot of the banana-plant may be seen to be quite saturated in the early morning by the moisture that has trickled down during the night.

When travelling in the wilds of South America the sight of a clump of bananas is always welcome to the wayfarer, for it is a certain sign of the proximity of a human dwelling. If a house is abandoned, the banana-plants which surround it soon die out; for they will not grow in ground overrun with weeds, but dwindle away, cease to bear fruit, and finally die out. On the other hand, there are few plants which respond so quickly to careful cultivation.

Although bananas are so cheap on their native soil—in some parts of tropical America the finest bunches can be bought for less than sixpence—there are few fruits which are so profitable under proper conditions. In the West Indies and in Central America a small capital invested in banana-cultivation gives a large return, and these are the countries whence the United States draws her enormous supplies. There are many steamers which make a specialty of this trade, and which are loaded mainly or entirely with the luscious fruit. A frequent and regular steamship service is necessary. When the steamers call at uncertain times or at long intervals large quantities of the fruit are lost, as it is very perishable. When shipped the bananas must be quite green and almost as hard as a stone; and in six days, when the steamers reach New York, the fruit is soft, yellow, and in prime condition for eating. If a day or two later, the consignment will be rotten. On the wharves at the shipping ports vast quantities of bananas in prime condition for eating are thrown into the sea when there is any delay in the arrival of the steamer; for, although in the best condition for consumption, they would not stand a six days' voyage. It is noticeable that in the banana-trade between the West Indies and the United States the middleman has been almost totally eliminated. The bunches are bought on wharves direct from the growers; and on the arrival of the steamer at the port of destination an auction is held also on the wharf, and the fruit is disposed of direct to retail dealers and consumers. The writer does not know if this is the rule in every case; but that was the practice in those places which came under his personal observation.

It is said that in Mexico as many as one thousand bananas are planted to the acre; but we doubt the accuracy of the statement. Even the dwarf varieties can scarcely be planted at a less interval than ten feet, and this would only give four hundred and thirty-five to the acre. The writer speaks from practical experience, having grown bananas for the market and made a careful study of their cultivation. In planting out the bananas, the number of plants to the acre can be somewhat increased by the system of planting in hexagons instead of in squares or quincunxes, as is generally the case. As the hexagon system does not seem to be generally understood or practised, it may be described here at length, especially as it is applicable to any kind of plant, and not merely to the banana. The writer has found it extremely advantageous, and it is probably the best possible method of utilising the

ground. In explanation, it may be said that, other things being equal both above and below ground, plants have a natural tendency to spread equally in all directions—in other words, the ground effectively occupied by each plant is represented by a circle. Now, if it were possible to allow each plant a circle of the requisite size without there being any intervening space between the circles, the whole of the ground would be effectively occupied without any waste. But this is manifestly impossible; there must always remain a space between the circles, and this is so much ground unoccupied. The roots, supposing they spread equally in all directions, cannot penetrate this extra space without overlapping in other parts. The nearest approach to the circle which is possible under these conditions is the hexagon, for ground can be divided into hexagons without leaving any intervening space. The bees are well aware of this principle when they make their cells hexagonal. The simplest way of planting in hexagons is to lay out the ground in equilateral triangles instead of in squares, and at each apex or point of intersection to place a plant. In this way it will be found that each plant stands in the middle of a hexagon. When planted in hexagons it will be found that there is space for about 15 per cent. more than if the planting were in squares or quincunxes, although the plants are the same distance apart. Thus, if arranged in squares ten feet apart, only four hundred and thirty-five plants can stand on an acre, whereas five hundred and three will occupy the same area when planted in hexagons. Further, the ground being better shaded, weeds are kept down and moisture retained; and as the plants are more in contact with each other, they are not so liable to be blown down or injured during a heavy gale. This plan involves a smaller expenditure both of capital and labour. Of course, the system of planting in hexagons is entirely different from that of planting in quincunxes, although several persons to whom the writer explained it imagined that it was the same.

The uses to which the banana-plant can be applied are probably as numerous as in the case of the bamboo, which serves so many purposes in tropical countries. Nearly all domestic animals are fond of the fruit, and cattle and horses also relish the leaves. The Chinese eat the flowers pickled with vinegar; the young shoots are cooked and eaten as greens, and the stem contains a considerable amount of starchy matter, which is relished by cattle and pigs, especially when boiled. The fruit can be eaten either raw or cooked in a variety of ways; when dried like figs it is wholesome and nourishing, and it can be converted into a dry meal.

The plantain, a variety of banana formerly considered a distinct species, is still more valuable as a food than the ordinary fruit. It is not edible in a raw state, but when cooked in a variety of ways it may be eaten as a vegetable or as a substitute for bread, and is very nourishing; though not so sweet as the banana proper, it is more sustaining.

A very intoxicating spirit can be distilled from the banana, or a more useful product in the form of an excellent vinegar. The juice of the stem furnishes an indelible black dye, as all those who have worked among bananas know to their cost, it being impossible to eradicate the stains which it leaves on the clothing. On this account it has been proposed as an excellent basis for the manufacture of marking-ink, as well as for common ink and blacking. It is also used as a mordant in dyeing other colours, and has in addition many valuable medicinal properties. The stem abounds in a fibrous matter which is said to be well adapted for the manufacture of paper. In some varieties of the plant this fibre is very strong; the so-called Manilla hemp —which is not hemp at all—is the produce of a kind of banana. The leaves or spathes form an admirable natural material for packing tobacco, and the dried fruit of the banana itself is often sent to market in a kind of packing-case made of this substance. In fact, the uses to which the banana could be put are innumerable.

A continuous augmentation in the value of the imports of bananas to the United Kingdom has taken place within the past few years. The value, which was under seven hundred thousand pounds in 1901, had risen to about one million pounds in 1903. Nearly the whole of the trade was with the Canary Islands three years ago; now about one-fourth of the enlarged imports come from the British West India Islands.

SOLACE IN NATURE.

When Fortune had no smile for you, and joy seemed out of reach,
And you and Happiness, alas! were very far apart,
Did you ever stand at twilight on some quiet, wave-washed beach,
And let the sea's soft monotone speak comfort to your heart?

When Life had lost its savour, and chill disappointment fell
On the cherished plan or project that you had gladly made,
Did you ever bend your footsteps to some green and tranquil dell,
Where the trees grow leaves for healing, and birds sing unafraid?

When Death had cast its shadow, and a loving voice was still
That had been as tender music to the sunshine of your day,
Did you ever take your sorrow to the moorland or the hill,
And let the whispering breezes charm your bitter tears away?

For Nature, sweet in silence and passing sweet in speech,
Has a word for every trouble and balm for every smart;
But to find her gifts of solace, which are well within our reach,
We must come as trustful seekers, and draw very near her heart.

R. Matheson.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE FALSE ALARM OF 1804.

By Elizabeth Grierson.

Does haughty Gaul invasion threat?
Then let the loons beware, sir;
There's wooden walls upon our seas,
And volunteers on shore, sir.
The Nith shall rin to Corsincon,
And Criffel sink in Solway,
Ere we permit a foreign foe
On British ground to rally.

SO wrote Robert Burns in the summer of 1795, when the first rumours of the danger of a French invasion were beginning to spread through the country. The rumours were vague and indistinct at first, but it was seen that there was cause for uneasiness in the great force which was being gathered together by Napoleon Bonaparte, whose destination was said to be the shores of Scotland, and the earliest step towards measure of defence was taken when the first two companies of volunteers in Scotland were formed at Dumfries. The poet joined the force, and at a dinner given by the magistrates of that town on the occasion of the king's birthday he proposed the somewhat unfortunately worded toast, 'May we never see the French, and may the French never see us.' There were some ill-natured critics who professed to see in these words a spirit of cowardice, with which they taunted Burns, who, indignant at the suspicion, went home and wrote the above verses, which were subsequently published in the *Dumfries Journal*.

The effect was marvellous. The 'Invasion Song,' as it was called, echoed through the country; and a year afterwards, when the writer died, his brother volunteers came forward and expressed their desire that he should be buried with full military honours, his being the first volunteer funeral in the country.

For some time after this the alarm seems to have calmed down, although it was never quite dead; for on the 4th of November 1798 we find an order issued to the First Roxburgh and Selkirk Rifle Volunteers containing the following: 'The commanding officer desires to impress on all concerned the necessity of being ready in case of emergency. . . . He also recommends volunteers who are in any business to consider what arrangements they can make for carrying on their affairs during the time they may be mobilised.'

From that time onwards things grew more and more threatening. It became clear that the ambition of Napoleon aimed at nothing less than universal dominion, and to this ambition the power of Britain seemed the only obstacle. 'Let us be masters of the Channel for six hours,' he is reported to have said to Admiral Treville, who was in command of his fleet, 'and we are masters of the world.' Slowly but surely he set about collecting the means of transport for his soldiers, and by the beginning of 1803 he had fourteen hundred boats gathered together at Boulogne, backed by an army of five hundred thousand men.

With such a force menacing the country, it behoved us to be on the watch, and the call to arms sounded through the length and breadth of the land. It was responded to right loyally, for at once ninety thousand militia and four hundred and twenty thousand volunteers were enrolled, ready to rise at a moment's notice to defend our shores.

The age of service was from seventeen to fifty-five, and some curious entries may be found on the roll of 'names for general defence.' Thomas Dyce, the parish minister of Teviothead, enters himself as 'above age, yet willing to serve;' and four other names appear on the roll with the same declaration. Another writes 'below age, yet willing to serve.' Ten men declare themselves 'not willing to serve;' and one, an exciseman, only promised to serve 'if duty permit.'

Then came a stirring time, when nothing was talked of or thought of but things military. According to an old chronicler, there was 'ridin' an' drillin' like the very deevil.' Statesmen and orators delivered stirring speeches, and poets helped to deepen the enthusiasm by their verses. Burns's 'Invasion Song' was followed by Scott's 'War

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Song to the Edinburgh Light Dragoons' and Hogg's 'Donald MacDonald,' of which a verse may be quoted:

> Wad Bonaparte land at Fort-William
> Auld Europe nae langer should grane.
> I laugh when I think how we'd gall him
> Wi' bullet, wi' steel, an' wi' stane;
> Wi' rocks o' the Nevis and Garry,
> We'd rattle him off frae our shore,
> Or lull him asleep in a cairny,
> An' sing him 'Lochaber no more.'

Nor was the Church behind the Press. The General Assembly voted a patriotic address to the king, and decreed that the 20th of October should be observed as a general fast throughout the country, while Dr Chalmers and many other ministers preached appropriate and patriotic sermons. One Glasgow divine, Paterson by name, took the very suggestive verse for his text, 'He that hath not a sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.'

In the south of Scotland and Border districts extensive preparations were made. Every small town and village had its drilling-ground, and every country laird was turned, for the time being, into an amateur officer. Curious stories are told of the difficulty some of these worthy gentlemen had to remember the cut-and-dry phrases which come so pat to the lips of the well-trained soldier. One old gentleman wanted to give the order, 'Rear rank, forward;' but not being able at the moment to remember the exact military expression, he said sharply, 'Back raw, step forret.' Doubtless the order served its purpose, although it was not formulated in any 'Soldier's Pocket-Book.' Another gentleman whose memory failed him altogether turned in despair to the sergeant and ejaculated, 'Lord! Ha', cry, man. Aw've forgot!'

Not only men but carts and horses were requisitioned, and each district agreed to provide a certain number at a moment's notice should they be needed for transport. Thus the parishes of Lilliesleaf and Bowden, besides supplying sixty-four volunteers, furnished seventy-five horses, fifty-four carts, and twenty-seven drivers; while at a muster held at Newcastle in October, sufficient horses and carts were brought to convey two thousand troops at once to any quarter where they might be needed.

Early in 1803 the Lord-Lieutenants of Scotland were informed by the Secretary of State that he had received information that Napoleon intended to invade Scotland, and that Edinburgh was to be the point of attack. Consequently Lord Moira, the commander of the Scottish forces, concentrated his troops—and he had none too many—in the capital, leaving the country districts to be guarded by the militia and the volunteers. The coast was carefully and eagerly watched by night and day, for, as an old minister explained, 'It could not be told where the French would land, but likely it would be at the *seaside*.'

At that time our modern methods of communication were unknown, but measures were promptly taken which ensured a speedy rising when the hour of danger came. In the old 'reaving days,' balefires had often flashed from hill to hill, and once more they were to be employed to herald the approach of danger. Along the coast and on all the more prominent hill-tops sentinels were posted and beacons erected. Each of these beacons consisted of eight wagon-loads of faggots and three or four tar-barrels, and it was calculated that they would burn fiercely for two hours or more. Each district was left to make its own plans. In the counties of Haddington, Berwick, and Roxburgh it was arranged that if the French fleet were sighted during the day, twelve minute-guns were to be fired from St Abb's Head, Eyemouth, Berwick, Knockenhair, near Dunbar, and Haddington, and a single column of smoke was to be made by means of burning wet straw. If the enemy arrived at night, twelve minute-guns were to be fired at each of the above stations, and beacons were to be lighted at St Abb's Head, Hardchester, Duns Law, and Hume Castle in Berwickshire; at Caverton Edge, Penielheugh, the Dunion, Crumhaugh Hill, Tudhope, and the Wisp in Roxburghshire; and at Knockenhair, Blackcastle, Pancraik Hill, North Berwick Law, and Garleton Hill in Haddingtonshire. Black Andra and the Eildons were the danger-signals for the men of Ettrick Forest. Should the French manage to come to anchor in any of the bays on the Haddington or Berwickshire coast, men were told-off to remove all the cattle to safer quarters, while others had orders to remove all the upper millstones and to destroy the ovens. The whole country was on the tiptoe of anxious expectation, and such was the apprehension that prevailed among all classes that we read that 'figures in the distance were supposed to be the advance-guard of the French army, while at night the noise of a wheelbarrow along the stony street was enough to alarm a whole neighbourhood.'

Sir Walter Scott, who was quartermaster of the Edinburgh Light Horse, as well as sheriff of Ettrick Forest, got into hot-water at this time with the Lord-Lieutenant of Selkirkshire over his conflicting duties, for the continual drills and musters which were held at Musselburgh and Portobello did not, in Lord Napier's opinion, leave Sir Walter enough time to attend to his duties as sheriff, and he found occasion to remind him that the law required every sheriff to reside at least four months of the year in his shrievalty. Scott was very wroth with this interference, which seemed to him uncalled for; but perhaps he saw the wisdom of acting on the reminder, for shortly afterwards he removed from Lasswade to Ashiestiel. Writing about this time to Mr Ellis, the author of *Specimens of English Poetry*, he gives us an interesting picture of the state of anxiety which prevailed. 'The necessity of the present occasion,' he says, 'has kept almost every individual, however insignificant, to his post.

Government has left us entirely to our own means of defence, for we have not above one regiment of the line in all our ancient kingdom. In the meanwhile we are doing the best we can to prepare ourselves for a contest, which, perhaps, is not far distant. A beacon-light, communicating with that of Edinburgh Castle, is just erecting in front of our quiet cottage. My field equipage is ready, and I want nothing but a pipe and a *Schnurr-bartchen* to convert me into a complete hussar. Charlotte, with the infantry (of the household troops, I mean), is to beat her retreat into Ettrick Forest, where, if the Tweed is in his usual wintry state of flood, she may weather out a descent from Ostend.'

At last the crisis arrived. On the night of the 31st of January 1804, the whole of the inhabitants of the eastern border were startled by the sudden, sullen boom of the alarm-guns, and the beacons blazed up, first on one hill, then on another, until the midnight sky was lurid with light. One can fancy the commotion that ensued in the early hours of that dark winter morning. From every town, village, and hamlet, from bleak hillside and lonely valley, volunteers came pouring forth, bound for their appointed trysting-places. Every one was eager to be in time, and in the case of those absent on business we read that their wives and mothers sent their arms and accoutrements to the rendezvous, lest they should be the last to join the ranks. At some places (Melrose, Gattonside, Smailholm, Morebattle, &c.) kindly forethought on the part of the ladies of the place had provided each man with a flannel undergarment, which was given to him before he marched. At Galashiels, where the volunteers (warned by the alarm-bell of the old Tolbooth and the flaming beacon high up on the Eildons) fell in at the Cross, an eye-witness describes the scene, made visible by the bright light of a blazing fire: 'Women were to be seen helpin' their men wi' their accoutrements, some rinnin' wi' ae thing an' some wi' anither, sabbin' an' greetin' a' the time, while the bairns were haudin' by their goon-tails, cryin' for their faithers no' to leave them;' and doubtless this scene was repeated at every mustering-place.

When the Galashiels company was ready to march, their destination being Dalkeith, it was found that a woman named Susie Ha', the sergeant's wife, had established herself on top of one of the baggage-wagons, and, in spite of the officer's remonstrances, announced her intention of remaining there. It would not be the first time she had faced the French, she told him, and she spoke the truth. As a girl of sixteen she had left her home to follow her sweetheart, William Hall, who was serving against the French in the Irish Rebellion; and when hostilities were over, and Hall discharged, the devoted couple returned to Galashiels, where they settled. When volunteers were called for William again offered his services, and was appointed drill-sergeant to the local force.

At Selkirk the town was roused by trumpet and drum, and the mustering-place was the Cross. Like the Gala Water men, the company had to march to Dalkeith, and, starting about four o'clock in the morning, they kept a sharp lookout lest peradventure they encountered a flying squadron of the French. 'Halt, lads! Yonder comes the enemy,' shouted Sergeant Cameron just as daylight broke. A halt was made, and in breathless silence the column waited. As the enemy drew near it resolved itself into a string of harmless coal-carts.

The Duns volunteers marched to Haddington, while those of Smailholm, Ancrum, and Sprouston marched to Kelso, the little band from Sprouston being led by their parish minister, the Rev. Andrew Thomson, afterwards of St George's Church, Edinburgh.

At Hawick the alarm was given about nine o'clock in the evening by the lighting of the beacon on Crumhaugh Hill, which was first observed by a volunteer named Knox, who ran to the Tower Knowe and fired his gun, thus gaining a prize of twenty shillings which had been offered for the firing of the first signal-gun. Curiously, no beacons had been erected in Liddesdale, so James Moffat, a cavalry trumpeter, was sent galloping up the valley of the Slitrig and down Liddesdale to warn that district. One can imagine the thrill of dismay that went through many a startled cottage-home as the sound of his trumpet woke the inmates. The dalesmen rose with an alacrity which proved them worthy descendants of the old moss-troopers. Although some of them had to ride twenty-five miles over very rough country, all of them had assembled in Hawick before daybreak. One of their officers, Mr Robert Scott of Arkleton, having ridden by the coach-road which runs between Langholm and Hawick, arrived in Hawick before his Liddesdale men, and without drawing rein, turned and galloped up the Slitrig to meet them. Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto swam the flooded Teviot on horseback at a place where few of his servants dared follow him, so that he might be in good time to meet and encourage his troops; while Sir Walter Scott, who happened to be at Gilsland when the alarm came, had his horse saddled at once and rode to Dalkeith, covering the distance—one hundred miles—in twenty-four hours. Before he arrived, however, the alarm was known to be false. The Roxburgh yeomanry, under Colonel Lockhart of Borthwickbrae, rode to Duns, while the Berwickshire contingent rallied at Duns and proceeded to Dunbar.

These are but a few instances of how the volunteers rode at the call to arms, not only on the Borders, but in the north of England as well. Everywhere we read the same story of prompt action and ready obedience.

Innumerable stories are told of incidents connected with that anxious night. Most of them relate to 'weaker brethren;' for, although there were few laggards, all were not so heroic as Susie Ha', and there were some who had joined the ranks in a

moment of enthusiasm who began to count the cost when they heard the drums and saw the beacons flaring. Indeed, the mothers in some cases seem to have been braver than the sons; although perhaps there was some truth in the retort which a farm-lad made to his mother when she was trying to rally his drooping spirits: 'It's easy you speakin', mother; but *ye* dinna *need* tae gang.' One woman, hearing the alarm, and finding her son asleep, went and shook him vigorously, crying, 'Get up, Jock; the French is landit;' but Jock, regardless of the danger which threatened his native land, only drew the bedclothes tighter up to his chin, and replied decidedly, 'Aw winna rise if a' the French in *Britain* was here.' Another lad, a Teri, a degenerate descendant of the 'sons of heroes slain at Flodden,' who had been persuaded by his mother to join the volunteers, hid under the big box-bed when the crisis arrived, and on being found by his companions and dragged unwillingly out, gazed sullenly at his martial parent and said upbraidingly, 'Ye auld limmer, ye see what ye ha'e brocht me to;' while yet another faint-hearted youth is reported to have taken leave of his family with the doleful words, 'Aw wuss aw'd been a wumman.' A unique letter is still preserved, written by a man who would fain have escaped his duty. It runs thus: 'Dr. Doctor, this comes to enform you that the kernel of our core will nut let me off from voluntearin', so you wod oblige me by giving me a surtificate that I am inkapable of serving.' What the doctor's reply was history does not relate.

In some places the impression prevailed that the French had really effected a landing and were pressing inland to murder and destroy. 'What aboot the French noo, Tibby?' was the trembling inquiry of a woman in Hawick as a neighbour passed her door. 'They're a' at the Easter toll-bar,' answered the sobbing Tibby, who had not the self-control of a lady farther down the street, who was having a supper-party when the first alarm-gun was heard, and who, proud of her order in domestic affairs, said composedly, 'Everybody has their ain, except the hamper up the stair; it should be sent to Leith.'

As every one knows, the alarm proved false; but it served to show of what stuff the Borderers were made, and what sort of reception the French would have received had they ever gained a footing on our shores.

It will never be exactly known what raised the alarm. Some people think it was a ruse on the part of the authorities to test the spirit of the volunteers —if it was so they might well be satisfied with the result; while others, probably with more truth, hold that the error arose through the watchman at Hume Castle mistaking the glow of burning charcoal at Shoreswood Priory, in Northumberland, for a lighted beacon. The mistake was soon found out, and Captain Murray of Gordon Bank, who had charge of several beacons, sent a mounted messenger to Greenlaw in the hope of stopping the alarm, but in vain. The tufts of flame leaped from hill to hill like wildfire, and it was out of any man's power to stop them. At Edinburgh, however, where a force of four thousand volunteers had been raised, including a regiment of cavalry and two corps of artillery, each capable of serving twelve guns, besides the regular troops under Lord Moira, the men were not called out, owing to the thoughtfulness of the sentinel at St Abb's Head, who, suspecting that there was some mistake from the fact that the alarm came from inland (Hume Castle), did not light his beacon; so the capital was fortunately, or unfortunately, spared the excitement. The men of Peebles, too, were allowed to sleep in peace, because, for some unknown reason, the alarm did not reach them.

The alarm was not confined to the Borders alone; it spread from Berwick to Newcastle, where it was confidently affirmed that seventy thousand men had landed in the Firth of Forth; and from Newcastle to Durham and the north of Staffordshire, more than a day elapsed before the inhabitants of these regions became aware that it was false.

Whatever was the cause of the mistake, the authorities profited by the experience, for a proclamation was issued three weeks later to the effect that 'the Vice-Lieutenant of Berwickshire requests the inhabitants of the county to refrain from muir-burn, or other extraordinary fires, or smokes, either by day or night, lest those deceitful lights should mislead the signal-posts on which the national safety so much depends, besides leading the public not to confide in them or come forth when conveying the real alarm of an invading enemy.' After this the country settled down and the excitement subsided, although Napoleon still hoped to carry out his plans. His boats remained at Boulogne, and in the following July he went there himself to confer with his admiral. So confident was he of ultimate success that he arranged that the Pope should crown him king of England in Notre Dame in November, and he had dies for a medal prepared, which bore on one side the image of his own head crowned with laurels, and on the reverse Hercules crushing the fabled Antæus, the motto being, '*Descente en Angleterre*,' and in smaller letters, '*Frappé à Londres en* 1804.' When all was ready he gave orders for Admiral Treville to put to sea; but alas for the uncertainty of all human plans! Latouche Treville fell ill, and died on the 20th of August; and fourteen months later the battle of Trafalgar put an end for ever to the project of a French invasion.

It was Douglas Jerrold who said that 'if an earthquake were to engulf England to-morrow, the English would manage to meet and dine somewhere among the rubbish, just to celebrate the event.' The threatened invasion of Napoleon was social earthquake enough to our ancestors just a hundred years ago, as every reader of this sketch will admit. We are sufficiently removed from the event to realise the ready bravery therein exemplified, and to rejoice at the same. To mark the centenary of this event various Border associations will dine together in Edinburgh next month.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER V.—SHOWS SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS.

LIFE has no labyrinth but one's steps can track it, and mind acts on mind though bodies be far divided.

Following the strange sensation that crept upon me while examining that half-faded, uneven screed came a complete blank. My muscles were paralysed, my breathing difficult, my throat contracted, and my manhood's energy utterly sapped until I was helpless as a child. It seemed as though the Unseen Power had touched me with the finger of Death, and I had withered and fallen.

Yet slowly and painfully I struggled back to a sense of my hapless position, and on opening my eyes, sore in their sockets, I found, to my amazement, that I was lying in a heap on the carpet beside my overturned chair, my head close to the carved leg of my writing-table. The light dazzled me, and I quickly became aware that I was lying full in the morning sunshine which streamed in at the open window.

I had fallen from my chair and remained insensible the whole night. Nello had not discovered me, as I had dismissed him, wishing to be alone.

In Tuscany it is light early in summer, and the July sun soon gathers power. I glanced at the clock, and saw that it was already a quarter to five.

Outside, a fisherman was singing a gay song as he unloaded his boat, and children were already shouting as they bathed in the sunlit water; but the brightness in the world beyond only jarred upon me, soured and embittered man that I was. Could that curious sensation be a precursory sign of some terrible malady—epilepsy or paralysis, perhaps?

I struggled to my feet and stood beside the table, dazed, unbalanced, and so weak of limb that my legs could scarcely bear me. I felt as though I had just risen from a sick-bed after months of suffering.

The book lay open at the final page whereon the writer of the record, Godfrey Lovel, had inscribed his name and date as already reproduced here. My thoughts ran back to the moment when I had experienced that sudden seizure, and I recollected how interested I had been in the few lines I had succeeded in deciphering.

The unmistakable paralysis that had stricken me down at the very moment my curiosity was aroused was certainly alarming, and even mysterious, especially after the prior's hints as to the evil that would pursue me if I determined to continue in possession of that fine old volume.

The fat priest's words recurred to me with a deep and hidden meaning, and I admit that my spirit was mightily disturbed. It seemed that I had raised a foe where I might have won a friend.

I locked the book away in my safe, and went forth upon the balcony and breathed the fresh air of morning. Across the sparkling waters of the tideless sea the islands stood gray and mysterious in the blue haze, Gorgona, peopled only by its convict-gangs, showing most distinctly of all. A veil of mystery seemed to have fallen upon everything—upon all save a mighty battleship, with black smoke belching from her three yellow funnels and flying the white ensign of England as she approached an anchorage outside the port.

A desire for fresh air seized me; therefore, feeling faint, I took a liqueur glass of neat brandy, and then descended to the big marble entrance-hall that always echoed so dismally to my lonely footsteps. Recollect that I was a man without kith or kin, self-exiled for private reasons over which I had been unable to exercise control, and although living among a people that I loved because of their sympathy and charm, I was yet homesick for England and suffering from the nostalgia that those whose lot it is to spend their lives abroad know, alas! too well.

Outside I took the old sea-road—that shadeless road that runs with so many windings away along the edge of the deadly Maremma and on to Rome. I walked it often, for it led out along the edge of the brown cliffs through a wild and uninhabited tract of country, a district which until ten years ago had been dangerous on account of a band of lawless brigands. The latter had, however, all been exterminated by the Carabineers, and the loneliness of the country suited well my frame of mind.

I met no one save an old barefooted fishwife whom I knew, trudging onward with her basket poised on her head. So I lit my pipe and gave myself up to reflection, trying to account for my strange seizure. I hesitated to consult a doctor, for I entertained an Englishman's want of faith in the Italian medico. I longed to be able to consult my own doctor in London, and ask his opinion whether the strange stupor were an actual warning.

Although Italy possesses such distinct charm; although Tuscany was the home of my youth; although I had hosts of friends among the fishermen and honest *contadini* about me; although my friends at the white old monastery away among the olives on the side of the Black Mountain were always warm in their welcome and eager to render me the very smallest and humblest service, yet I was suddenly tired of it all. Sweet as were the pleasures of Tuscany, as Byron, Shelley, Smollett, and George Eliot had found, yet I was English, and England was my home.

I threw myself down on the grass of the cliff-top and thought it all out. Through seven long years I had led that life of utter loneliness, returning to London only for a fortnight or so each year, and then sadly leaving Charing Cross again for another

twelve months of exile. I had my work, the writing of romance, to absorb my attention, it was true; but the writer of novels must live in congenial surroundings, otherwise the influence of a solitary life must show in his work.

Letters I had received from home during the past few days showed, too, that there was really no further reason why I should not return and live in England among my friends; therefore, after long reflection and carefully considering the whole question, I at length made up my mind to pack up my collection of pictures, old furniture, manuscripts, and antiques, and remove them to some country home in England.

I have a habit of acting with precipitation. My father, full of old-fashioned caution, used to chide me for it. In his day there was no such thing as smartness. But in the professions, as in business, old-fashioned stolidity has now passed away. To-day, if one sees the legend 'Established 1792' over a shop, one avoids it, knowing that its proprietor is not content with up-to-date small profits. Time was when the solid professional or business man was as black-coated and serious as an undertaker; but it is all of the past. The smart, speculative man, who acts promptly and has the courage of his own convictions, is the man who succeeds in the present scramble for daily bread. In every walk of life one must keep abreast of the flood; hence, with my mind made up, I entered the Consulate at eleven o'clock, and announced my immediate departure to my old friend and confidant Jack Hutchinson, one of the most popular of His Majesty's representatives abroad, and whose name with every skipper up and down the Mediterranean is synonymous with geniality of manner and kindliness of heart.

When I sank into a chair in his private room and announced to him that I was going his face fell. I knew well that he had no other English friend there, and my departure would leave him utterly alone. He was an exile, like myself; only, there was for him a comfortable pension at the end of it.

'Well,' he exclaimed after a moment, 'I'm awfully sorry you're going, my dear old fellow—awfully sorry. But I think you are acting wisely. You've been here too long, and have grown misanthropic. A little London life will take you out of yourself. Besides, of late you've been working far too hard.'

I told him of my strange seizure; and, having heard me, he said:

'Exactly. Just what I expected. Pelegrini the doctor feared a collapse, and told me so weeks ago. That I'm very sorry to lose you, old chap, you know too well. But you'll be better in England. You're homesick, and that never does in Italy, you know. I and my wife both were so when I was first appointed here twelve years ago; but we've got over it—you never have.' Then he added: 'By the way, have you seen old Graniani to-day? He stopped me half-an-hour ago in the Corso Umberto and asked if I had seen you this morning.'

It was on the point of my tongue to tell Hutchinson all that had passed in Florence on the previous day; but I thought it useless to trouble him with what seemed but vague suspicions.

'Why does he want to see me?' I inquired.

'Oh, he has got something or other to sell you, I suppose,' was the consul's reply. 'Somehow, Kennedy, I don't like the old fellow. Whether it's his ugliness, his deformity, or his manner, I can't tell; only, I instinctively dislike him. And more than ever when I met him just now.'

'Why?'

'Well, to me, his manner was as though he expected to hear some grave news regarding you.'

'Grave news!' I echoed. Then it occurred to me that the old hunchback was, of course, privy to the mysterious evil following the possession of the *Book of Arnoldus*. 'What grave news did he expect?'

'How do I know, my dear fellow? These Italians, and especially men of his class, are so subtle and cunning that you can never get at the bottom of their motives.'

'But I've always given Graniani his price—with a little bargaining, of course. Why, I've paid him hundreds of francs. You recollect what I paid for that miniature of the missing Dauphin of France?'

'But you obtained a gem, even though you had to pay heavily for it,' was my friend's answer. 'If it had been in old Contessini's hands you'd have had to pay double, or he would have sent it to London.'

'I know that,' I laughed. 'Graniani has had some good things now and then, and I've been a good customer; therefore I can't see why he should entertain any hostile thought towards me.'

'As I've already said, you never know the Italian character. The man who is your best friend to-day will be your worst enemy to-morrow. That's what makes life so insecure here, and affrays with the knife so frequent. All I can say is that I noticed about the old scoundrel a distinct expectation to hear bad news of you, and I judged from his manner that he was disappointed when I told him that for aught I knew you were all right. If I were you, I wouldn't have any more dealings with him. Now you're leaving Antignano, cut him. He has served your purpose well, and you can't afford to be mixed up in any quarrel with a man of his stamp.'

'Yes, I will,' I answered. 'I don't like him myself. Of late he has been far from straight.'

'And of late, it seems, he has been making secret inquiries of one of the Italian clerks here about your antecedents in England.'

'Whatever for? How can my antecedents concern him?'

'Ah, that's the point, my dear Kennedy. He's forming some ingenious plot or other; therefore we must be on the alert. When a man bribes one of the clerks to obtain information about an English-

man's past, his parentage, and all the rest of it, there 's something devilish suspicious about it.'

'I should think so! I wonder what the old scoundrel is up to?'

'Some blackmailing business or other, most probably. If so, act with discretion, and we 'll have a chat with the Chief of Police. The present Questore is terribly down on blackmailers.'

'But what can be the motive?'

'That 's more than either of us can tell. We must watch and form our own conclusions,' was the consul's reply, leaning back in his white linen suit and stretching his arms above his head. 'You see now,' he added, 'why I am in favour of your leaving Tuscany without delay.'

'Yes, I see. But there 's some mystery about old Graniani, and we ought to clear it up.'

'Why should we trouble to do so?' he asked.

I had told him nothing about the incident which had occurred while I was waiting for the fat Prior of San Sisto; therefore, in a few words I briefly recounted what I had witnessed.

'Strange!' he exclaimed. 'Remarkably strange! We must watch him, Kennedy. It almost looks as if, for some mysterious reason, he means mischief.'

We agreed as to this, and then fell to discussing the best means by which I might get rid of my house and have my collection of antiques packed for transmission to England.

Soon after noon I returned home to luncheon, and in crossing the Piazza Vittorio Emanuelle to take the electric tram, my eyes caught a glimpse of a neat female figure in black, which struck me as strangely similar to that of the dark-eyed woman who had been closeted with the fat prior in Florence on the previous day. My first impulse was to turn and follow her; but not being sufficiently certain of her identity, I stepped upon the tram, although sorely puzzled. Was she in Leghorn for some secret purpose? I wondered. Somehow I felt convinced it was she.

On my arrival home, however, my suspicion became more than ever aroused, for I found old Nello in a terrible state of anxiety. On getting up he had discovered that my bed had not been slept in, and that I was absent. Being Italian, he feared that some *disgrazia* had happened to me.

Then, when I assured him that I had merely been out for a long walk instead of sleeping, he said:

'The hunchback antique-dealer is awaiting you, signore. He says it is most important that he should see you, so I have shown him upstairs to the study.'

His announcement took me aback. The old scoundrel was the last visitor I expected. Nevertheless, I drew a long breath to steady my nerves, and with calm resolution mounted the stairs.

(To be continued.)

ANTONIA KENNEDY-LAURIE DICKSON.

IT affords the Editor of *Chambers's Journal* some melancholy satisfaction to give a few biographical particulars of this highly gifted and accomplished lady, who passed away at the end of August 1903, after four and a half years of great suffering, patiently and bravely borne.

Miss Antonia Dickson, who possessed a versatile literary gift, besides being an old contributor to our columns, was a friend of the present Editor and of his father and predecessor in the editorial chair. We do not hesitate to say that as a pianist, the subject of this sketch was one of the most amazing and brilliant of the many whom it has been our privilege to listen to.

Of Scottish descent, her father, James Dickson, of Liverpool, was a distinguished painter and lithographer, who published *Outlines of Celebrated Pictures*. Her mother, Miss Elizabeth Kennedy-Laurie of Woodhall, Kirkcudbrightshire, was a descendant of the Lauries of Maxwelltown and of the Robertsons of Struan, connected by blood and marriage with the Earls of Cassilis and the Royal Stuarts. This lady was a brilliant scholar and musician, and noted for her beauty, the latter a heritage from her mother, Miss Robertson of Struan, whose presentation at the Court of George III. was the occasion of His Majesty's remarking, 'My English Court cannot boast so beautiful a woman.'

In 1895 Miss Dickson furnished some biographical particulars of her life to a friend. These we now follow. She says:

'I think there never could have been a time in my life when I was not absorbing music. My first recollections are of the weird crooning of my Breton nurse (I was born in Brittany), and of the tones, magically sweet, of my mother's voice. My mother used to revert frequently to my passion for sweet sounds and the facility with which I could be diverted from my childish sorrows and beatitudes by a strain of music. At five my scientific education began on a toy piano of one octave in compass. A few weeks after my initiation into the scale of C, we started on an extensive travelling tour, where, for the most part, musical instruments were unattainable or located in some public place from which my childish timidity debarred me; but so crammed was I with the new methods that I formed a habit of practising regularly on the sheets of my little crib or on the furniture. I think even this dumb practice was valuable, for my mother superintended my efforts and instituted a correct poise

and elevation of the fingers. At ten I went to London, where I played the Moonlight Sonata and Thalberg's "Home, sweet Home," to Osborne Williams, the eminent English composer and pianist. It was in accordance with his advice that I took up my abode in the centres of Leipzig and Stuttgart, studying under Moscheles, Johann Zschoeher, Sigismund, Lebert, and the Court pianists of Würtemberg, Prückner and Wilhelm Kruger. Let me relieve the strain upon my modesty by quoting from a journal noted for its severity to youthful aspirants: "Miss Antonia Dickson, a child of twelve, performed a composition of Kullak's *Les Perles d'Écume* with the most effective brilliancy of execution, and so completely mastered all technical difficulties that her performance excited the deepest admiration." Leaving the Stuttgart Conservatory, I gave an extended concert-tour, playing in France, Edinburgh, Glasgow, at the Crystal Palace, and at the house of Sir Julius Benedict, who pronounced me "a most accomplished and eminent artiste, who has a splendid future before her." I took a certificate for composition in its different branches from Trinity College, and gained the degree of Associate of the Royal College of Organists under peculiarly severe standards and examiners. Of the thirty-three candidates present on that occasion I was the only lady, a fact on which the press enlarged next day, stating also that the associateship of the College of Organists had up to that point been conferred only upon three ladies in Great Britain; that, moreover, I was the first Scotswoman in possession of this honour.

'Side by side with my musical education, my literary powers were progressing. My father and mother were skilled in the use of the pen as in the brush. My father was a good classical scholar, an archæologist, and a comparative mythologist; my mother a gifted linguist, an adept in folklore, and a scientific musician. With my father I studied the pearls of ancient wisdom and drank in the glories of the classics; with my mother I threaded the mazes of national fancy and music. My parents encouraged me to write, forming my style on the best models. I remember once at the age of nine trying to shape one of my childish effusions after the model of an unexceptionable but extremely heavy leader in the *Times*. At seventeen I became a contributor to *Chambers's Journal*, the Editor of which was accustomed to refer to me as "my literary goddaughter, and one of my most esteemed contributors."'

Magazine and newspaper work followed, successful and congenial in character, until literature and music were broken up by the illness and death of a sister and by the mother's physical prostration. A removal to Petersburgh, Virginia, took place, where her mother died, and Miss Dickson herself became a chronic invalid for many years. In this enforced seclusion, Antonia Dickson devoted herself to literary work. She wrote the text for a sumptuous art-work, *La Photogravure*, and conjointly with her brother, W. K.-L. Dickson, a distinguished inventor and electrical engineer, the *Life and Inventions of Edison*, *The History of the Kinetoscope*, *Art Leaves*, &c. In later life she appeared with success on the lecture-platform with her 'Lecture Recitals on Musical History,' and her public and private appearances must be still fresh in the memories of many of our readers. An American contemporary says, referring to Miss Dickson: 'She was a charming writer, a thorough student of art, literature, and music, and a brilliant conversationalist. Her mind was a rich storehouse of knowledge, of which she gave generously to the world through the magazines and the press.'

THE ONE WHO NEVER GOT THERE.

By JOHN OXENHAM, Author of *John of Gerisau*, *Barbe of Grand Bayou*, &c.

LADY JONES, relict and sole legatee of the late Alderman Jones, knighted in the usual way for the usual reasons, was a lady of generous proportions and many good deeds. Her charities were bounded only by the limits of her knowledge of necessitous cases. She had a fine, large, open face, and a fine, large, open pocket, and she clothed and fed and warmed multitudes of sinners less well protected than herself from the blasts and storms of life.

Sir John had made his money in some quite common article—butter or tea or sugar, or some such thing; but he had handled it on a scale so extensive as almost to redeem his operations from the vulgar taint of trade.

Neither he nor Lady Jones was burdened with any very close relations, and they had not been blessed with children. When the alderman died and his business was turned into a limited company, Lady Jones found herself with full hands and a somewhat empty heart; and, like the good soul she was, she turned them wholesomely, and in the wholesale fashion of her late husband, on to the cause of charity.

It would be easier to tell what she did not do than what she did, for her benevolences were endless and the sluice-gates of her golden reservoirs were never closed. The leaves of her cheque-books were as plentiful almost as those of autumn, and more satisfactory to those on whom they fell; and the whispers of them rustled throughout the land.

She had always taken very great and sympathetic interest in the missionary service; and when she read Duncombe's article in his paper, suggesting the idea of invitations from outside friends to the

little exiles of the Missionary School at Willstead, she took the matter into immediate and serious consideration: immediate, because when she gave she always gave quickly; serious, because she felt some not unnatural doubts as to the ability of herself and her companion, Miss Conway, to suitably amuse, entertain, and control a small boy, who must obviously be somewhat unused to being subjected for the space of several weeks solely to the society of the gentler sex.

'I feel it a kind of duty to have a boy, Connie, after reading this,' she said to Miss Conway, tapping Duncombe's article with her gold eyeglasses; 'but dear knows what we shall do with him! Do you know how to play with boys?'

'Well, I used to,' said Miss Conway, somewhat dubiously; and, being of a conscientious disposition, made haste to add, 'but it is some time since, and I'm afraid boys have changed a little since then.' Some boys had, notably those with whom Miss Conway used to play. For she was down in the last census paper as forty-three, and there was another one nearly due, in which she would probably figure as forty-four, and Lady Jones would look thoughtfully at her over her glasses as she filled in the figures. 'But,' said Miss Conway, with a gleam of inspiration, or, it might be, of reminiscence, 'if you give him plenty to eat, and take him to some entertainments, and give him a shilling now and then, he'll enjoy himself all right. We might try a small one to begin with.'

'Yes, that's a good idea. We will ask for a very small one for the first time, and if he is a success we can try two next time. I wonder if they have any boys of the name of Jones.'

'Sure to, I should think,' said Miss Conway undiplomatically, and solely with a wish to coincide with her patroness's views, which she made a point of doing.

'Why?'

'Oh, well—er'—— and Miss Conway began to root earnestly after other than the obvious reasons for the belief she had expressed. 'There are so many good Welshmen in the ministry and in the mission service, you know. There was that Mr John Jones of Tan-gan-something in Central Africa, and that Mr Griffith Jones of Ram-chun-something-else in India'——

'Yes, I should think they'll have some little Joneses. We'll tell them we'll try one if he's small and quiet and easily amused, and not likely to get into any mischief, or have the mumps or anything of that kind.'

And so, among the other invitations received at the school in response to Duncombe's article, there came one from Lady Jones at Bournemouth, offering to take a very small, quiet, easily amused, and guaranteed healthy boy for the Christmas holidays, if the order could be filled on something closely approximating the lines named.

The headmaster at the school ran rapidly over his supply of Joneses, and fixed on little Pedr Jones, whose father and mother were located at Antananaconda in Central India. 'He's as quiet as a mouse, and as shy as a tortoise,' said he. 'He'll suit Lady Jones to a T.' So he wrote saying he was sending her ladyship little Pedr Jones, who, he was quite sure, would suit her in all respects. He only hoped she would not find the boy too shy and quiet. And in due course he himself saw little Pedr safely into the train at Waterloo, duly consigned to Lady Jones at Bournemouth.

Lady Jones and her companion drove to the station to meet their guest, outwardly calm, but inwardly full of anxiety to see for themselves what kind of a boy little Pedr was, and whether he looked amusable and controllable, and not visibly predisposed to any epidemic.

When the train disgorged, and a nice-looking small boy in bowler and overcoat, with a neat brown handbag stamped in black letters 'P. J.,' came along, looking anxiously round for a friendly face, Lady Jones rushed at him herself, and said, 'You are Pedr Jones?'

'If you please, ma'am!' said the small boy modestly.

'That's a dear boy. Just what we wanted. Have you any other luggage?'

'Gracious me! I hope so,' said Miss Conway to herself.

'A box—yes—with "P. J." on it.'

'Thomas,' to the footman, 'go and find Master Jones's box, marked "P. J.," and bring it along in a cab.—Now, come along, dear. Here is the carriage. I'm quite sure you're hungry. You shall have some tea the minute we get home. Did you find it cold on the journey?'

And they were bowling along towards Boscombe, all apparently very well satisfied with themselves and their neighbours and the world in general.

Little Pedr proved eminently satisfactory. He was a round-faced little fellow with dark hair and bright, sharp eyes which seemed to see everything that passed, and at first he was extremely timid and quiet; but that wore off by degrees, as it could not fail to do under the genial sunshine of Lady Jones's overpowering kindliness. He perked up in time, came out of his shell, and livened up those two quiet ladies' lives in a way that astonished even themselves. Lady Jones was rather disappointed that he did not speak or even understand a word of Welsh; but he explained that his parents did not speak Welsh in Central India, and he had come home when he was eight—four years ago. His recollections of life out there were getting somewhat overworn by English manners and customs; but certain things had remained in his memory, and these he related at times, when his shyness wore off, with considerable gusto, and caused his auditors to open wide their eyes and thank their stars that they lived in a land where other manners and customs prevailed.

Among his effects, which Miss Conway found

when she unpacked his box, was a very nice little Bible, awarded to him as a prize for general good conduct during the current year, and this she of course duly reported to Lady Jones, whereby little Pedr gained still higher standing in their eyes.

He was a knowing little fellow too, in his way, and his erudition extended to things not always known of small boys. He was telling them one day, when his shyness had worn off, about the chief of the district in which his father and mother were located: of his gorgeous dress on state occasions, of his golden trappings and flashing jewels—of which things he had a more vivid recollection than of anything else in his childhood. 'He used to wear one great ruby in his turban which they said was worth fifty thousand pounds,' said little Pedr. 'A lovely jewel. I can see it yet when I close my eyes;' and he closed his eyes and presumably saw it. 'He was a very nice man. He gave mother some little stones, and she used to let me play with them at times. I used to like just to let them roll about in my hands. I can remember yet how much I used to enjoy it.'

It was the thought of a very kind heart that prompted Lady Jones to call little Pedr into her own bedroom next day and smilingly to show him her own collection of jewels. She, too, knew the pleasure of the rippling gleams in one's own hand, and the alderman had known of it, and had gratified her enjoyment, as being one of the best uses to which he could put a part of his superfluous wealth. She had not bought a stone since he died, and she rarely wore a jewel; but neither had she sold any, since it was he who gave them, and they reminded her of him. He had bought with discrimination, and, being a business man, had bought in a business-like way, and made sure that he got good value for his money; so Lady Jones's collection of gems, mostly unmounted, was choice and of very great value.

'The lovely stones!' said little Pedr, and trickled them delightedly through his fingers. He gazed at their sparkling beauties with deep absorption for a time, and Lady Jones watched him with almost equal enjoyment. Then, with several still in his hand, he closed his eyes and said quietly, 'I can almost feel myself a very little boy again, and you are my mother standing beside me.'

Lady Jones was nearly overcome, and wished most ardently that she had been blessed with a boy of her own like this dear little fellow. She kissed him mistily, and made up her mind to keep an eye on his future, and if anything ever happened to his parents—why—who knows?—perhaps she might have a little Pedr of her own in everything except actual fact of birth. And while she could not find it in her kind heart to wish anything unpleasant to happen to Mr and Mrs Jones out in Antananaconda, she believed that if anything of the kind should unfortunately come to pass she could lessen the effects of the blow to little Pedr very effectually.

Pedr was in and out of her room often after that first time, and she allowed him full share in her own enjoyment of her gems. He was always most scrupulous in seeing them all tucked safely away in their flat velvet cases, and he always took upon himself to see them lodged securely in the safe in the corner of her room.

But little Pedr's amusements were by no means confined to playing with her ladyship's jewels. He had much more boyish tastes, and Lady Jones and Miss Conway laid themselves out to give him a good time. They took him to entertainments, such as there were. They took him drives when the weather permitted. They let him have a very small, quiet, hired pony all to himself now and then. They took him walks among the pines and along the shore. They let him hire a bicycle, and he begged so hard for Miss Conway to accompany him on a tricycle that she consented to try; but she never went a second time, and Pedr did not press it. And so, among all these diversions, the days passed all too quickly, and time came at last when there was only one week of the holidays left, and the coming event manifestly cast its shadow on little Pedr's spirits. He grew very thoughtful, not to say gloomy at times, and it took more than their combined efforts to cheer him.

Lady Jones thoughtfully saw to little Pedr's writing at the proper time to his parents in India, and gave him a note of her own to enclose, saying what a nice little fellow he was, how much they had enjoyed having him, and how they hoped they would be able to repeat the enjoyment another year, and perhaps also in the summer as well. This with a view of lightening his present shadows.

Then, just about a week before term began, a very unpleasant thing happened. Lady Jones's house was broken into one night, and among other valuables her unique collection of unmounted jewels was stolen. The job was most effectually carried out, and evidently by practised hands. An entrance was effected by a scullery window looking into the back garden. Two masked men appeared like nightmares at Lady Jones's bedside, and in the most gentlemanly way requested the loan of her keys, promising her no ill-treatment whatever if she behaved herself. Then they leisurely ransacked the drawers, came on the safe, and tried the keys till it opened, pocketed the gems, bound Lady Jones's hands and feet and mouth with her own white silk handkerchiefs, apologising the while for the precaution in really the politest manner imaginable, and departed as quietly as they came.

In due course the detectives arrived, subjected the house and every member of it to the most scrutinising examination, nodded their heads sagaciously, and went off, presumably on a clue.

This little affair naturally cast a certain shadow on the last week of little Pedr's stay at Bournemouth. Lady Jones, while regretting the loss of her jewels, more from the associations which sparkled in their faces than from their actual worth, did her very best to make little Pedr's

last days as happy as the former ones; but the shadow was on him and the brightness had departed.

'Mumps!' said Miss Conway didactically. She had once been in a family where the mumps ravaged twelve children one after another, and she had never forgotten the experience. 'I'm not sure but it would be safest to send him home at once.'

But Lady Jones had in her own doctor, and he laughed the idea of mumps to scorn, and declared little Pedr as sound as a bell.

'It's dumps,' said he, 'not mumps.—School isn't a patch on Bournemouth, is it, Pedr?'

'No, sir,' said Pedr meekly.

In due course Miss Conway packed up his box with the prize Bible in it, and the two good souls drove with him to the station and saw him into his carriage, and there were tears in Lady Jones's eyes as she kissed him a final good-bye and pressed half-a-sovereign into his hand at the same time. And she drew down her veil hastily when little Pedr, not knowing or caring a button whether it was a sixpence or an actual button she had given him, threw his arms round her ample neck, and sobbed, 'Oh, you are so good! I am so sorry'—— and then the guard whistled and the train was out of the station before Lady Jones could get her handkerchief up under her veil.

A few days later little Pedr Jones in the second form classroom was struggling manfully with some abstruse arithmetical problems which most tantalisingly recalled happier days gone by. One of these invited him to find out exactly how much plum-pudding would fall to the share of each boy in a school of two hundred boys if twenty-five puddings, each weighing eight pounds thirteen ounces, were sent up for their delectation. Another stated definitely that a certain circus was seventy-five feet in diameter, and requested information as to the amount of ground covered by the whole circus.

Pedr had arrived at the conclusion that the boys of that school would, if the division were fairly made, each have more plum-pudding than the boys of some schools were in the habit of getting, and his thoughts were reaching out tentatively towards such facts as: whether the ground covered by the whole circus comprehended the stables and menagerie, whether they had a comic donkey in that circus and a pony that stood still while fireworks were let off all round him, whether—— And then the headmaster came in, tapped him on the shoulder, and carried him off to his study, where a stout, handsomely dressed lady and a keen-eyed man sat waiting for him. They gazed curiously at him as he came in, and there was a look of surprise on the lady's face.

'But this is not Pedr Jones,' said the lady.

'I beg your pardon, my lady,' said the headmaster.

'This is not *my* Pedr Jones,' said the lady, with surprised emphasis.

'Exactly!' said the keen-faced man, with a snap like a steel trap.

'It is the Pedr Jones we sent, and, as it happens, it is the only Pedr we have on the books just at present.'

'But my Pedr had black hair and very dark, bright eyes. This little fellow has yellow hair and blue eyes.'

'I don't understand it,' said the headmaster, staring at the bewildered little Pedr as though he expected thereby to detect signs of sudden changes of hair and eyes in him. 'You went to Bournemouth, Pedr?'

'Yes, sir.'

'To Lady Jones?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Well?' and he looked from Pedr to Lady Jones. 'Don't you know Lady Jones again?'

Little Pedr looked at the lady and said, 'This is not Lady Jones, sir;' at which Lady Jones laughed, but in a very puzzled way.

Then she and the headmaster looked helplessly at Steel-trap, and he said, 'It is as I expected. There has been substitution on the road;' and he took little Pedr in hand himself.

'What station did you get out at in Bournemouth, my boy?'

'Bournemouth West, sir.'

'How was that? You were to go, I think, to Bournemouth Central.'

'Lady Jones met me at Bournemouth West, and told me to get out there, sir.'

'I see. Did she say why?'

'Yes, sir. The drains had had to come up suddenly at her own house, and she had taken one at Parkstone for a month till her own was all right again.'

'Quite so. And you stayed with her at Parkstone for the whole time?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Had a good time?'

'Yes, thank you, sir.'

'You could show me the house you stopped at if I wanted you to?'

'Oh yes, sir.'

'Thank you!' and he nodded to the headmaster, and at a sign from him Pedr went back to his musings on plum-puddings and circus-rings in a state of fog.

Before he had quite settled the circus matter he was sent for again, inducted into his coat and hat, and sent off in a cab in company with Mr Steel-trap, who proved a very pleasant and amusing companion, and knew as much about Pedr's Lady Jones before they reached Bournemouth as Pedr did himself. And the news circulated throughout the school that Pedr Jones had been arrested and taken away by detectives for highway robbery and attempted murder—which let his special chum in for four pitched battles in defence of their mutual honour,

three of which he won beyond dispute, and claimed the fourth, which was accordingly postponed for further argument.

Little Pedr quite enjoyed this extra holiday and the official visitation of his holiday scenes; and when he returned to school, without gyves upon his wrists and no visible signs of imprisonment about him, but wrapped in a golden cloud of mystery which he duly shared with his valiant chum, he became a nine days' wonder and a miniature Sherlock Holmes, and was much courted by large and small.

And there our story might stop; but it does not.

Lady Jones and Miss Conway never ceased talking and thinking of their little Pedr, and the former spent much money in the attempt to learn what had become of him.

'He may have been all they say, Connie,' she said stubbornly; 'but he was a dear little fellow, and I am sure there was good in him. Do you remember how he flung his arms round my neck at the last minute just when the train was starting? He said, "I'm so sorry"—— And I'm quite sure he was. If he helped those men, he was made to do it. I do wish we could get hold of him. I believe he l-l-li-liked me.'

'Of course he did,' said Miss Conway, with a sympathetic sniff.

They were sitting so one night, when there came a faint knock on the front door, a tentative, deprecatory suggestion that one without sought admittance, and at the same time expressed a doubt of his right to so great a boon. And presently—it being fortunately Thomas's evening out—a maid came flying in.

'Please, m'm, my lady, there's a boy outside wants you, and I do believe, m'm, it's little Master Pedr; but he's'——

And those two good souls leaped straightway at the door, and their bodies were not much behind. There on the top step they found a dilapidated little object which it was no wonder the maid had objected to let into the house on her own responsibility, so forlorn, so wretched, and so extremely dirty was he.

But the others did not hesitate one second. He was very dirty, he was very miserable, he might be extremely wicked; but he was first and foremost a boy, and a boy in need of many things—among others, and not least, a bath. If a stray dog had looked up at Lady Jones with eyes like that, she would have invited it into a shop and fed it on buns and milk.

Not even when he was bathed and combed and fed into comfort and a remote likeness to the Pedr they had known did they question him. Lady Jones was no fool, and she had it in her mind that it was better for him to say what he thought well to say rather than that she should draw it out of him. And presently, with his little black head in the curl of his arm, and many shamefaced sobs, he told them:

'I did it because they sent me here to do it. I had never thought about it much. But you were so good to me. . . . But I couldn't go back on them till it was done. . . . I was very miserable. I escaped from them three days ago, and have been coming ever since. If you will get the police I will tell them all I know.'

Lady Jones was for not getting the police; but Mr Steel-trap happened to call the very next morning—you might almost have thought he had got wind of the matter—and of course there was no good trying to conceal anything from him.

He questioned little Pedr, whose name was not Pedr at all, very sharply, then went quickly out and despatched a number of telegrams, though his stiff under-lip curled up over its still stiffer fellow at the hopelessness of it.

'If I'd only got my hands on the little chap a week ago,' he said to himself. And again, 'If those chaps get caught they'll deserve all they get.'

But the chaps—some of them at all events—were caught, to Mr Steel-trap's surprise and contempt and lasting glory, and they got all they richly deserved. For they had put down their little tool's disappearance to accident, and not to malice prepense, or, may one say, to self-recovery. They had searched high and low for him; but they had never suspected him of turning soft and going back to the place where he had spent at once the happiest and most miserable days of his life.

The leader of the gang—a most gentlemanly man, I assure you—was the boy's stepfather; and no sooner did he hear of Duncombe's idea of billeting the boys out for Christmas than he saw his own possibilities in the scheme. It was easy to strike up an acquaintance with one of the school servants, and through her to learn the destinations of some of the boys. The moment he heard the assignment to Lady Jones he sought no farther, for he had heard rumours of her ladyship's diamonds, and only required confirmation of the fact, and some points as to household arrangements and the place where the gems were kept.

Some few of the stolen stones were recovered, but not many.

The empty spaces in Lady Jones's jewel-cases were never filled up; but she always claimed that she gained more than she lost, for there had always been an empty corner in her large heart, even when the alderman was there, and now it was filled, and without the necessity of wishing any ill to anybody in India or elsewhere.

Little Pedr, whose name was not Pedr, grew up as straight as a die, and never gave her one moment's anxiety. She used to watch him cautiously and unostentatiously at first, but soon gave it up and rejoiced in him exceedingly, more than ever she had done in the jewels she never wore.

Lady Jones is still alive, and little Pedr, whose name is not Pedr, and who is no longer little, is in the navy. He has gone far, and is likely to go farther.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

STEEL-CHAIN MAKING.

IN describing a modern machine it is often asserted that the raw material goes in at one end and comes out a finished product at the other. This is literally true of the Locke chain-making machine, of American origin, of which a demonstration was recently given in London. It is fed on one side with a tape of annealed steel, and from the other side there emerges link by link a completed chain. And perhaps the most wonderful feature of the process is that there is not a particle of waste, a ton of steel producing a ton of chain. The chain is of the 'detachable' kind—that is to say, the links can be separated from one another sideways; but there are no loose pins, the end of one link folding over its fellow. Such chains used in connection with sprocket-wheels are extensively employed on all kinds of machines, and many different sizes are made, from the big-linked kind suitable for dredging machinery to one small enough to replace the perishable sash-line on an ordinary window. We were witnesses of tests applied to this new form of chain which conclusively proved that it will bear a far higher strain than will the ordinary sprocket-chain with links of malleable iron. A steel chain is lighter bulk for bulk than one of iron; and the machine under review, being quite automatic, and thus dispensing with hand-labour, will produce a cheap article. It is being introduced in this country by the Locke Steel Chain Company, of 18 Bishopsgate Street, London.

THE ELECTROPHONE.

For some years that modification of the telephone known as the electrophone has enabled people at their own homes to listen to performances at concert halls, theatres, &c. The apparatus has now been brought to such perfection that on the occasion of Mr Chamberlain's recent speech at Birmingham his words were listened to in London and taken down in shorthand, a verbatim report appearing in the London *Evening News*. The matter occupied eight columns of type, and was being eagerly read by Londoners about twenty minutes after Mr Chamberlain had concluded his speech at Birmingham, more than one hundred miles distant. This is certainly a great achievement, and marks a new departure in journalism. Possibly some day the electrophone or some such apparatus will be made to work automatically in union with a type-setting device, so that the verbatim reporter will find his occupation gone. But that time is not yet. There are very few public speakers whose utterances will bear verbatim reporting. Most speeches require much judicious editing before they are published, and no machine possesses the powers of discrimination to perform that very necessary work.

THE PHONOGRAPH.

While the electrophone is helping the shorthand writer by putting him in touch with a speaker more than a hundred miles away, the phonograph is gradually ousting him, or her, from the merchant's office. In several different offices lately we have seen the phonograph in use. It stands at the principal's elbow, and when he wants to dictate a letter to it he presses a button to set its cylinder working, and talks the letter into its trumpet-mouth. When several letters have been so recorded, the detached cylinder is removed to another room, where it speaks the words which it has absorbed into the ear of the typist. It is obvious that this method of correspondence obviates the necessity of keeping a shorthand clerk. The Columbia Phonograph Company, who do an immense business in the circulation of musical phonographs and records, inform us that the instrument is used for correspondence to a much larger extent in America than it is here. The convenience of the system is such that it is sure to extend as soon as its advantages are known.

ENVELOPE-MAKING.

The manufacture of stamped envelopes for the United States Government is carried out by means of a machine invented by Mr H. J. Wickham, which gums, stamps, prints, folds, and counts the envelopes into packets of twenty-five. At the commencement of the operation five hundred blanks are placed in a pile on a table or bed attached to the machine; they are automatically picked up one by one, and carried to dies and type, where they are stamped and printed in the required colours. They are then passed on to the folding apparatus, where three edges are gummed and joined, the fourth, the flap of the envelope, being left to dry. Carried forward by an endless chain, they are again picked up one by one by pincers and arranged in packets of twenty-five. One machine, attended by a single workman, is able to make forty-five thousand envelopes per day, the cost of manufacture being reduced to a very small sum.

ANIMATED MICROSCOPY.

The work of the cinematographer has hitherto been to amuse rather than instruct, and when we see the announcement 'Animated Pictures' we do not associate the phrase with anything of a technical nature. But it has lately been shown in the most conclusive manner that this form of photograph can be enlisted as an able expositor of facts in natural history which could not by any other means be brought before a class of students in such a realistic manner. Mr Martin Duncan has succeeded in wedding the cinematograph to the

microscope, so that organisms which are too small to be seen at all by the unaided eye are projected upon a screen in highly magnified form, while their movements can at the same time be studied. An old but still a favourite experiment with microscopists is to secure a living frog near the stage of the instrument so that the circulation of the blood can be seen in its webbed foot. Mr Duncan has produced an animated photograph of this phenomenon, in which the blood corpuscles can be plainly seen coursing in lively streams through the vessels. He has also photographed in the form of animated pictures living bacteria magnified by the microscope to one thousand diameters, the component images being taken at the rate of sixteen per second. To achieve this remarkable result a special system of lighting the original object had to be devised, and this, we understand from Mr Duncan, is the subject of a patent application.

FLOATING ISLANDS.

The recent report of a floating island which drifted out to sea from the German coast has called attention to the circumstance that Britain can boast of a phenomenon of a somewhat similar character. It is mentioned in most of the guide-books to the Lake Country as occasionally appearing on Derwentwater not far from the famous Lodore Waterfall. The eminent meteorologist, the late Mr G. J. Symons, who was well known in connection with the rainfall statistics, when visiting the Lake District had an opportunity of seeing this island, which only occasionally makes its appearance above the surface of the water, and generally in the month of June. Its appearance is that of a lawn, and while the centre portion rises perhaps to a height of a foot or so above the water-level, the edges are still anchored to the bottom of the lake. The phenomenon is attributed to a mass of vegetable matter which is normally attached to the soft bottom of the lake, but under certain conditions it gets charged with gas and becomes buoyant enough to tear itself away from its bed. Observations of its occasional appearances go back for many years, and it is marked on some of the old maps.

REGISTRATION OF PLUMBERS.

In a memorandum forwarded to us by the Worshipful Company of Plumbers, it is pointed out that an ample supply of water and an efficient system of drainage are the two first requisites to the health and comfort of the home; that, although the architect and builder are responsible for the erection of a house, the actual work in connection with the drainage and the water-supply is undertaken by the plumber, who, unless a competent worker, can do no end of harm. To protect the public against the disastrous results of bad workmanship, by enabling them to distinguish between qualified and unqualified workmen, the company organised some time since a scheme of technical instruction by which plumbers could be efficiently trained, and a system of registration by which competent workmen could be identified. The company now call upon householders to assist in this useful work by employing only plumbers who can show a certificate issued by them and a registration ticket for the current year.

PASSENGER-LIFTS.

Hydraulic and electrical lifts are now so common in business premises that they are familiar to all dwellers in large towns and cities, and in underground tube-railways there are lifts of the same type, each capable of carrying fifty passengers or more, which establish communication between the stations and the streets above. In the next tube-railway to be opened in the Metropolis, the Great Northern and City Railway, the stations are to be furnished with moving stairways instead of lifts. In these stairways there are no stairs, but a moving belt which traverses an inclined plane, upon which the passengers will stand two abreast. The belt being always in motion, the passengers will be able to step on to it at any moment, and a large number can be carried by it within a short time. The method has been in use at the Crystal Palace and at other places of amusement, on a small scale, and has been found to work well. It will probably be adopted by other tube-railways.

ABOUT ALUMINIUM.

There are two notes in the November issue of the *Journal of the Franklin Institute* concerning aluminium, which we think may be of service to our readers. The first refers to a method of soldering the metal, which forms the subject of a recent United States patent. The solder consists of aluminium five parts, antimony five parts, and zinc ninety parts. First the aluminium is melted, the zinc is then added, and lastly the antimony. The mixture is fluxed with sal-ammoniac, and the clear metal poured off into sticks for use. The other note has reference to an observation by Bernhard a German experimenter, which was published some little time back. He found that aluminium would act just like a hone of fine quality, and would put a splendid edge on surgical knives, razors, &c. The edge thus formed is so fine that no amount of stropping can improve it; indeed, the latter operation tends to spoil the edge by rounding it. All this is confirmed by the writer of the paragraph in the journal from which we quote; but he is careful to add that with an Ouachita (Hot Springs) hone it is quite possible to get as keen an edge in as short a time.

PEAT-FUEL.

Many are the patents which have been granted to sanguine inventors for processes which aim at compressing peat into solid block-fuel; but for some reason or other peat-fuel is not yet an article readily procurable, although thousands would buy it if it would answer the purpose of coal at a lesser price. We recently saw a demonstration of one of these

processes at the works of Messrs Johnson & Phillips, electrical engineers, Charlton, Kent, the novel point of which seems to be the introduction of a current of electricity at one stage of the manufacture, in order to drive off the water. We were not able to ascertain anything about the cost of this new fuel, nor did the printed description of the process handed to us contain any particulars of tests having been made by competent workers of its actual value as a heat-producer compared with that of coal.

THE DIVINING-ROD.

At Renfrew some time back a demonstration was given of the art of 'water-divining,' the operator being Mr A. W. Wills, of Bath, who claims, it is stated, that he has never yet failed to find subterranean water by means of the divining-rod. Two places were marked where the curling upwards of the rod indicated that there was running water beneath, and we presume that borings will be made to test the correctness of the diagnosis. Professor W. F. Barrett, who has devoted much attention to the alleged powers of the water-diviners, believes that in many cases the 'dowsers,' as these diviners are called, are guided by surface signs, imperceptible to the ordinary observer, but known to the experienced eye. But he admits that there have been several successful cases of water-finding where this explanation cannot apply. He fancies that the real cause of such success is due to something new to science; to a supernormal perceptive faculty possessed by certain individuals which causes an object sought for to excite an impression upon them when they approach it. The necessity for the divining-rod and its alleged movements he regards as absurd. He suggests, as a subject for investigation, that some modern method of detecting a change in the circulation of the blood, the result of emotional disturbance, might be tried on one of these 'dowsers,' as a substitute for the divining-rod.

THE PRESERVATION OF TIMBER.

A novel method of seasoning, strengthening, and preserving timber has lately been introduced and is said to give most satisfactory results, and we have been able to glean from the *London Chamber of Commerce Journal* the following particulars concerning it. The timber is boiled in a weak solution of sugar, so that as the natural sap and moisture is driven off its interstices are filled and its fibres knitted together with a cement which both strengthens and preserves. After boiling, the wood is put into a drying-stove and submitted to a high temperature, and by the time the moisture is driven off it is ready for use. It is believed that soft woods which have hitherto been useless for structural purposes can now be changed, by this process, into a valuable material which can be used by builders. Wood treated in this manner becomes heavier, poplar, for example, gaining 75 per cent. on its original weight; and the tensile strength of this and other woods is increased by the sugar-treatment to a remarkable extent. The process makes wood less inflammable by reason of the greater compactness and solidity conferred upon it; and as the necessary plant and raw material are cheap, this method should have a wide future before it. It would seem to be especially adapted to the treatment of soft wood-blocks for street-paving purposes.

POISONOUS SHELLFISH.

The recent scare concerning the pollution of certain oyster-beds has caused many persons to refrain from eating the toothsome bivalve, and the trade has suffered to a serious extent. It would seem from a report of the London Medical Officer of Health that similar care must be exercised regarding mussels and cockles. A case of enteric fever was traced to mussels sold at Billingsgate Market, and these were found to have come from Leigh, near the mouth of the Thames. Samples of both cockles and mussels from the same beds were submitted to bacteriological examination, and were found to be polluted, some to a dangerous extent, with sewage. The Fishmongers' Company have therefore prohibited the sale in the London markets of these Essex cockles until they can render a better account of themselves. It seems from this report that there is a minimum period for which these shellfish should be boiled before being eaten, and this precautionary measure has been disregarded.

PHOTOGRAPHS IN COLOUR.

Although we do not seem much nearer to the realisation of that dream, 'photography in natural colours,' we have abundant evidence in the various periodicals devoted to artistic matters that a means exists of associating photographs with coloured surface-printing. The process is not published, so that those who are anxious to find out all about it must possess their souls in patience. The Photochrom Company have lately issued a remarkable series of coloured copies from well-known works hung in the National Gallery, London. Except that they are much reduced in size, it is very difficult in the case of some of them to believe that they are not actual painted replicas of the original works. They are sold at a price which brings them within reach of the shallowest purse, and we hope that in process of time such pictures, or something like them, will elbow out the terrible German lithographs after the same masters which may still be found in isolated districts. The wide circulation of such photochroms would be a potent aid in the art education of the masses.

'BITS FROM AN OLD BOOK-SHOP.'

There is an endless fund of interest and romance connected with an old book-shop. One never knows —although in these days of lynx-eyed collectors the chances are daily lessening—when one may lay hands upon some bibliographical curiosity. In this graveyard of dead reputations, humbling to the vanity of authors, we may stumble upon a first edition of

R. L. Stevenson, Shelley, or Burns. Mr R. M. Williamson, who seems an enthusiast in his profession, has published *Bits from an Old Book-Shop*, in which he gossips pleasantly about the pleasures of bookselling, lovers of books, the twopenny-box, and kindred subjects. There are bits of autobiography, too, which relate how the author was trained in Selkirk, and started business at 325 Leith Walk, Edinburgh, almost on the same site as William Chambers did in May 1819. According to Mr Williamson, the books that sell best are the Bible, an English Dictionary, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Arabian Nights*, *Pickwick Papers*, and *East Lynne*. Mr Williamson evidently knows most about retail bookselling, although his remarks on publishing are shrewd and sensible. Like many more in the trade, he has calculated the profits of the author of *Wee Macgreegor* on that shilling book at three thousand pounds. That is on a basis of three-halfpence for the initial cost per copy, leaving tenpence-halfpenny to be divided between author, publisher, the wholesale trade, and the bookseller. But is this not mere guess-work? Many thousands more have been sold since Mr Williamson made his calculation. Few speculations pay better than publishing when a book goes well; on the other hand, in none can money be more quickly lost when that is produced which the public does not want. And there are thousands of volumes written and published every year which no human being wants, or would be the better for if given for nothing. Myriads of these annually gravitate towards the old book-shop.

GRAIN FROM THE YUKON.

A Canadian correspondent of the *Glasgow Herald* draws attention to the possibilities of receiving grain from the Yukon. He remarks that 'it is curious how the northerly limit of wheat production has continually advanced. Not so many years ago the very idea of raising wheat anywhere in the Canadian West was accounted as absurd. Then it was found that wheat could be grown, and profitably grown, in Manitoba. But the people of Manitoba were equally sceptical as to the possibility of growing wheat in the Saskatchewan country, until adventurous farmers had proved the Saskatchewan valley to be an even greater wheat-country than Manitoba. Then the limit of credulity was placed in the Peace River country, far north of Edmonton; but men brought down samples of wheat raised on Indian reservations on the Peace River that were superior to anything that had previously been seen. And now an authentic report states that wheat can be grown successfully in the Yukon. An American scientist, H. Brian Pearson, writing about the agricultural possibilities of the Yukon, says: "From a residence in the country extending over some years, I can state that all the hardy cereals and vegetables can be grown there; in fact, I have raised various kinds both at the coast and in the interior. There are thousands of acres of land in this region available both for agricultural purposes and for stock-raising. This land is far richer in the earthy phosphates than that in many of the Eastern States. Alaska and the Yukon will probably be capable of ultimately exporting millions of bushels of wheat and other grains to add to the world's present supply." It is improbable that we shall have to fall back upon the Yukon for wheat for many generations to come; but the fact remains that it must now be classed among the regions capable of growing marketable grain.'

THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS.

The plea urged by the Duchess of Portland, as president of the Society for the Protection of Birds (3 Hanover Square, London, W.), deserves the widest possible publicity. The duchess utters a note of appeal and warning which should reach the heart of every woman wearing a hat decorated with birds' wings or other bird-trimmings. The duchess says: 'Hats composed of feathers—some wreathed in bullfinches, some with twisted and distorted bodies of terns, others decked with dyed plumes—offend the eye at every turn. From seagulls and bullfinches, in fact, to the brilliant gem of the tropics, nothing appears to be sacred to the trade. Is it useless to protest yet once more against the reckless slaughter of bird-life which this barbarous fashion entails? The personal vanity which sacrifices, not the life only, but the very race of birds created for the beautifying of the world, is unworthy of the civilisation of the twentieth century. In the interest of good taste, and for the sake of bird-life, I hope I need not plead in vain.' The securing of so-called osprey feathers is described by R. W. Cater in his article, 'Heron-Hunting on the Wanks' in this *Journal* for 1897.

IN WINTER-TIME.

Ah, my Beloved! when the snowflakes fall,
And all the world is dead and cold and sere,
A weight lies on my heart as if each year
Had fallen like these flakes and wrought a pall
Cold as the snow and heavier than all!
Does death lie 'neath its folds? Have doubt and fear
Killed faith and hope and love, and every dear,
Sweet dream of youth that we can still recall?
In truth, I know that 'neath it, through the sod,
New life is quickening in root and tree;
That soon the snows will melt, and fair flowers nod
To the warm sun. I know that this will be.
Ah, if I knew it were the will of God,
His spring-time then might come to thee and me!

KATE MELLERSH.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SIXTH SERIES.

CAST BREAD.

By MARY STUART BOYD, Author of *Our Stolen Summer*, *Clipped Wings*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—MR DREGHORNE CASTS HIS BREAD UPON THE WATERS.

THE Dreghornes were a well-known and highly respected Glasgow family. For generations their stock had been esteemed as solid folks, prone to charity, and much given to ungrudging hospitality.

Peter Dreghorne, the last male survivor, was a warm man both in pocket and in heart. He had retired from business, and his interests were divided between sharing the direction of certain charitable institutions and guarding the affairs of a West End church where he acted as elder, and whose management knew and valued him as one of the three members whose cheque-books were ever ready when there was any deficit in the church funds.

All his married life had been spent in the house in Park Terrace to which he had taken his bride; and there it was that Elizabeth, John Peter (who died in infancy), Gertrude, and Ellen Mary were born. Mr Dreghorne loved his placid, buxom wife and admired his three daughters, especially Elizabeth, the eldest, who was both handsome and witty.

Mr Dreghorne's greatest pleasure lay in entertaining, though it was not in elaborate dinner-parties given in return for similar feasts that his soul delighted. His selection of guests was entirely uncalculating, and most frequently consisted of those from whom no return invitation could be anticipated.

At one time it was a score of aged poorhouse inmates, whose sole claims to his hospitality lay in their poverty and dependence. At others, city missionaries, Bible-women, residents in the Blind Asylum, night policemen, pupils from the Deaf and Dumb Institution, all in turn shared his generosity; though against the future reception of these latter Elizabeth raised a mild protest, because, as she averred, the knowledge that they were watching her and criticising her among themselves without emitting a sound caused her to wrestle with an overpowering desire to scream.

With this exception, Mr Dreghorne's family, accustomed to their otherwise indulgent father's foible, uttered no objection to his inviting whom he liked—except, of course, on that memorable occasion when they were giving a formal garden-party at their coast house at Innellan, and Mr Dreghorne arrived accompanied by a swarm of utterly disreputable street-arabs. Strolling through the park on his way to the club that morning, he had seen the young ragamuffins disporting themselves round the fountain, and, seized by compassion, had brought the troop down by river steamer, walking in accompanied by his grimy guests just when the garden-party was at its gayest.

But even on that trying occasion the protest was of the mildest. Mrs Dreghorne cherished a fixed belief that everything her husband did was right, and the younger girls took their cue from Elizabeth.

'Papa is master of the house, and can amuse himself as he likes, and everybody he chooses to invite must be welcomed,' was Miss Dreghorne's ultimatum. 'The only thing I must insist on is that we are not expected to recognise the guests after the entertainment has ended. Fancy, having all papa's protégés claim one as a friend!' she had added with a shudder.

It was therefore no surprise for Mr Dreghorne's home-circle when that worthy gentleman, on his return from taking part in a meeting of divinity students, announced that, pitying the loneliness of those fine young fellows, many of whom, having come from distant homes to the University, were forced to live in squalid lodgings, he had, just on the spur of the moment, invited as many as liked to spend the following Thursday evening at his house.

'A little music, a good supper, and a hearty welcome,' he had promised them; and the gathering had applauded the generous nature that prompted the spontaneous invitation.

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'How many do you expect?'

Elizabeth, who was housekeeper, asked the question.

'Um—forty, or perhaps fifty. Yes, there must have been quite fifty at the debate. Better prepare for fifty, my dear; and remember that young men have good appetites.'

'Well, papa, I only hope you won't have reason to regret your rashness.' Miss Dreghorne could not resist a touch of reproof at this fresh instance of her father's precipitate kindliness. 'I don't object to emancipated washerwomen or indigent road-sweepers, because they are on a different social plane from us, and know it; but I certainly think it a little indiscreet to issue a general invitation to a tribe of men who are sure to consider themselves on terms of equality with us. It is so—complicating.'

And Peter Dreghorne, shutting himself into his study—the ground-floor room wherein he studied the *Glasgow Herald* and considered the claims presented by the begging-letters that formed the greater part of his correspondence—pondered whether the act whereto a momentary impulse had urged him might prove a foolish as well as a hasty one.

The fateful Thursday arrived. At six o'clock the family dined in the breakfast-room, for in the dining-room the table, telescoped to its fullest extent and flanked by sundry smaller tables, was already laid for supper.

'Give them something substantial, Lizzie,' the host had advised when consulted regarding the nature of the viands to be provided. 'Have plenty of fowls and joints and sweets: jellies, meringues, and tarts, and—and things, you know. Young men are certain to have a sweet tooth.'

And Elizabeth interpreted his commands liberally.

Mayonnaise of salmon, lobster salad, boned turkey and tongue, oyster patties, chicken croquettes, besides all manner of enticing sweets, were there in profusion, with dinner-rolls sufficient for a hundred. Large crystal jugs of iced lemonade graced the board, and an overpowering odour of coffee pervaded the staircases.

Elizabeth, shrugging her white shoulders under the black-net dress that she esteemed good enough for the occasion, made a caustic remark comparing the house to a coffee-tavern. But the younger girls were in their gayest evening-frocks and their highest spirits.

When they had assembled in readiness in the drawing-room there was diversity of thought as to the manner of the guests' arrival.

Nelly and Gerty, their minds prejudiced by memories of rectorial election riots, and expectant of a gay, rollicking band, thought the students would dash up in hansoms. Mr Dreghorne inclined to the belief that they would arrange to gather somewhere and arrive in a body. Elizabeth scornfully refused to express an opinion; and, seated in her special easy-chair, Mrs Dreghorne dozed placidly, as was her after-dinner wont, the knitting that never progressed held laxly in her plump hands.

Consumed by hostly concern, Mr Dreghorne moved restlessly about. As he looked into the dining-room, a sudden and utterly foundationless fear that there was too little to eat tortured him. He had just hurried upstairs to voice the dread conviction when a tinkle of the door-bell heralded the arrival of the first guest.

It was not the bold clamour to be anticipated from a band of heroes. Indeed, so little imperative was the sound that, had it not fallen upon alert ears, the summons might have passed unnoticed.

'Mr Colin MacCalman.'

With the announcement the parlour-maid had thrown open the drawing-room door to admit a being so different from their preconceived notions that Nelly and Gerty involuntarily gasped, and even the host's greeting was silenced on his lips.

So far from belonging to the type of vivacious manhood anticipated, Mr MacCalman proved to be the epitome of awkward sobriety, clad in a heavy suit of rough home-spun tweed. To add to the girls' disappointment, he was not even what they considered young. His actual age was three-and-twenty; but his black beard marked him at least five years older. His hands revealed that his acquaintance with honest labour had been by no means a casual one. To judge from Mr MacCalman's consternation, it might have been the first time his country-made boots set sole on carpet. Why he, of all that student throng, should have been the only one who accepted Mr Dreghorne's invitation in the spirit wherein it was extended remained an unsolved mystery.

The Dreghornes' dismay lasted but a moment. Hastening forward, Mr Dreghorne shook Mr Colin MacCalman warmly by the hand, and promptly introduced him to his wife and daughters; only a slightly increased effusiveness of manner betraying the perturbation he experienced. Elizabeth, coming to her father's aid, chatted her hardest to relieve the constraint of the situation. The girls' chagrin had given place to amusement. Stifled giggles came from behind the window-curtains, where they had stationed themselves to watch for fresh arrivals.

Mr MacCalman meanwhile lost no opportunity of exhibiting his embarrassment. He experienced great difficulty in modulating his voice to the acoustics of a drawing-room, and met his genial host's attempts at conversation by replies that sounded either scarce audible or over-loud.

The time spent in waiting for the company that never came dragged heavily past. Even the kindly flood of Mr Dreghorne's small-talk threatened to dry up, and his spouse's social efforts—which were strictly limited to a beaming smile and an occasional remark respecting the vagaries of the weather—did little to relieve the tension.

Elizabeth, having early classed Mr MacCalman as impossible, and the party as a fiasco, was tempted to indulge in some sarcastic remarks, which the

guest, being happily void of a sense of humour, received with a serious attention that rendered her shafts powerless.

When ten o'clock had come without bringing a second arrival, Elizabeth, taking the initiative, suggested supper, and the little procession—half-a-dozen all told—went downstairs valiantly to face the tables spread for fifty. It was quite evident, from the seemingly reluctant manner in which Mr MacCalman endured the touch of his hostess's hand on his arm, that even the stereotyped civilities of life were as yet mysteries to him.

In the dining-room, when confronted by the feast, MacCalman evinced no surprise. Mr Dreghorne, his attention perforce concentrated upon one guest, heaped that guest's plate, and the guest ate earnestly, as though the assimilation of food were a sacred duty, and one not to be lightly interrupted by frivolous conversation.

It must be confessed that each individual member of the family cherished an unspoken hope that, the meal ended, their solitary visitor might take his departure. But such a cavalier proceeding would have been contrary to the Highland gentleman's conception of courtesy. Mr MacCalman accompanied his weary entertainers upstairs, and sat, an interested listener, while Gertrude and Ellen Mary, with many wrong notes and much *sotto voce* friction, performed the duets over whose acquirement they had spent much time and temper, their achievement being received by their admiring parents with that astounding exhibition of complacent enjoyment wherewith unmusical progenitors greet their unmusical offspring's efforts in harmony. Then Elizabeth sang sweetly, a little disdainfully perhaps, but altogether to the secret delight of MacCalman, who, while appreciating the sweetness, thought it only right that so gifted a being should be proud.

Mrs Dreghorne had lapsed from the stage of fitful apologetic dozing into that of profound slumber, when the incubus, who had been stealthily watching the timepiece, and saw the hands reach midnight, rose abruptly to his feet.

'I'll have to be taking the road.' He spoke hesitatingly, as though reluctantly compelled to deprive the company of his presence. Needless to record, nobody offered this terribly literal person even the most half-hearted inducement to prolong his visit.

Mrs Dreghorne, awaking with a slight involuntary snort, uttered the formula wherewith she invariably sped the parting guests. 'Must you *really* go? Glad to have seen you. Hope you'll call soon.' And good Mr Dreghorne, who could not have been inhospitable had he tried, and who would have been honestly grieved had Mr MacCalman suspected himself unwelcome, remarked in farewell that they would be happy to see him again.

'I'll have to be taking the road,' mocked Elizabeth, who was turning out the lights in the drawing-room brackets when her father returned from seeing their visitor off the premises. 'One consolation, father, that dispensation is over!'

But Mr Dreghorne, remembering the invitation he had unwarily uttered on the doorstep, rumpled his gray hair uneasily. Even at that early date, the fear that her congratulations might be premature oppressed him.

A poor student has but few opportunities of making affluent friends. Colin MacCalman was in his third year at Glasgow University, yet the occasion of his visit to Park Terrace marked his introduction to the superfluities of existence.

MacCalman was a man endowed with great natural ability as yet latent. His prosaic exterior concealed a powerful poetic nature; and even Miss Dreghorne's opinion regarding the stolidity of her father's latest protégé would have met with considerable modification had she been privileged to see a translation of the eloquent Gaelic letter he despatched to the far-off Highland croft where dwelt the old folks who stinted themselves that their aspiring grandson might have the means to study for the ministry.

TALKS WITH GIRLS.

By KATHARINE BURRILL.

FOR THE EVERYDAY GIRL.

'GENERALLY speaking, I don't like boys. How do you do, boy?' was the memorable remark of Miss Murdstone when she first met 'David Copperfield.'

Generally speaking, I don't like girls. Little boys are much easier to get on with. You can always put things on a pleasant footing by the gift of half-a-crown—a very small boy will even accept sixpence with gratitude; and you can make a friend for life of a gorgeous young gentleman in a stand-up collar and coat-tails by giving him a sovereign. When the waves of adversity engulf you, he of the collar and tails will always say, 'Poor old chap, he once tipped me a sovereign.'

There is a popular superstition that you cannot offer little girls money. Personally, we believe they would accept it with inward satisfaction, though with much outward reluctance. But who has the courage to tender even 'so old and valuable a friend as a half-crown' to a small person in a Liberty velveteen frock, or to a more advanced young woman in a serge skirt and a red Tam o' Shanter? You can give them boxes of chocolate; but even the very best chocolate does not form the same firm basis of friendship, probably because the actual spending

of money, the mere act of laying it ostentatiously on the counter, is a greater joy than the possession of what money buys. Little boys are always quite oblivious to your clothes, and this fact gives you, when in their society, a feeling of ease and security. 'Contrariwise,' little girls stare hard at your hat, which makes you nervous. They appear polite; but you know they are comparing your appearance with that of Mrs Jones next door, and the comparison is not to your advantage. A small girl will embarrass an entire company by saying in a stage-whisper, 'Mummy, why is Mrs Smith so bulgy?' or staring very hard at a plain friend, will remark, apparently into vacancy, 'I *do* like pretty people.' It is on these occasions that we feel girls should be locked up at three years old and let out at five-and-twenty; for the semi-grown-up 'Backfisch,' the just-left-school-home-for-good-girl, is even more alarming. She remembers accurately all you have forgotten, and has possibly learnt more than you ever heard of in the way of lessons—and she looks her superiority. The girl who is least alarming is the 'Tom-boy' country girl, who keeps pets; being more like our friend the genial school-boy, she is less terrifying. Never having been at a boarding-school, she is neither full of airs and graces nor does she talk to you of Constitutional History and Higher Mathematics with pitying condescension for your appalling ignorance. Quite the nicest girl we know is the one sister among many brothers, which goes to prove that boys are good educators and disciplinarians. Therefore we still hold to our opinion that English public school-boys and Scotch old ladies are the most delightful Human Beings in the world. As girls cannot turn themselves into Etonians or Harrovians, they ought to try to grow into charming old ladies. Age does not always bring wisdom, and you may be as idiotic at seventy as you are at seventeen. You can be as empty-headed with white hair as you were when your locks were golden; only, a stupid old woman is ten times worse than a stupid young one; and if the years have merely hardened your heart, crystallised your faults, and left your mind stagnant, your case is very bad indeed. In the most beautiful speech that a woman ever made to her lover (and that we wish every girl would read), Portia tells Bassanio that the full sum of her is nothing—she calls herself

> An unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised;
> Happy in this, she is not yet so old
> But she may learn; happier than this,
> She is not bred so dull but she can learn.

Portia was a great heiress and a beautiful woman, and yet she calls herself 'nothing' with a sweet humility that, I fear, we do not find in the girls of to-day. To me, Portia seems almost an ideal of what a true-hearted woman should be. Perhaps a little bit of a romp; but so gay, so generous, so *great-hearted*, so true a friend, so loyal a lover. Truly she was not 'bred so dull' that she did not grow into a magnificent woman, and made her home at Belmont the centre of all that was best and happiest; in fact, I am not at all sure that she did not try to do something for Shylock, perhaps persuaded Jessica and Lorenzo to ask for his forgiveness and be friends once more.

One quality Shakespeare's Heroines possessed that is rarely met with in girls of the present day—they were Merry. Now, merriment is a good old English word that means cheerfulness and gaiety, and does *not* mean loud and senseless laughter; nor does it mean screaming at the pitch of your voice, nor an unending stream of rather vulgar chaff. The merry heart that goes all the way without tiring is the heart so full of generous good-fellowship that there is no room in it for envy, jealousy, and small-mindedness. You can be very amusing with a spiteful tongue, but you will never be merry. Beatrice, who was 'born in a merry hour,' teased poor Benedick unmercifully; but she was nevertheless a brave and loyal woman—nothing of the Feminine Cat about her. Light-hearted Rosalind, even 'bonny Kate,' who was also 'sometimes Kate the Curst,' were nearer the old ideal of what a wife should be than the maidens of to-day. For long ago a wife had to be 'Merry, buxom, and debonaire.' Now, we have occasionally seen old ladies who answered this description; but we fear the young men would have some difficulty in finding Brides if they insisted on these three qualifications. At one time all the poets—except Byron, who said rude things about milk and water and bread and butter—wrote nice things about girls. When they were not 'standing with reluctant feet where the brook and river meet,' then they were Queens of the May, or rosebuds 'set with little wilful thorns.' They were beautiful, they had golden curls, they wore white muslin, they were dainty and charming and graceful, and everything that was delightful.

Other times, other manners. Now every one who writes about girls calls them hard names; and if we believed the articles in Magazines and Newspapers (only we don't) we should think the youthful feminine portion of the English Race in a very bad way. Mr Marriott Watson inveighed against the Athletic Girl, with the result of a shower of indignant letters from hockey-players who revel in rude health and sevens in shoes, and another shower of applauding letters from maidens whose pride is an eighteen-inch waist and a small foot, and who do not play games. No sooner did the Athletic and Unathletic, each perfectly pleased with themselves, simmer down into comparative peace than some one rose up and attacked The Suburban Girl. She, poor thing, was accused of many enormities, chief among them being imitation lace and jewellery, and dyed birds in her hats. Is it to be wondered at if the dwellers in Suburbia rushed into print in defence of their rolled-gold muff-chains and cheap torchon-trimmed petticoats? After all, is it anybody's business what any one else wears? And if Miss Suburbia cannot

afford the real, is she to go unadorned when the attractive imitation calls to her from every shop-window?

The Play-going Girl is like 'the fly on the ceiling whose case is the worst one,' for she is accused of Morbid Hysteria. So far she has said nothing in her defence. Silly she may be, but that she writes to her favourite actor offering him her photograph we do not believe. She may spend her pennies on bunches of flowers for actors (more probably for actresses), and she may buy gorgeous frames in which to enshrine the counterfeit presentments of 'Karl Heinrich' and 'the dashing Brown;' but that any English or Scotch girl is such a drivelling idiot as the article in question says she is we absolutely refuse to believe.

Now, it is bad to be a morbid play-goer, to play cricket when you ought to be doing something else, to wear hats covered with poor little birds and high heels that make you totter as you walk; but all these things are minor matters compared with the very much graver charges brought against the Modern Girl. Quite lately we had—possibly an instructive—certainly an unedifying correspondence in a Leading Daily Paper on the subject of revolting Daughters. To judge from their letters, many of them must be very revolting indeed. On the other hand, the mothers, who are presumably older and should have more sense, wrote equally revolting, and in some cases very narrow-minded, unfair letters. Surely the daughters might be better employed than airing their grievances in print; and if the mothers were busy with their homes trying to make their children's lives interesting and happy, they could have no time in which to expose their ignorance and failure to an unsympathetic public under such alluring names as 'A distressed Mother,' 'Hopeless,' and 'A Matron of Balham.' Many of the girls seemed to think themselves very ill-used because they had 'to make calls' with their mothers, and 'go out in the carriage.' These young persons' parents evidently keep a gig and come up to Mr Pecksniff's standard of respectability, possibly live in 'a cottage with a double coach-house, a cottage of gentility,' and have besides what Bailie Nicol Jarvie called 'a' the comforts o' the Sautmarket.' Now, many people have to walk when they would much prefer to drive, and other people have no carriage exercise but what is afforded by a penny Tram-Car and an occasional common cab. Happy little Miss! who is both the fortunate possessor of a kind mother and a family barouche. If little Miss finds making calls so irksome, when she has daughters of her own she will be able to enter into their feelings and leave them at home, sallying forth alone in her best bonnet, new gloves, and a card-case. We do not pretend that driving from house to house praying that people may be out is an interesting or exciting performance, but it is better than excitement and interest to please your mother. You may regret that you do not live in Far Cathay or on the plains of Timbuctoo, where we imagine calling is unknown; but we must pay something for civilisation. Many mothers look forward longingly for years to the happy day when their daughter returns home for good, and it must be a bitter disappointment to find your girl does not care to be with you and grudges every moment spent away from her own pleasures and her own friends. We say 'home for good,' but for bad would unfortunately be more accurate. The advent of the emancipated scholar is often the upheaval of the whole domestic economy. Perhaps it is hardly her fault, as she is rather in the position of a dog who is let loose after always running on a chain—we can hardly blame 'Fido' if he takes advantage of his liberty to root up the flower-beds or scour the woods for rabbits, oblivious of our whistle.

At school a girl is hemmed in with rules and regulations, bells for this and bells for that, hours for work and hours for play, the whole day carefully mapped out and very little left to her own initiative. She comes home from the Finishing School, or the Higher Education College, and Hey, presto! everything is changed and she is thrown on her own resources, with very often dire results. For at eighteen we are quite as sure that we know everything as we are certain at eight-and-thirty that we know nothing and can never live long enough to learn one millionth-part of what there is to learn. Cock-sure Youth gallops round the world, while Age sits at home and is afraid to look out of the window. When Cock-sure Sweet Seventeen comes home she is very likely, with her upsetting, new-fangled ways, to turn the whole house out of the windows to the very great discomfort of 'Papa' and 'Mamma.' 'Papa' (bless him!) has cheerfully paid for all the extras, the accomplishments that Seventeen (we hope) brings home with her, and probably has worked very hard for that same privilege. But will Seventeen sing 'Annie Laurie,' or 'The Message,' or 'Drink to me only with thine eyes,' when 'Papa' asks her? Not she—either she is not in good voice and will not sing at all, or she sings short German or French songs, or erotic English ditties that poor 'Papa' does not know and does not care for. He probably loves little scraps of Mozart and Haydn that 'Mamma' played in their young days; but Seventeen is not going to indulge them with 'The Dream of St Jerome'—'that poor Charlotte played so sweetly'—or Weber's Last Waltz—I should think not—Seventeen fancies her playing of Paderewski or Moskowski, and will Mazurka up and down the piano entirely to her own satisfaction. Of course there are homes where both father and mother are entirely musical, where there is a Home Orchestra, and where all appreciate and understand Classical Music; but we believe these are rarer than the Homes where 'Papa' would like an English Ballad or an old Scotch Song sung to him in the evening. Perhaps this is hardly the place to say so; but the day may come when you would give all the

world to have 'Papa' back again—even though he prefers *Il Trovatore* to *Tannhauser*, or to hear 'Mamma's' voice even though she was scolding you for some little duty left undone. It is as difficult to make the young believe that changes must come as it is to make the old believe that some things will remain fixed and immutable. But I think if girls would remember what they owe to their fathers and mothers, and how empty Life will be without them, we should hear less of Revolting Daughters.

If girls have become 'unmanageable' (as 'Rita' says they have, and says it too in a beautiful new Magazine tied with red ribbons), does the very grievous fault lie with their home upbringing or with their education? To-day, many more subjects are studied, books are fifty times more instructive, and teachers have higher qualifications than they had ten years ago; but are girls improved? Certainly not in manners, or what Mr Turveydrop called Deportment. We constantly meet clever, brilliant girls whose manners and conversation leave much to be desired: after an hour in the society of a dictatorial, loud-voiced, knock-you-down young woman, you feel this must be Julia Mills' 'Desert of Sahara,' and your heart longs for the return of pretty little 'Dora,' even though all she can do is sing to the guitar and play with 'Jip.' If Education cannot teach respect and reverence to elders, and—yes, we are old-fashioned—betters, then a little less education, please. If culture does not tend to refine, away with the Higher Culture. A pleasant, agreeable woman who can only read and write, but takes wherever she goes her own atmosphere of love and happiness, is worth twenty spectacled scholars who in the pursuit of learning have lost what R. L. Stevenson calls their '*métier de femme*.'

This is not written for girls who are studying to pass stiff examinations and take their places as teachers, and who have to earn their own living—splendidly they do it too; but for ordinary girls who are living at home, and who are done with school—not done with trying to learn, we hope, for there is more to be learned when you leave off lessons than ever there was before.

A great many girls are discontented and dissatisfied because they have nothing definite to do. Now, Milton, who knew what he was talking about, wrote, 'Nothing lovelier can be found in woman than to study household good.' Cannot and will not the mothers help their daughters by allowing them 'to study household good,' and giving them certain duties in the home? Even, perhaps, let them order the dinner on certain days, or take an alternative week of housekeeping—suppose they make mistakes; every one makes mistakes when they begin, and girls are less likely to make muddles of their own homes if they have had a little experience of household management under a mother's careful and watchful eye. People say, 'The servants would not like it.' No, they would not if a girl is uncivil and overbearing; but most servants are interested in 'their young ladies,' and let us hope there are still left a few British homes where the cook has known 'Miss Mary' or 'Miss Ethel' as a baby. If nothing will tempt girls to take an intelligent interest in housekeeping or cooking, and they will neither make their own blouses nor 'sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam,' then they had better go on with their studies. If all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, all play and no work makes Jennie a very silly and tiresome member of society. Even if Jennie lives in the depths of the country, are there not Correspondence Classes? Are there not books? Most of all in the good green country are there not those other books that Sweet Earth holds in her arms and that are found 'in the running brooks'? If it is really true that there are 'Stately homes of England' that, however 'beautiful they stand,' are full of bitterness and unhappiness, mothers railing at their daughters, and the latter 'speaking back' to their parents—then, it is inexpressibly sad. It is worse than sad, it is shameful to think that it should be English-speaking women and girls. Did they not for over sixty golden years have before them an example of noble womanhood, of womanhood that showed no signs of flinching or faltering, though living 'in the fierce light that beats upon a throne'? It is a poor return for all Victoria the Good did for her people that within three years of 'the Passing of the Great White Queen' the newspapers of her land should be flooded with letters and articles on unmanageable and revolting Daughters. Queen Victoria was good. When 'the shouting and the tumult dies,' that fact will remain; even after the World has forgotten the Greatness of Her Reign, the magnitude of Her great Possessions. She was good: good wife (*'gutes Fraüchen*,' how simple and sweet it sounds!), good mother, and good friend. May all the wives and mothers of this England, 'that never did nor never shall lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,' remember whose children they are and rise up to call Her blessed who was so truly the Mother of Her People.

Charles Kingsley's 'Be good, sweet maid,' sounds rather stupid and dull to the girl who feels she is and 'can be clever;' but surely it is better 'to do' than 'to dream.' You need not throw away all your dreams; you can still 'Hitch your wagon to a star,' still build your Castles in the air, still listen for the far-off voices of Immortal Gods.

But sooner or later a girl will discover that only while digging in the homely Potato Patch does she find the Four-Leaved Shamrock of happiness, only when following the straight line of duty does she see the curved line of beauty circling round her feet. When a great man came to die, at the end of a life so well spent, so fine under misfortune that we of the Gray North are proud to claim him for our own, almost his last words contained the solution of the whole question. For what is it all about after all—all this pother and outcry? Things cannot be so very bad, 'there is always sun on the wall;' some women are happy, some mothers love their

children, some girls are devoted to their parents. Would you hear the conclusion of the whole matter?

. . . . . .

'I found him entirely himself, though in the last extreme of feebleness. His eye was clear and calm —every trace of the wild fire of delirium extinguished. "Lockhart," he said, "I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man —be virtuous—be religious—be a good man."'—*Lockhart's 'Life of Scott.'*

THE CLOSED BOOK.

By William Le Queux.

CHAPTER VI.—THE OPENING OF THE BOOK.

'SCUSI, signore!' exclaimed the ugly, disreputable-looking old man, holding his battered straw hat behind him, and bowing with as much studied grace as his deformity would allow. The Tuscan, always the essence of politeness, is a marvellous diplomatist. 'I regret to disturb the signore,' he went on in his soft musical speech; 'but I was anxious to know if he met yesterday in Florence the Prior of San Sisto?'

'I did,' I replied, amused at his ingenious attempt to affect ignorance of our meeting.

'And did you make any purchases?'

'I bought one book—a rare Arnoldus.'

'In manuscript?'

'Yes.'

'Bound in original oak boards, with an old brass clasp—eh?' he inquired, with a queer smile about the corners of his mouth. 'May I be permitted to see it?'

His demand aroused my suspicions at once. It was evident that the prior had regretted having sold it to me, and had sent his agent to endeavour to get it back at any cost. Therefore, knowing the unscrupulous ways of some Italians in a cosmopolitan city like Leghorn, I did not intend to give the cunning old fellow sight of it.

'Why do you wish to inspect it? I've packed it away, and it would give me great trouble to get at it again.'

'Then the signore does really send things to England to sell again, as I have heard the people say?' suggested the old man somewhat rudely.

'No, I'm not a dealer,' I responded angrily. 'Who told you so?'

'It is common gossip, signore,' replied the queer old fellow blandly. 'But if you wish it I'll take steps to correct public opinion on that point.'

'Let the gossips say what pleases them,' I snapped. 'I've never yet sold anything I've bought. I suppose they think that by the quantity of my purchases I must be going to set up a curiosity-shop. But,' I added, 'tell me, Graniani, why do you wish to see the manuscript I bought yesterday?'

'Oh, mere curiosity,' was his quick answer. 'You know I'm interested in such things, and I wanted to know how the prior treated you after my recommendation.'

'He treated me well enough, and I bought a bargain.'

'A bargain!' he echoed, and I fancied I detected a strange curl in his lip. 'The Reverendo does not sell many bargains. How much did you pay?'

'Ah!' I laughed, 'I suppose you want to charge him commission—eh?'

The hunchback grinned, displaying his toothless gums, whereupon I took up the receipt and showed him the amount I had paid.

Again he expressed a desire to be allowed to see the book; but, feeling certain that he had come to me with some hidden motive, and at the same time wondering what plot against me the evil-looking old fellow was forming, I point-blank refused. I did not tell him that I knew of his presence in Florence on the previous day, deeming it best to reserve the knowledge to myself. Without doubt he had seen the book in Landini's possession, and the desire to inspect it again was only a clever ruse.

'I think, signore, that hitherto my dealings with you have shown me to be trustworthy,' he said in a tone of complaint, 'and yet you refuse to allow me to see a volume that I understand is most interesting.'

'And rare,' I added. 'It has already been valued by Olschki, who declares it to be a unique specimen, and worth very much more than I gave for it.'

'I know, I know,' he replied, with a sly wink. 'The person who sold it to the prior knew its value and told me. But it is not a bargain, signore—depend upon it that you never get a bargain from the Signor Reverendo.'

'To whom, then, did it originally belong?'

'Ah! that I regret I am not at liberty to say, signore. I gave my word not to divulge the name. Our nobility who become so poor that they are compelled to sell their treasures to the rich foreigners, like yourself, are naturally very reticent about allowing themselves to be known as needy.'

True, I had believed that he was a broken-down noble, some count or marquis who had a knowledge of antiques and who had fallen upon evil times; but the events of the last couple of days had caused me to change my opinion, and to regard him rather as a clever and crafty adventurer.

I could see by his manner that he was ill at ease,

and after some conversation regarding an old Montelupo plate he had offered me at a fabulous price, I waited for him to speak.

'I really wish, signore, you would show me the manuscript,' he blurted forth at last. 'Believe me, I have always acted in your best interests, and surely you will not refuse me such a small favour?'

'But why are you so desirous of seeing it?' I demanded.

'In order to verify a suspicion,' was his response.

'Suspicion of what?'

'A suspicion which I entertain, and of which, if true, you should be warned.'

I was surprised at his words. Had not the actual seller of it warned me by strange hints?

But an instant later, on reflection, I saw the cunning of the two men, who, acting in collusion, wished to repossess themselves of the book, and I resolved to combat it.

'I have no use for any warning,' I laughed. 'I suppose you'll tell me some fairy-story of evil pursuing the man in whose possession the volume remains—eh?'

The hunchback raised his shoulders and exhibited his grimy palms, saying:

'I have come to the signore as a friend. I regret if he should seek to treat me as an enemy.'

'Now, look here,' I exclaimed rather warmly, 'I've no time to waste over useless humbug like this! I've bought the book at the price asked, and neither you nor the prior will get it back again. Understand that! And further,' I added, 'I shall not require anything more that you may have to sell. I've finished buying antiques in Leghorn. You can tell all the touts in the piazza that my purse is closed.'

Again the ugly old man raised his shoulders expressively and opened out his hands—this time, however, in silence.

I rang the bell for Nello to show the fellow out. Then, when I had done this, he turned to me with knit brows and asked:

'Does the signore refuse absolutely to show me the *Book of Arnoldus?*'

'Absolutely.'

'Then it must be at the signore's peril,' he said slowly, with a strange, deep meaning and a curious expression on his brown, wrinkled face.

'I don't believe in prophecy,' I cried in anger. 'And if you mean it for a threat—well, only your age saves you from being kicked downstairs.'

The old fellow muttered beneath his breath some words I did not catch, then bowed as haughtily as though he were a courtier born, and, turning, followed the silent Nello through the long white door.

I believe it was a threat he uttered at the moment of parting; but of that I was not quite sure, therefore was unable to charge him with it.

Still, the strange warning caused me to reflect, and the old hunchback's movements and his secret inquiries about my antecedents all combined to induce within me a vague sense of anxiety and insecurity.

Through an hour in the blazing, breathless afternoon I dozed with cigarettes and my three-day-old English newspaper, as was my habit, for one cannot do literary work when the sun-shutters are closed and the place is in cooling darkness. I was eager now to get back to England, and had already ordered Nello to make preparations for my departure. He was to go into town that afternoon and inform the professional packer to call and see me with a view to making wooden cases and crates for my collection of old furniture and pictures, all of which I intended to ship direct to London. Italy was a lovely country, I reflected; but, after all, England was better, especially when now, through no fault of my own, I had stumbled into a slough of mystery.

The faithful old man was heart-broken at my sudden decision to leave.

'Ah, Signor Padrone,' he sighed when he returned to report, 'this is a sorry day for me! To think—the signore goes to England, so far off, and I shall never see him again! I have told them in the town, and every one regrets.'

'No doubt,' I answered, smiling. 'I suppose I've been a pretty paying customer to the tradespeople. They must have made good profit out of me—eh, Nello?'

'They did, Signor Padrone, before I came to you; but of late it has been different. I've continually threatened to tell you when I've found them attempting to cheat. They don't like to be thought thieves by an Englishman, signore.'

'Well, Nello, you'll get another place very soon. The Signor Console will look after you till you get something to do. I don't intend to discharge you at a moment's notice.'

'But—but, signore?' faltered the faithful, white-haired old man. 'Ah, signore! you don't know—indeed you don't. You have always been so good to me that somehow—well, to tell the truth, I've served you as though you were my own son. Could you not take me with you to England?'

'Impossible!' I said. 'You don't know English, in the first place; besides, you have your family here. You'll be far better off in Leghorn than in England with its gray skies and damp climate. You, a Tuscan, couldn't stand it a month.'

'But Beppo Martini, from the Hotel Campari, went to London, and now he's one of the head-waiters at the Hotel Carlton—a splendid post, they say,' urged Nello.

'I know. But he was younger, and he'd been in Paris years before,' I answered decisively. 'I regret, Nello; but to take you to England is utterly impossible. When I am gone, however, I hope to hear of you often through the Signor Console.'

'But you do not know,' he argued. 'You can't know. All I can tell you is that when we part you will be in peril. While I am at your side nothing can happen. If you discharge me, then I fear for your safety.'

I laughed at him, deeming his words but a blundering attempt to compel me to keep him. Italians are experts in threats and insinuations of evil.

'Well, Nello, I haven't any fear, I assure you,' I replied. 'You've been a most excellent servant to me, and I much regret that we should be compelled to part; but as for evil falling upon me during your absence, I must say frankly that I don't anticipate anything of the kind.'

'But will not the Signor Padrone be warned?'

'Warned of what?' I cried, for every one seemed to have some warning in his mouth for me.

'Of what I have told you?'

'You want to go to England as my personal body-servant and guardian—eh?'

'I do,' replied the old man gravely.

'And because of that you've hit upon an exceedingly clever ruse by which to induce me to let you have your way,' I laughed. 'No, once for all, Nello, you cannot go with me.'

He stood in silence for a few minutes, as still as though he were turned to stone.

Tears stood in the eyes of the affectionate old servitor. A lump had arisen in his throat, and I saw that with difficulty he swallowed it.

'You do not know my fears, Signor Padrone,' he said huskily. 'It is for your own sake that I ask you to keep me as your servant—for the sake of your own future. If, however, you have decided, so it must be. Nello will leave you, signore; but he will not cease to be your humble and devoted servant.'

Then he turned slowly and went out, closing the doors after him.

I felt sorry that I had jeered at him, for I had not known how deeply he was attached to me. Still, to take a man of his age to England would be an utter folly, and I could not help feeling that the warning he had given me was a false one, spoken with a motive.

At last I rose, and, ascending to the study, where the windows were still closed against the heat and sun-glare from the sea, took forth my treasured Arnoldus, and seated myself at my writing-table with the determination of deciphering at least some of that record written at the end.

The first line only of the uneven scrawl was in Latin, as I have already given, and for a long time I puzzled over the next, so sprawling and faded was it; but at length I discovered, to my utter surprise and satisfaction, that the rest was not in Latin, but in the early sixteenth-century English.

Then slowly and with infinite pains I gradually commenced to transcribe the mysterious record, the opening of which read as follows:

'FOR SOE MUCH as the unskilfull or the ungodly cannot of themselves conceyve the use of thys booke, I have thought it good to note unto them what fruite and comoditie they maye tayke thereof in soe plane forme of manner as I can devise.

'Fyrst, therefore, they maye here lerne who and what manner of man I am. Next, they maye knowe of mi birthe and station, of mi lyfe at the Courte of mi Lorde Don Giovanni Sforza, Tyrant of Persaro, of mi confydences wyth mi ladie Lucrezia, of my dealynges with the greate Lorde Alexander P.P. VI., the terryble Pontiff, of mi adventures among the fayre ladyes of Pesaro and Rome, and of dyvers strange thynges in Yngolande.'

Written in rather difficult Old English, it continued:

'Then may they further mark the deep signification of this my secret record, and of how with speed I made amends for my slowness beforetime. Lastly have I here noted at the request of certain that by their own labour and without instruction or help they cannot attain the knowledge of THE SECRET HIDDEN. The studious man, with small pains, by help of this book, may gather unto himself such good furniture of knowledge as shall marvellously enrich the commonplace.

'Do you, my reader, think of death? The very thoughts disturb one's reason; and though man may have many excellent qualities, yet he may have the weakness of not commanding his sentiments. Nothing is worse for man's health than to be in fear of death. Some are so wise as neither to hate nor fear it; but for my part I have an aversion to it, for it is a rash, inconsiderate thing that always cometh before it is looked for; always cometh unseasonable, parteth friends, ruineth beauty, jeereth at youth, and draweth a dark veil over the pleasures of life. Yet this dreadful evil is but the evil of a moment, and that which we cannot by any means avoid; and it is that which makes it so terrible for me, sinner that I am; for were it certain, hope might diminish some part of the fear; but when I think I must die, and that I may die every moment, and that too in a thousand different ways, I am in such a fright the which you cannot imagine. I see dangers where perchance there never were any. I am persuaded 'tis happy to be somewhat dull of mind in this case; and yet the best way to cure the pensiveness of the thoughts of death is to think of it as little as possible.

'Let him that learneth this MY SECRET, AND SURVIVETH, seek and so gain his just reward. But if thou, my reader, hath terror of the grave, seek not to learn the contents of THIS CLOSED BOOK. Tempt not the hidden power that lieth therein, but rather let the clasp remain fastened and the secret ever concealed from thy knowledge and understanding.

'I, Godfrey Lovel, one time of the Abbey of Croylande, brother of the Order of the Blessed Saint Benedict, warneth thee to stay thy curiosity, if thou fearest death as I do fear it.

'TO SEEK FURTHER IS AT THINE OWN PERIL.'

'AROUND THE WORLD THROUGH JAPAN.'

PUCK may be left out of the question, for he offered to put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes. Jules Verne's hero, who went round the world in eighty days, is out of the reckoning as well; he has been beaten by many a modern globe-trotter. Here we have Mr Henry Frederick, traveller and journalist, who has encircled the globe in fifty-four days seven hours and twenty minutes. Possibly this was done for a wager. Mr J. C. Doherty, of the Junior Conservative Club, started from London in September 1903, to do the journey, if possible, in fifty days; maybe in forty-eight days. By using the Siberian Railway the traveller may now shorten the journey by about twenty-two days. Then by Canadian Pacific steamer to Vancouver, and across Canada by the Canadian Pacific Railway, and on to New York, is the shortest route.

Compare this with the tedious voyages of the famous old circumnavigators, who did the thing leisurely, and were so much at the mercy of wind and weather and the enemies of England as well. They had an eye, too, for a Spanish treasure-ship by the way, and enlarged the bounds of the British Empire in the pure spirit of adventure. Sir Francis Drake's famous voyage of circumnavigation occupied two years and ten months; Dampier, the keen-eyed observer, took two years; George Lord Anson sailed from England in September 1740, with six indifferent vessels and crew, and bad stores. After three years and nine months he returned with only one vessel and less than two hundred of his original followers, but with Spanish treasure amounting to five hundred thousand pounds, and having greatly extended our knowledge of navigation and geography. Captain Cook, to mention only one of the results of his voyages, enlarged the British Empire by Australia. As compared with these early voyagers, travelling in a first-class steamer is now a gigantic picnic in a first-class hotel, with all the comforts of civilisation.

That is an old but true saying that 'the eye sees what it has the power of seeing.' One man may go round the world and come back a greater ignoramus than when he set out, and maybe a worse man morally. If a fool at the beginning, a fool he will remain to the end. Travel will make no more impression upon him than good advice. Another man, with the seeing eye and the mind to grasp and utilise the new knowledge and stimulus and inspiration that come from contact with fresh scenes and peoples, has not only added to his own information, but is prepared to hand on his knowledge to others. One great defect in most of our modern elementary education is that so much of it is derived from books. Much observation and intercourse with one's fellow-men are needed as a corrective. There are travelling scholarships and bursaries; but neither Andrew Carnegie nor any millionaires have seen their way to institute a Round-the-World Scholarship for a tour of six or eight months. An examination-paper drawn up at the end of it might have a chance of being more interesting and instructive than the bulk of such documents.

Books have been multiplied recording tours round the world, insomuch that the voyage eastward has become almost a commonplace to the reader, who still, however, betrays a languid interest in reading about China and Japan. The native of India or China protests, and quite naturally, that the globe-trotter should set down his crude impressions, which do not go deep enough to be a correct mirror of the life of the country. Mr Walter Del Mar, in *Around the World Through Japan* (A. & C. Black), writes pleasantly and intelligently in setting down notes and impressions of a tour which occupied about eight months. One can see a great deal and spend much money in eight months. A bachelor travelling first-class, and having the best of everything, will spend on an average, over a period of eight to twelve months, about two guineas a day. This does not include cigars or wines, or the purchase of outfits or curios; but it includes steamer tickets and all other expenses. If two were to occupy the same rooms at hotels the expense might be three guineas a day for both. The fare by Siberian Railway from Dalny to London is about twenty-six pounds, with ten or twelve pounds for food and extras by the way. Mr Del Mar started eastwards on 12th January 1899, on board a steamer in the Thames, travelling by Colombo, Batavia, Singapore, Hong-kong, and Shanghai. He was at Nagasaki on 5th April; at Honolulu on 23rd July; San Francisco, 14th August; and left New York for London on 20th September. Two-thirds of his book are about Japan. He thinks the three months ending with June are the most favourable for that country.

The landsman is apt to marvel at the pastimes engaged in on board an eastern-bound ship; but possibly the reader so circumstanced would be ready to fall in with the most inane of the lot. Whist, piquet, gambling on the ship's run, concerts, potato-races, tugs-of-war, races in which the ladies run with cotton to be threaded by partners who hold needles at the other end of the deck, pillow-fights, or maybe a necktie race, in which the ladies run with neckties to their partners, tie them in a bow, and race back to the goal. Mr Del Mar has nothing good to say of Port Said, which is 'an emporium of the indecencies of literature, art, and nature, unredeemed by the saving grace of either cleanliness or beauty.' A guide at Aden had the accomplishment of being able to avoid telling the truth in seven languages.

Colombo was reached in twenty-four days from

London. The tea-planters are described as most agreeable gentlemen; while we hear about cocoa, cinchona, and the india-rubber industry, which is on the increase. It was a relief to get away from 'hot and evil-smelling Batavia.' Less than three million acres in Java are owned by Europeans and Chinese.

Mr Del Mar found Singapore, that great emporium of the East, most interesting, although topographically he found it had little to claim attention. To Sir T. Stamford Raffles, who with Sir Humphry Davy founded the London Zoo, belongs the credit of far-sightedness in taking the measures whereby it was saved for the Empire from the Sultan of Johore. The mine-managers of South Africa, who have been at their wits'-end for labour, might here get an object-lesson of how useful and successful John Chinaman may become under the British flag. As a recent correspondent of the *Times* has pointed out, Singapore is probably the most cosmopolitan city of its size in the world, with a population of about two hundred thousand. This is shown by the methods adopted by the post-office. For some parts of the town three sets of postmen start together on almost the same rounds. A Malay takes all the correspondence for Europeans; a Chinese postman takes all correspondence for Jews, Armenians, Malays, Arabs, Parsees, and Japanese; a Tamil postman delivers letters directed in the Tamil, Telegu, and South Indian characters; a Sikh delivers letters addressed in Hindustani, Persian, and the North Indian characters. Chinese postmen fail in delivering letters directed in Japanese; but the Malay postmen succeed in this. Mr Del Mar calls Singapore a Chinese terrestrial paradise; and amongst the Celestials it is an accepted fiction that the territory of the Straits Settlements is part of China, and a place where good Confucians may pass their lives and leave their bones. Under our beneficent rule the Chinese are free to develop their many good qualities and abilities; they rank high as business-men, and in the lowest work do the best work at the lowest prices. The Chinese coolie is described as hard-working, patient, sober, and not unintelligent. The Chinese merchants have luxurious homes, and indulge in cycling and horse-riding, in boots and breeches, with their pig-tails under their caps. The Governor of Singapore remarked that 'they drive better cattle than I do!' The deaths exceed the births, and the balance of population is kept up by immigration. Our traveller enjoyed the sight of how quickly the coolies could coal a big ship with baskets suspended on a bamboo pole. They have been known to put three thousand tons of coal on board a British man-of-war in eight hours. Convention abides at Singapore, for a 'swallow-tail' is worn by Europeans at all formal dinners. Amongst the fruits our traveller enjoyed here were a small banana, the sour manilla (a fruit like a small pear), and the durian.

It may be that Mr Del Mar is more frank and plain-spoken than most travellers; but in no volume we have ever read were there more entries regarding the 'social evil.' There are at least twenty-two different pages in the book in which the matter is referred to in undisguised language; and under Japan a painstaking account is given of the question there. The student of social morals may welcome such references, although these are hardly for indiscriminate reading. According to our traveller, 'it would almost seem that social and marital relations are loosened as the temperature of the locality rises, and that levity of manners are the result of lightness of attire. No doubt the relaxation of social restraints is one of the charms of the East, for this charm cannot be said to be a physical or even an intellectual one.' One can never imagine any nation rising to be a prominent world-power, however, that trades in the subjection of women. Mr Del Mar is under no illusion as to the Japanese, for he says 'their immorality and gross shamelessness, and generally their treatment of women, are disgraceful to a people claiming to be one of the Great Powers, as well as their commercial dishonesty and their continued subjection to gross and trivial superstition.' Of their commercial sharpness the publishers of this *Journal* had an example by the reprinting of their *Dictionary of the English Language* (edited by T. Davidson) by means of a photo-lithographic process, in order to undersell the legitimate edition in Japan. The seamy side of their life goes alongside high intellectual competency; the Chinese physically are a finer people, and intellectually as well endowed. Japan itself, Mr Del Mar thought, was a sterile country, largely volcanic, and not beautiful in the sense that England, Scotland, and Ireland are beautiful; while 'the mass of the people are not as cleanly in their habits as the Dutch, nor as polite as the Germans, nor as moral as the Scotch, nor as truthful as the Portuguese. And it may be doubted if they are more patriotic than the English, more artistic than the French, or more adaptive than the Americans.' They have been called the Frenchmen of the East.

Mr Del Mar found Hong-kong pleasant to look at from the harbour; but the Chinese there are confined to their own quarter, and dare not make a display as at Singapore for fear of the sharks amongst their own countrymen. There is a lively description of Canton, which can be seen extended along the Pearl River for about four miles, with the densest masses of house-boats and sampans in the foreground. The number of boats is given at eighty-four thousand; and here the owners live, are married, and die. In exploring miles of narrow streets, some of them covered so as to form long arcades, 'the vista of such an arcade, with its succession of vermilion and gilt signs, is striking enough to make one forget the dirt and smells.' In Flowery Forest Monastery he saw five hundred well-gilt wooden idols, each with an incense-bowl before it. The execution-ground was a place where criminals

were brought in batches to be decapitated or cut into a thousand pieces. At the Chinese Examination Hall the competitors bring food and writing materials, and may have to remain twenty-four or sixty hours, whatever happens. Passes are accomplished by bribery, corruption, collusion, fraud, personation, and purchase of papers. The Manchu caste monopolises all the high offices.

Macao advertises itself as the 'Monte Carlo' of the East, and the expenses of the Government are partly met by the yearly payment of fifteen thousand pounds received from the Chinese syndicate which has the gambling concession, and runs sixteen fan-tan houses to suit the various classes of gamblers. Bread, it appears, is practically unknown to the Chinese, and the favourite drinks are a sort of arrack distilled from rice and tea scented with chulan-seed or rose-leaves. Opium, our traveller thinks, is little if any more injurious to hard-working coolies than tobacco, and seemed to act as a stimulant. In steamers crossing the Pacific a Chinese crew is to be preferred. The Europeans in Shanghai are less than seven thousand, while the Chinese population in the native city is estimated at six hundred and twenty thousand. But if the visitor has seen Canton or Peking, he is recommended to omit penetrating the walls which for three and a half miles encircle Old Shanghai, for 'the lions of Shanghai are very small ones, its smells are very great, and it far exceeds either Canton or Peking in the quantity of filth per acre it can and does exhibit.' The trade of the great river-valley is centred here. The British and Japanese firms outnumber all the other nationalities. The United States comes next to Great Britain in the value of goods sold to China. The Chinese seem to have most fear and respect for Russia, and from peasant to Empress-Dowager, among both Chinese and Manchus, there still remains, we are told, hatred of the foreigner.

Dorothy Menpes, in looking at China from an artistic point of view, says that the colouring of her cities and canals reminds one of a meerschaum pipe. The cities show rich red-browns and golds, ranging down to blue-blacks, and have an ancient, smoked, and polished appearance. And the people: 'Their minds and imaginations are as fine as ever; they do not lack the genius to conceive nor the dexterity to execute, and yet they remain stationary.' When China does begin to move doubtless we shall hear of it.

Nagasaki, we are told, is the winter-quarters of all the foreign fleets in North Pacific waters. Mr Del Mar had a sight of the Emperor of Japan. He is above the average height of the Jap, and advances slowly and rather unsteadily, as if unused to walking; his toes are turned in, and he seems to walk without straightening his knees. The Empress appeared to have a cold, sorrowful face, with small, refined features and curved nose, and was dressed in European costume, with hat, gloves, and parasol. In a fashionable resort our traveller did not see one woman with a really good figure, and the proportion of women with pretty faces was small. But the ladies excel in small, well-shaped hands. In the baths they sometimes appear in absolute nudity before the other sex. Religion seems very much a veneer, like a good deal of Japanese imitative civilisation, and the temple-pilgrimages are a pretext for a day's outing; 'half of the people go to the temple to play and half to pray.' There is no weekly day set apart for religious observance, although the Government offices are closed on Sunday. The Buddhists boast the greater number of large temples and monasteries; but, as in China, the votaries do not take their religion very seriously, and are prepared to change it in obedience to the imperial edict. Japanese Christian missions have been a great success; a deep impression is also being made upon China. The immediate effect of the Anglo-Japanese alliance has been to secure the integrity of Korea and of China, although there have not been wanting signs that there may be trouble between Japan and Russia over Korea.

Here are a few Japanese contrasts to what obtains with us: The husband may keep as many concubines as he likes; but a Japanese lady can have no male friends or acquaintances. Drunkenness is uncommon; but suicide is increasing, and is double that of the United Kingdom. A foreigner is as safe in Japan as in London. The common people bathe in the same tub one after another, and the women last, all in the same water. Mr Del Mar saw rice being washed in the gutter-water. Dorothy Menpes remarks that everything in Japan is small and slow and careful. If a lady does go on horseback, she rides astride like a man. A Jap puts a horse in a stall tail-first, probably from the fear of being kicked. The beef is better even than that of Old England. At an hotel in Kobe it is possible to have a choice of seventeen dishes. Rice-bran is used by many instead of soap. Paupers are seldom seen; they are cared for by their own relations. Almost every country in the world buys rice from Japan, while the United States takes about three-fourths of the tea; and in these days of fiscal proposals it is suggestive that the removal of the American duty has been a source of much satisfaction to the growers. Over the taverns at Hakodate are branches, suggesting the old saying, 'Good wine needs no bush.'

A recent critic terms this book one of the best impressionist records of travel he has ever read, and the account of modern Japan by far the fullest and most truthful known to him. With the reservation that it has not been written for babes, but takes cognisance of all the facts of life, we recommend the reader to make its acquaintance for himself. There he may learn to his heart's content of pilgrims, dancers, temples, theatres, actors, geishas, restaurants, inns, coolies, and railways; also, how best to see and afterwards to tell of what he has seen.

GREAT TEACHERS OF MY TIME.

By T. H. S. Escott.

'OH, Children of Nineveh, with no music in your souls, and ears hardened against the concord of sweet sounds!' With some such exclamation of mock-heroic banter, a Harrow master during the second half of the last century was in the habit of relieving his overwrought feelings when a false quantity particularly atrocious or some other elementary blunder of an exceptionally aggressive kind was perpetrated by one of the pupils in his class-room. The teacher, a slightly built but remarkably wiry young clergyman, had then not reached his thirtieth year. With boys of any intellectual turn or taste his popularity and success were surpassed by no teacher on the staff of Vaughan or Butler. At that time the most refreshing quality distinctive of F. W. Farrar was a breezy but intense earnestness, and a cheery but passionate belief in the truth of any opinion to which he had been conscientiously led and the righteousness of the cause that, after careful thought, he had made his own. As a young man, indeed till the final failure of his health, an enthusiast, he never failed to show to all those whom it concerned a reason for the faith that was in him. Boys of any quick receptiveness could, therefore, have been subjected to no more enlightening or stimulating influence. Given responsive natures of that sort, the man who died Dean of Canterbury had been in his day the most successful among educationalists in the Victorian age.

At Harrow, in other ways too, he exercised a healthy power throughout the school. Rugby Chapel never heard from Thomas Arnold himself sermons better calculated to do such a congregation good than those preached by Farrar before the school of Byron. Once it was known that Farrar would fill the pulpit, the Sunday colds and coughs often pleaded as excuses for absence from the service were never heard of. Chalmers or Liddon himself never addressed a more attentive audience. The author of *Childe Harold* was called by Heine the greatest elemental force of his century. The letters of Byron's name, rudely written, may still be read on the tree in the 'churchyard on the hill' commemorated in his lines. Appropriately enough, therefore, to those poetic traditions, 'voluntary verse' is, or used to be, among the exercises of the place. To some purpose it was encouraged by Farrar. As still a youth at Cambridge, he had, indeed, himself produced many metrical compositions, inspired, it might be said, by the genius as well as marked by the mannerisms of a certain spiritual Byronism. By-and-by, in the course of half-holiday walks with them, even more than during school-hours, he really communicated some of those graceful gifts to his more promising and sympathetic disciples.

Of the 'voluntary' versifiers whom he trained at Harrow, one at least, a Scotch nobleman, bade fair to rival the reputation of the historic bard produced by the school. That child of the muses afterwards won notoriety by his wealth and munificence to the Church of his adoption, and as Lord Bute he received a sort of immortality from sitting to Benjamin Disraeli for the hero of *Lothair*. It was thought in the Harrow stage of Farrar's career that, should the future Lothair fail to achieve the highest laurels of song, the distinction must be won by a class-mate, a famous eye-doctor's son. This was George Anderson Critchett; since then he has become, not the greatest bard, but the most eminent oculist known to Harley Street. Another member of the same Harrow group, J. T. Agg-Gardner, has developed, as member for Cheltenham, into one of the trustiest and most self-sacrificing pillars of twentieth-century Conservatism.

Among Farrar's Harrow colleagues was another theologian who was making those years of tutorial work a time of preparation for the highest service not less to all classes in his country than to his Church. At that earlier epoch Brooke Foss Westcott, who was to die Bishop of Durham, had about him neither in his dress nor manner anything very distinctively ecclesiastical. The first impression produced by him was that which might have been associated with a highly cultivated and especially refined Nonconformist minister of liberally undenominational views. His life was that of ascetic but simple piety. His sermons appeal to interests different from those to which Farrar addressed himself, and seemed so saturated in a spirit of mystical devotion as to give rise to the school-boy saying that the preacher wrote them on his knees. They held his hearers not less closely than Farrar's more popular discourses. Together with Vaughan's scriptural lectures, they produced, in the formation of school-boy character, an effect to be compared with the results that had followed Thomas Arnold's discourses to an earlier generation at Rugby. Westcott's peculiar power manifested itself elsewhere than at the Middlesex school, and in a shape equally practical. The present writer, when travelling with him in the Western Islands of Scotland, has heard him deliver informal addresses on the everyday aspects of Christianity to the fisherfolk on the sandy levels of the Iona shore or on the rock-bound coast of Mull. Here his teaching sank as deeply into the native mind, and is to this day recalled as vividly, as his addresses many years later, when Bishop of Durham, expounding to the Northumbrian miners the Gospel of the Resurrection in its capacity to solve the problems of industrial life, including the difficulties between labour and capital. With all these persons Westcott became a power because he

was an earnest, simple-minded man, who lived what he preached. In addition to this, he was a Briton of an essentially manly kind, a true specimen of muscular Christianity, notwithstanding his slight, delicate stature. Some little physical disability unfitted him for boating. But while canon of Peterborough he captained a cricket eleven comprising six sons of his own, completed by others of his colleagues. His own forte in the field was bowling; here Lillywhite's *Guide* of the period noticed the excellence of his 'head-work.' Athletic feats of this sort I have only seen paralleled among ecclesiastical families by Charles Wordsworth, Bishop of St Andrews, and his sons.

In some points Bishop Westcott curiously resembled Arthur Stanley, Dean of Westminster. Both men's theological lectures at their respective universities were equally epoch-making events about the same time. There was a similarity, too, as regards personal habits. Westcott, indeed, lacked that constitutional incapacity for the simplest arithmetical matters which prevented Stanley from realising that the coin half-a-crown and two shillings and sixpence were of the same value. But Westcott's generous disinclination to spend anything on himself called almost as much for family supervision or control as did Stanley's grotesque absent-mindedness. In moments of spiritual elation, when they were addressing undergraduates from the university pulpit, the slight proportions of the two men seemed to expand under the influences of the same fervour. Inspired by his theme, and by the sight of the intent young faces before him, each preacher seemed to be transfigured from the homilist into the seer.

If these two men differed from other teachers of their time in not appearing to fashion themselves after any special exemplar, that was scarcely the case with their distinguished contemporary, Benjamin Jowett. As tutor of Balliol, even more than as master, Jowett in his day exercised a healthy influence of a kind generally ignored. H. L. Mansel, who in 1867 succeeded Milman as Dean of St Paul's, had engaged in a controversy with F. D. Maurice, with results more theologically unsettling to the receptive youth of that generation than can have attended any other discussion in the second half of the last century. Jowett's so-called scepticism was merely a trick of manner, by which he tried to reproduce the famous irony of Socrates. As a fact, and in his relations with the youth of that period, Jowett had a great deal more of the downright British bluntness of Dr Johnson than the merely intellectual sympathies of the Attic philosopher. Jowett's real hero was not, indeed, Socrates, but Samuel Johnson, whose writings he knew almost as well as he did Shakespeare, and infinitely better than he ever even pretended to know Plato. Whether as tutor of his college or as its head, he first aimed, as did Johnson, at making those whom he influenced good citizens. The views of the High Church Tory Mansel, as J. S. Mill had foreseen, were not calculated to strengthen or quicken young people's faith. 'A person of some rhetorical ability' was the praise allowed by Jowett to Maurice's opponent. The Balliol teacher devoted all his shrewdness, wisdom, and quiet satire to impressing upon his disciples that the personal dicta of a theologian on his promotion could not possibly interfere with the preparation for the duties of life which they were at Oxford to acquire. Herein lay the distinctive value of his service and teaching during the most useful years of Jowett's blameless life.

It was a period of notable teachers, on the Isis, elsewhere than at Balliol. The lectures of W. W. Capes of Queen's on subjects of modern usefulness to lads entering upon any sort of intellectual calling owed nothing to any Balliol teachings, and were becoming an influence for good not confined to the University. His chief colleagues—Edmund Moore (to-day the great authority on Dante, recently made a canon) and H. B. Byrne—succeeded in inspiring often the most unpromising material with an abiding interest in Old World philosophy and scholarship, not as antiquarian curiosities, but as effective instruments of modern training.

Nearly contemporary with those just named were other moulders of the undergraduate mind worthy to be remembered among the intellectual forces of Victorian Oxford. Early in the sixties of the nineteenth century had been elected to a studentship at Christchurch a Snell exhibitioner from Balliol, a Scotsman of intellect as powerful as his physique seemed frail, and of the same courageous and ardent temper as forms the material of great moral reformers, now a Savonarola, now a Luther, now a Thomas Arnold. No one then in Oxford residence will have forgotten the manifestation of heart-deep sorrow that filled the place when, on a cold, bleak spring day in 1862, the news went round of George Rankine Luke having been drowned in a canoe on the Isis, close by Iffley Lock. H. G. Liddell, picturesquely aristocratic of figure and general appearance, and steeped to the finger-tips in patrician prejudice, was then Dean of Wolsey's famous foundation. On his election to the House, Liddell was thought to have received somewhat coldly the modest, shrinking little Scot, fresh from the college presided over by his brother-lexicographer, Scott. Luke's quiet strength and serene zeal for everything of ennobling tendency had long since converted the stately and scornful Dean into one of his warmest admirers. As he issued from the deanery in Great Tom Quad., accompanied by Santford (then censor, to-day Bishop of Gibraltar) and by Osborne Gordon (who put more Greek scholarship into more generations of golden youth than was ever done by Jowett himself), Liddell, in a voice tremulous with emotion, drew the attention of his companions to the fact that all the window-blinds had been drawn down. It was a spontaneous and merited tribute from all sets and degrees within

the building to the tender respect universally won for the quiet little scholar and teacher by a course of tranquil and brave devotion to duty.

About this time, too, a compatriot of Luke had won, in the university of King Alfred, a reputation rivalling that of his former tutor, Jowett. Beaumont Street, Oxford, had long been more or less classical ground from its containing the residences of Frederick Symonds, the kindest and most skilled medical attendant ever possessed by, at least, three Oxford generations, and of J. E. Thorold Rogers, the friend of Bright, of Cobden, and, with the late T. B. Potter, founder of the Cobden Club. Had Rogers in the first instance, instead of taking orders, gone to the Bar, or while young entered Parliament, he would have made a national name. As political litterateur in prose and verse he had the happiness of Mansel himself. His was the epigram *à propos* of the two Oxford historians of that epoch:

> **Where from alternate tubs,**
> **Stubbs butters Freeman,**
> **Freeman butters Stubbs.**

But the particular denizen of Beaumont Street now referred to was John Nichol of Glasgow. The son of the Glasgow astronomer, the son-in-law of Sheriff Bell, he was then in the habit of passing the summer term at Oxford, to take a few favoured pupils for the final Honour Schools. He may not have been without some of the egotistic weaknesses of the greatest men. These, if they existed, were more than relieved by a genius for teaching, improved by art and elevated by native kindliness into a general power and wish to help his pupils to the utmost and in every way. The success with which he secured first-classes eventually caused a decided modification in the papers set for 'Greats.'

With Nichol must be ranked another teacher, then making a name for himself in another direction. Walter H. Pater lived to be first the high-priest of the æsthetic movement, and afterwards, while fellow of Brazenose, a convert to genuine Christianity, who desired, when death came upon him, to settle down to clerical life in a college-living. In earlier days he had among Oxford teachers a position not unlike that of John Nichol. To all then meditating an intellectual vocation they were healthfully stimulating preparatives for later usefulness. At this time he systematically overworked himself. Even thus early the results to his health were but too painfully apparent. He began his teaching before breakfast and continued it throughout the day. Then came his private studies. The light in his room, looking out upon the High Street, long outlived the lamps in that thoroughfare.

At the epoch now looked back upon, two of the schoolmasters who perhaps sent up the best-prepared lads to Oxford were the present Bishop of Hereford and the late Dean of Westminster. Both of these, in their influence and in its fruits, reproduced not a little of the example and the methods of Thomas Arnold. Bradley at Marlborough and Dr Percival at Rugby, nearly at the same time, made an identical discovery as regards the chief instrument of classical training. The writing of Latin prose had come to be regarded as the great test of youthful excellence. The two teachers just mentioned discovered that true perfection in this art was to be obtained less by constant practice than by the habitual assimilation of the best models. To write like Cicero and, above all, Livy, the surest plan was not merely to study these authors, but copiously and regularly to learn them by heart. Hence, and hence only, the marked improvement displayed in the Latinity of those papers with which Oxford examiners were then busy.

'It is the sermon of a man who knows better than most of his cloth what real theology is.' Such was the comment made in the present writer's hearing by Benjamin Disraeli on a sermon which he had just heard from its then Principal in the chapel of Glasgow University. The occasion of the remark was the English statesman's visit to Glasgow to be inaugurated as Lord Rector in 1874. The discourse thus characterised was a masterly exposition of the Divine attributes with the human, especially in regard to the virtue of forgiveness. The crowded building in the half-light of a winter afternoon; the tall, rather gaunt, but most impressive presence of the preacher in the pulpit above; the remarkable, familiar features of the most distinguished member of the congregation, in his House of Commons listening-attitude, below: these were only some of the details that made a scene never to be forgotten by the many who witnessed it, but of whom very few now survive. What Disraeli felt was intelligible enough to all who had even a slight acquaintance with John Caird. The Prince-Consort had used nearly the same words of this great teacher and preacher as early as the middle of the nineteenth century. Carefully-thought-out eloquence, intellectual strength, spiritual fervour: these, fused together in one discourse, had caused Queen Victoria's husband, in 1855, to pronounce the divine, who had taken the religion of common life as his subject, 'the greatest living prophet in Protestant Christendom.' Norman Macleod, Principal Tulloch, and others of that school and generation have impressed deeply their personal qualities, their mental power, their zeal in their high service, upon Anglo-Saxons in all parts of the world. Perhaps, even of these, none spoke with more abiding and more elevating authority than did Principal Caird during the period in which Benjamin Disraeli formed one of his congregation.

The closing decades of the last century comprehended the palmy period of a distinguished little society in London which might have been described as a club for the teachers and preachers of their age, secular or religious. Such, indeed, was the Metaphysical Society. Its organising spirit had perhaps been Mr James Knowles. If its most famous

member were found in W. E. Gladstone, its leading spirits, who took the most active part in its discussions, were Cardinal Manning and Richard Holt Hutton, the editor of the *Spectator*. James Martineau, Matthew Arnold, and William George Ward (the erewhile mathematical tutor of Balliol), as well as the poet Browning, may sometimes have been of the company, but the chief figures were those already mentioned. In his earlier days, Hutton, like so many reflective men of his day, was the disciple of F. D. Maurice; then among his associates were J. M. Ludlow and Thomas Hughes, the author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. Afterwards, R. H. Hutton's mental master would have been recognised by him in his brother-member of the Metaphysical Society, James Martineau. The great incidents in its proceedings at this time were the high speculative arguments, wherein different sides were taken by teachers of their generation so mutually opposed and so individually distinguished as Manning and Martineau; upon very rare occasions, it may be, by Gladstone, Browning, and I rather think once or twice by Tennyson himself. The extraordinary magnetism exercised by Martineau over his personal following was perceptible in his manner with casual acquaintances. As such, it was realised very many years ago by the present writer, when, as an exceedingly young man fresh from college, he was concerned in preparing some examination questions, in which his venerable seniors, Maurice and Martineau, with one or two more, were to have a voice.

The wisdom of Arnold of Rugby, though in shapes very different, to some degree descended to his sons. Matthew, illustrious eldest, had as his second brother Tom Arnold, whose faculty of imparting knowledge and stimulating thought marked him, through all his phases of religious development, as a great teacher. The intellectual relations between Arnold of Rugby and his brilliantly versatile second son seemed to suggest to those who knew them best a comparison between the positions in which stood to each other John Henry Newman the Cardinal and his brother Francis William. At one time Francis Newman had served as professor in New College, Manchester.

Not the least famous of Francis Newman's and of Thomas Arnold's Manchester pupils was one who long before his death filled a front place in the ranks of English teachers or preachers on matters equally concerning this world and the next. The two literary founders of the school of Radical Imperialism are the late Admiral Maxse and the happily surviving Mr George Meredith. The former, a naval officer of Crimean distinction, once a Gladstonian, always set that statesman a pattern of militant patriotism. The novelist just named reflected some aspects of the admiral's political evolution in his *Beauchamp's Career*. The whole episode of Dr Shrapnel, in that book, may be said to present the germ of the political faith now identified with Birmingham. In that connection, the Manchester College student, under Thomas Arnold and Francis Newman, must be mentioned here. R. W. Dale, quite as much in politics and letters as in theology, was the great intellectual worthy of nineteenth-century Birmingham. His influence and message, not merely in the pulpit but in the everyday duties of civic life, made him locally all that Martineau was on a larger stage, and what Joseph Parker's successor at the City Temple, R. J. Campbell, promises to become.

CUPID AND PSYCHE.

The fisher-boats wing o'er the seas,
Home from their green dominions,
Swing fluttering up into the breeze,
And fold their red-brown pinions;
Gannets are plunging near the land,
And gulls in ether wheeling:—
And you, upon the yellow sand,
With spade and bucket kneeling.

Brown, sunny face, light sunny hair,
Eyes of the blue of heaven;
A little girl—one would declare
A boy—of six or seven,
With mop of curls for winds to woo,
And—which is truly shocking—
Jersey of blue, and knickers too,
And neither shoe nor stocking.

Here, all intent on serious play,
Mere mortals nought affect you;
Who, as they pass upon your way,
Turn, smiling, to inspect you.
Garment and guise might well perplex,
Nor can we deem them stupid,
The folk that, witless of your sex,
Have dubbed you 'Little Cupid.'

'Tis Sunday. Who this dainty maid
Would know, if now they met her?
True, the brown legs are still displayed,
The feet mere sandals fetter:
But, ah, the frock!—snow-white, with lace
And starchy frills upon it;
While, ringed with curls, a flower-like face
Laughs from a snow-white bonnet.

So, whether maid or ocean-elf,
Fresh sunshine round you giving,
In blithe unconsciousness of self,
You live for joy of living.
Fashion is mostly far to seek,
But we are fine on one day:
They call you 'Cupid' all the week,
And 'Psyche' on a Sunday.

C. H. St L. Russell.

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WINTERING ON THE RIVIERA.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES.

By an Old Resident.

WITH the return of winter come, as usual, so many letters full of questions as to the conditions and cost of living in the South that it seems possible a larger circle of intending visitors might like to get the following plain, matter-of-fact information from an old resident on the Riviera. But let it be understood that the following remarks are not intended for 'well-to-do' travellers. Little pity need be wasted on the small discomforts suffered, and maybe impatiently endured, by the favoured rich, who can take the *train de luxe*. They probably do not get all they have the right to expect for the amount of money spent; but still they have the minimum of discomfort, and after a rapid journey they alight at one of the best hotels to find landlord and waiters ready with that eager welcome which is always flattering and pleasant, somehow; they are shown to large, clean, comfortable rooms, with sunshine generally streaming in from windows looking out on a beautiful view, and no time is lost in serving tea—good tea, and excellent toast and butter, &c.—on a dazzlingly clean table-cloth. Small and natural comforts; but how much prized after a long, dusty journey! That class of traveller need not waste a moment in reading these suggestions, which are addressed to those who pack their own boxes and *prefer* travelling second-class.

But here, at the very outset, comes a difficulty. The only *rapide* with first and second class carriages leaves the Gare de Lyon in Paris at 2 P.M., which necessitates the alternative of travelling from London by a night train, with all the discomfort of a night crossing or of sleeping in Paris. Excellent accommodation is now to be found *in* the Nord Station in Paris, at the hotel buffet. As this sleeping in Paris always entails a certain amount of expense, it might be found almost as cheap, and more convenient, to take a *billet mixte*—that is, second-class—from London to Paris, and first-class from Paris to the Riviera, about six pounds ten shillings, a little more or less according to the distance of the town to be visited.

	First-Class.	Second-Class.	Time of Journey.
London to Cannes:			
Vid Calais	£7 11 2	£5 3 3	26½ hours.
" Boulogne	7 5 2	4 18 10	27½ "
" Dieppe	6 9 6	4 9 10	27½ "
London to Nice:			
Vid Calais	7 14 9	5 5 8	27 "
" Boulogne	7 9 10	5 0 8	28 "
" Dieppe	6 12 4	4 11 8	28 "
London to Mentone:			
Vid Calais	7 16 5	5 6 9	28 "
" Boulogne	7 12 3	5 2 4	29 "
" Dieppe	6 14 7	4 13 2	29 "

And so on, according to distance. It may prove useful to remember that in every station there is a *cahier des réclamations*, which the stationmaster is bound to produce if called upon to do so, and in which, in presence of a witness, travellers can enter their complaints. We have known the mere insisting on the production of this *cahier des réclamations* work wonders in the way of finding places in an overcrowded train, carriages being added, and utmost civility replacing curt answers, to avoid a complaint being entered in the dreaded *cahier*.

It would be wise to pack up for November and part of December light woollen garments, such as tweeds or serges; from middle of December to middle of February warmer clothing would be wanted; from that time to the middle of March the lighter garments come again into wear. After that the days gradually get warmer and longer, and gentlemen and ladies take to summer clothing. For ladies, during the whole stay, pretty blouses for dinner-wear at *table-d'hôte* will be found useful. From these hints, the stronger sex will know best what will be correspondingly 'the right thing' for them to pack up, since, although women try hard—and too often succeed—to look manly, men on the Riviera do not as yet wear chiffon blouses at *table-d'hôte* dinners. In fact, the only

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unusual thing a few exceptional specimens do is —when German—like good children, to tie their napkins round their necks with an ingenious little instrument for the purpose; if French, a few—very few—tie it lower, a sort of bandage across their person, generally a broad, protuberant person. But whatever else they do, individuals of both sexes, always, at all seasons, should take an extra wrap, whether walking or driving, and put it on at once when, turning away from a sunny path or street, they encounter the cold chill of a sunless road. This precaution is, very wisely, never omitted by the people of the country, postmen not excepted, as the only way of ensuring immunity against the real danger of sudden transitions. At sunset the temperature falls suddenly by many degrees, and all doctors earnestly advise strangers not as yet acclimatised not to be out of doors at that time. Later in the evening the temperature is generally less trying. Of course when driving warm wraps or furs are always necessary, as well abroad as in England; and when the *mistral* (north-west wind) blows no warm wrap will be found 'too much.' That 'scavenger of Provence,' as it has been named, does not blow often; but when it does come, sweeping down straight from the glaciers along the valley of the Rhone, and stirring up the sea into that wonderful deep blue, it seems to blow through and through one's very bones. After Easter summer clothes can be worn most days, although before May real steady summer weather cannot be reckoned upon; it remains liable to sudden and marked transitions. Many healthy, strong people learn from sad experience the necessity of submitting to the precaution of taking that tiresome extra wrap, warm or light, according to the season.

In June visitors who chance to remain on the Riviera will find that the natives have discarded all unnecessary covering, and gradually appear very lightly and loosely clad, save on Sundays, when they turn out, women especially, extremely clean and smart, considering the wretched, dirty dwellings they emerge from.

There are many charming spots on the Riviera—both the French and the Italian Riviera; but the cost of the journey to Cannes, Nice, and Mentone gives a clear notion of the expense of going out to places a little before or a little beyond these well-known winter resorts. These three towns on the French side, and San Remo on the Italian coast, can boast of the great advantage of having first-rate English doctors. Cannes is perhaps the most favoured in this respect, as it is also for the number of its English churches.

One more little piece of advice about wise, small precautions: Take galoshes and put them on in the train before leaving dear Old England. To get on board with wet, cold feet means more seasickness and discomfort, and a probable cold at the beginning of the journey.

Hotels are numerous and generally good all along the Riviera; the prices range from moderate to exorbitant. The inclusive terms for *pension* (board), with a south room, in one of the moderate but good, well-situated hotels vary from twelve francs fifty cents (ten shillings) to twenty francs (sixteen shillings) a day. These hotels have electric light, lifts, and various public rooms besides the dining-rooms. In less fashionable and up-to-date hotels—that is, without lifts and only one sitting-room and one dining-room—a good south room, with *pension* (board), can be had from eight to twelve francs per day, according to the floor. North rooms are, of course, much cheaper; but they are cold and cheerless, and very unadvisable for delicate people. East and west rooms are cheaper than south rooms, but not quite as good, although they are, of course, infinitely better than rooms with a northern aspect; but they are not easily secured, as the hotels are long, narrow buildings facing south, north at the back, with a wide passage running down the centre, lighted at both ends by a large window, leaving only space enough for one room generally, two at most, looking east, and a corresponding number facing west. For these rooms the *pension* price varies from seven to twelve francs, whereas north rooms, with *pension*, can be had for five to seven francs per day.

In places where so many invalids are collected it is reassuring to know that in hotels and boarding-houses every room in which there has been a fatal case from infectious disease is compulsorily thoroughly disinfected, doctors being made answerable for the declaration of such cases to the municipal authorities.

Although the prices asked are at first alarming, good bargainers can always obtain a considerable reduction for a prolonged stay, especially for the beginning and the latter end of the season.

The *pension* includes: Bedroom first breakfast (generally brought up to the bedrooms, but served in the coffee-room if desired), consisting of tea, coffee, or chocolate with rolls and butter. Eggs, bacon, or fish are seldom eaten, and are 'extras' paid for as such at a more or less high rate according to the class of the hotel. The second breakfast 'with fork' (*à la fourchette*), or luncheon, is served in the public dining-room, no longer as a rule at a long *table-d'hôte* as formerly, but at small tables, which is infinitely pleasanter. The luncheon-hour is pretty universally half-past twelve; and this meal consists as a rule of a dish of eggs or fish, an *entrée*, a roast, potatoes, vegetables, cheese and butter, and dessert—that is to say, apples and oranges and dried fruit. Wine is an extra in hotels, but in boarding-houses ordinary claret (*vin ordinaire*), to be mixed with water, is generally provided. Coffee after luncheon or dinner is an extra, so is afternoon tea save in most *pensions*, where it is frequently served at about four o'clock; but as a rule visitors prefer making it in their own rooms.

In boarding-houses (*pensions*) the charges are much the same as at inferior hotels, and vary from seven to ten francs per day; but where there is no electric light, lamps and candles are highly charged

for, and it is often cheaper, if the landlord declines to make a reasonable bargain, to pay a sort of fine, like 'corkage' charged on wine bought out of the house, and to buy one's own candles. Some of the large hotels now provide afternoon tea (cups, not pots) in the hall for about seventy-five cents a head; but as a rule all people residing in hotels make their own afternoon tea in their own rooms; and a very cosy, comfortable little meal it generally is. One hotel we have known to notify: 'The hotel reserves to itself the right of furnishing afternoon tea or coffee;' but this notice was ignored with proper contempt by the visitors, who naturally had not bound themselves to anything of the sort. No one need be dismayed during a comfortable little home-like afternoon tea by the sudden appearance of an inquisitive porter or waiter, who chooses to select that precise moment to bring up letters or a message. In fact, no evil consequence would follow if one were to ask the intruder for a plate or a cup—empty, of course.

Dinner, generally at six or half-past six in boarding-houses, at seven in fashionable hotels, is always the principal meal of the day; too large, and therefore too long, in the best hotels. But as of late years small tables have been adopted, family parties can somewhat shorten the tedious waiting by telling the waiter beforehand which course they wish to 'skip.' In truth, it is sometimes far too noisy as well as too lengthy a meal, as hotelkeepers encourage Italian and pseudo-Hungarian bands to come and play during dinner. After dinner people so minded can escape; but at the cost of losing part of one's dinner who would do so? Never! It would be giving the hotelkeeper an unfair advantage.

Good villas, sufficiently well furnished, with plate, china, glass, linen, &c., are to be had on applying to the agents for lists. Really fine, delightful residences, with good view and large, well-kept garden, cost from four hundred to one thousand pounds for the season (1st November to end of May); smaller villas, with three reception-rooms, four to seven best bedrooms, four or five servants'-rooms, kitchen, pantry, &c., from two hundred to four hundred pounds for the season—all in proportion to the price. Under two hundred pounds, rooms, garden, and all are inferior; and very few of these houses have any view—none, one may say, a good view of the sea. For eighty or one hundred pounds for the season, visitors must be content with a small villa securely seated in a hollow, or objectionably surrounded by higher buildings, poorly and insufficiently furnished, and pretty generally in an unsatisfactory sanitary condition. A few really good furnished flats are to be found, more desirable by far than villas at the same price, ranging from eighty to two hundred and forty pounds for the season; fewer servants are needed, and the flats are generally in good houses with fine view and sunny aspect, there being a good garden round the house as a rule. But the number of these flats is very limited. Nice and Mentone have more than Cannes or San Remo; but then Nice is a large town, and Mentone is considered more specially good for lung affections.

Agents, consuls and vice-consuls, clergymen, and doctors are generally able and willing to give useful information. Rooms and small furnished lodgings are exceedingly scarce, and can only be discovered by making inquiries from local tradespeople. For English visitors, English tradespeople give the most reliable information touching these.

The following will give an approximate idea of the prices of provisions: Meat, first quality, 'all round'—that is to say, taking sometimes the best pieces, such as the under cut (fillet) of beef, and less choice parts at other times—two francs twenty-five cents per kilo (elevenpence-farthing per pound). But it must be borne in mind that the French pound is larger than the English pound—nearly one-fourth larger.

Fish is neither very abundant nor very good in the Mediterranean: sardines, mackerel, good and cheap when in season; soles are good but dear, three to four shillings per kilo (the kilo is two pounds).

Milk and butter excellent. The best Normandy butter, two francs (one shilling and eightpence) per pound, is in fact cheaper than the current price in England for shorter weight. Poultry is very good and abundant, not dearer than in health-resorts in England at the beginning of the season; but the prices rise considerably after New Year's Day.

Fruit and vegetables cheap and abundant when in season.

Sugar, tea, coffee, candles, raisins, &c.—in fact all groceries—are dear, owing to the heavy taxes laid on all those articles.

Useful 'job' servants for the season are to be found at the Swiss agencies (*Maisons Hospitalières*), mostly Protestants; also at the Roman Catholic *Œuvre de Sainte-Marthe*, and often from tradespeople. But do not trust to written characters. The wages are relatively high, as the season is short, and these cooks and housemaids leave their families in the Swiss or Italian bordering counties to come and earn a little money, then return home to work in the fields and do the harvesting: hard-working women, most of them are better cooks than can be procured at high wages in England. They ask from two pounds to three pounds a month. Some can be got for thirty or forty francs (twenty-four shillings or thirty-two shillings) a month; but these are a rougher class of servants, though often very good and 'teachable.'

Wood for firing costs two shillings and sixpence and two shillings and tenpence per two hundredweight (one hundred kilos); charcoal, four shillings and tenpence per one hundred pounds. Fir cones for lighting, tenpence per bag.

When we have said that studies can be carried on as successfully in many ways as in England, if one sets about it with proper determination, most of the questions usually asked will have been answered. But school-life and education are weak points in

France; we therefore only refer to instruction imparted at home by masters under the supervision of parents—watchful parents. For all English branches of study competent teachers can always be found among the visitors who are sent South to recruit or to ward off illness, and who are glad to increase often too slender means by giving lessons. French, Italian, and German teachers are of course numerous; and there are even Russian teachers, though few pupils are likely to be forthcoming for them. Drawing-classes are good and less expensive than private lessons.

Resident clergymen and doctors, for the most part good scholars, would be best able to give good advice on the spot, and the 'spots' are very beautiful and sunny.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER VII.—FORBIDDEN FOLIOS.

THE words of warning inscribed there in large, uneven letters, shaky in places as though penned by an aged hand, stood out from the time-stained vellum page like capitals of fire.

It really seemed absurd to heed them, and yet on every side I seemed to be warned by those whom I believed to be in ignorance that any endeavour to open the Closed Book would result in disaster. Surely the manner in which the precious volume had come into my possession was romantic enough; yet why should even the faithful old Nello be apprehensive of impending evil? There was something uncanny about the whole affair—something decidedly unsatisfactory.

Italy is a land of superstition shared alike by count and *contadino;* hence I at first put it down to some vague belief in the evil eye, of which I was in ignorance. During my residence in Tuscany I had often been surprised by the many popular beliefs and terrors. Your true Tuscan sees an omen in everything, and an exhortation to the Virgin or to good Sant' Antonio is ever upon his lips, while his first and last fingers are always outstretched when he sees a *gobba*, or female hunchback—the harbinger of every evil.

Whether the warnings uttered to me were the outcome of mere superstition, or whether part of one of those ingenious conspiracies which he who lives among the suave Italians so often has to thwart, one fact remained—namely, that in the almost undecipherable record itself a further warning was plainly penned. And this, instead of creating fear and hesitation within me, only further aroused my curiosity.

I was determined to possess myself of the secret at all hazards.

Ah! if I had but known how well founded were those words of caution uttered to me, and what was meant by the warning written on that damp-stained page, I surely would have closed the book for ever.

The pale, tragic face of that dark-eyed woman whom I had discovered in the fat prior's study, and whom I had afterwards seen in the noisy, crowded city, haunted me. Yes, there was a calm sweetness in that proud and beautiful countenance, Tuscan most certainly, and yet mystery and tragedy were written there but too plainly.

How I longed to question Father Bernardo about her!—for, odd as it may appear to you, my reader, her strange, subtle influence seemed upon me, and I felt myself helplessly beneath a kind of spell which, even to this day, I cannot define.

In turning those vellum leaves listlessly, I paused and gazed across my half-darkened room, deep in thought. Outside, the cicala in the dusty tamarisks kept up their cricket-like song, and in the far distance from the blue hills came the clanging of a village bell. Beyond that all was quiet—the world was hushed and gasping beneath that summer heat that ripened the maize in the fields and the grapes and oranges in my garden.

But I was sick of it all—yes, heartily sick. Italy had charmed me once; but over my heart its white dust had accumulated, and I longed for the fresh, green fields of England, longed for my own friends and my own tongue. Nostalgia had seized me badly, and I was world-weary and home-sick—longing now for the day of my departure.

With those secret pages still beneath my hand I thought it all over: the new life before me in England, among those friends I had known so well. When I had left London to exile myself I had left it with a canker in my heart, a soured and misanthropic man, aged before my time, prosperous as far as profession went, but bearing a burden of ill-concealed sorrow and regret. It was because—— But no, I will tell you nothing more of that wretched past. It is among the bygones, and surely I need trouble no one with what is so essentially a purely private bitterness of heart. Let it suffice to say that by the removal of my cause for grievance, a new vista of happiness had now opened out to me, and I was therefore eager to return to England and embrace it.

But some men are doomed to disappointment and dishonour where women are concerned, and perhaps I am one of them. I, however, leave it to you to decide when you have read all that I have penned here, the perfectly frank and straightforward narrative of all that happened to me.

Presently I returned again to the study of the ill-written script before me, half-fearful of the strange warning inscribed upon the page; but slowly

and with considerable difficulty, I deciphered it as follows:

'THIS BE THE CAUSES following why that
I, Godfrey Lovel, have made
labour to write this secret record.

First, immediately after my birth at Winchelsea, my father, Sir Richard Lovel, baron of the King's Exchequer, died of plague, and my mother in brief time married my lord of Lincoln. The goode monks of Winchelsea learned me, but at fifteen I left their habit and religion, crossed unto France, and became a soldier of fortune with the army of the King of Navarre. Full many a strange adventure had I in those days of youth with the mercenary bande in Italy, untill, in the year of God's grace 1495, I was in Pesaro, where I entered the service of my lord Don Giovanni Sforza and his lovely lady the Donna Lucrezia, who was daughter of His Holiness the Pope. At firste I was made captain of my lord duke's gentlemen-at-arms, but afterwardes my lady Lucrezia, of her gracious bounty, found me worthy to be her grace's secretary. Furthermore, pleaseth it you to understand that in the palace of the Sforza Tyrant I saw that which was not a little to my discomforte; nevertheless I must be content recordeing it briefly.

'But now, as touching my own part, I most humbly beseech you to bear with me, for of a verity I saw and knew what no man did; and you, my reader, who make bold sufficient after my warning and admonition, will find herein a chronicle of fact that will astound you. God be thanked there are not such thynges done in England as in Italy under the red bull of the Borgias.

'As concerning the revelations, these be the things that I have heard and have knowledge in. At the beginning thereof, the which was in the ember week of 1496, the Pope's Holiness the lord Alexander P.P. VI. sent his son the boy-cardinal to our Court at Pesaro. From the firste tyme I saw him dysmounting from hys hors in the corteyard of the palace I dysliked hym. Although but eighteen years of age, his father had made him cardinal-deacon of Santa Maria Nouva, a vain and sinful elegaunt whose ambition knew no bounds. He had come on secret mission from the Vatican to his sister, my lady Lucrezia, and to her he spake in privy during my lord duke's absence. The lord Don Giovanni was a brutal and ill-living man, cruel to his golden-haired, beautiful wife, that I vouch; but even to my lady Lucrezia, whose life was so unhappy that she had shed tears unto me, her man of confidence and humble servitor, the object of the Cardinal Cesare's secret mission was appalling.

'At the downe of the sun on the same day my lord, having returned from a visit to the Malatesta at Rimini, welcomed the cardinal warmly and entertained him in the great banquet-hall, wherein four hundred persons supped. The revels did not end with midnight, but my lorde and his guest retired at that hour. Some tyme later I had occasion to pass along the great corridor where the chamber of my ladie Lucrezia was, and herd the sound as of a woman crying within. It was my ladie; and, obtaining permission, I entered and found her plunged in grief and remorse. Most humbly desiring her grace to accept mi poor mind towards her most noble self, I induced her to tell me the truth.

'She tore her hair in desperation as she confessed unto me, with promise of secresy, that her brother the cardinal had been sent by her father His Holyness in order to envenom her husband the duke, because the Terrible Pontiff wished to marry her more advantagiosly for the increase of the Borgia power. Never in my life have I seene a beautiful woman in such despair, and I, her grace's confidential servitor, chamberlain, and secretarie, did I in my moste humble wise seeke to assist her, whereupon did she tell me with tears that she feared to disobey the will of His Holiness. I suggested that her grace should separate from her lord, and that the marriage should be annulled by His Holyness; but in desperation she told me that her brother Cesare had already poisoned him secretly with a certaine deadly and irrevealable compound only known to her father, her brother, and herself.

'My lord Don Giovanni Sforza, the Tyrant of Pesaro, whose reign was one of oppression, murder, bloodshed, and infamy, was doomed. In a few houres he must die. Notwithstanding that my ladie hated hys evil ways, she yet wished that he should live. But she feared the wrath of His Holiness if she went unto him and told him what the lorde-cardinall his guest had done, the lord-cardinal being then wyth him discussyng the best menes of suppressing the rebellious Orsini. At last, however, my lady, makinge me give my bonde to help her, did resolve to leave Pesaro for Rome. First, being desirous of carrying wyth her the costly jewels given her on her marriage, she unlocked her jewel-chest and caused me to fill my pouch and doublet with those the most precious. Whereupon this having been done, she took from a golden caskett preserved wythin the chest a small cross-hilted poignard with perforated blade, telling me to go unto her lord the duke and strike him with it in a part not mortal. The lorde-cardinal being present, and believing that it was an assassinacion, would make no effort to secure me; therefour, having struck the blow, I was to escape at once to Rome and there await her. Within the golden caskett were three delicate tubes of greeny-white glasse, sealed carefully, the which my lady told me in confidence contained the secret and all-powerful venom of the Borgias. They had beene given her by her father as a marriage-gift, together with the poignard with thin, hollow blade containing the secret antidote.

'CONCERNING THE CASKET: This casket aforementioned, with its three glass tubes, each the length of the first joint of a man's little finger, the which place in one's hands the power of secret death, and the one tube containing the antidote,

did she gyve into my safe keepinge, as well as her wondrous jewels, the like no man had before seen.

'I took the poignard, kissed my lady's hand in pledge of servitude devout, and flew to do her bidding, entering to where my lorde duke sat drinkynge with his treacherious guest, stryking hym in the arme wyth the knife bearing the antydote—thus saveing hys life, although he believed it to be an attempt at assassination—and then escaping by the Gate of the Rocchetta under cover of night, arriving in Rome at sundown on the sixth daye following. Wherefore wyll it be seen that not only did I carry the priceless emeralds of my ladie Lucrezia and the secret venom of the Borjas—the presence of the which cannot be detected—but I also held in my possession the antidote.

'In Rome I did hide away the treasures given into my safe keepinge in a place whereof no man knewe; while mi ladie, having fled from Pesaro, entered the convent of San Sisto; while the lorde Alexander P.P. VI., finding that his poison sent by the worshipfull cardinal had been unavailing, issued a decree annulling the marriage. Now, His Holiness had lost by death many friends in Rome, including several members of the Sacred College, and by their decease had become goodly enriched and empowered; hence the failure of the banal substance to take effect in the case of Don Giovanni must have caused him much surprise.

'Praise be to God, who, of His infinite goodnes and mercy inestimable, hath brought me out of darkness into light, and from deadly ignorance into the quick knowledge of truth, from the which through the fiend's instigation and false persuasion I have grately swerved, I was enabled to save the life of mi lord, although he be a tyrant and a man of ill-living. The lord Cardinal Cesare returned to Rome, and six months after the divorce of my ladie His Holiness brought her forth from the convent, and gave her as wife unto the Lord Don Quadrata and Salerno, and likewise gave them the palace of the Cardinal of Santa Maria in Portico, by the Vatican, in the which to live. And here again did I return unto my ladie as her confidential chamberlain; for now, knowinge how that she were but the innocent tool in the infamous hands of the lorde Alexander and his creature the Cardinal Cesare, I resolved to devote myself unto her protection. I told unto my ladie the hiding-place of her jewels; but she would not allow me to bring them to the palace, lest they should remind her of her past unhappiness. They were best to remain where I had secreted them. Again was my unfortunate lady's marriage without love, her happiness constantly disturbed by the terror in which she lived, being compelled by the Terrible Pontiff and her ambitious brother to act in treachery and dishonour, to entice men and women to their ruine, and to place death-trappes with the secret venom.'

Following this sentence was a blank space wherein was rudely drawn a curious geometrical design, some of the shaky lines—intended most probably to be straight—bearing numbers. It was almost like a plan; but careful inspection showed me that it was not, and for a long time I tried to make out its connection with the old monk's remarkable record.

THE RECENT MAGNETIC STORM AND SUN-SPOTS.

By VIOLET TWEEDALE.

THE story that the stellar heavens can teach us is incomparably more wonderful, more beautiful, more marvellous than is any gorgeous dream, or the wildest and most vivid imagery that the mind of man can conceive. The continuous development of astronomical knowledge leads its students into the world of infinity, and puts to the minds of men the most stupendous question ever propounded for their feeble elucidation. No divine revelation is accorded to solve the mystery within mystery, only patient observation; and the milestones of science give utterance to each grain of truth wrested from the illuminated missal of the skies. So each little phenomenon is noted. Little, infinitesimal, when thought of in conjunction with the titanic changes and convulsions ever taking place within the luminous fields of space, yet each little incident offering up its tiny quota to the mass of knowledge garnered in by the devotion of man to the elucidation of the unknown.

On Saturday the 31st of October 1903 there suddenly burst upon us the greatest magnetic storm which has visited this globe for twenty-one years. Since November 17, 1882, there has been no such mighty indication of solar activity, no such dislocation and disturbance of the electrical forces, which man has tamed and harnessed to his use.

To the man in the street there came no inkling that anything unusual in the magnetic conditions was taking place. In London the day was fairly bright, and it was not till the evening editions of several newspapers notified the fact that telegraphic communication between England and France was cut off, owing to a magnetic storm, that the ordinary person became aware that something unusual was surging around him.

A compass-needle does not always point in the same line, but shifts in direction, vibrating to and fro. Subject to no perceptible laws, those oscillations at times enormously increase, until the needles seem to have gone mad under the stimulus of some terrific excitement. Powerful currents rack the

telegraph wires; the operators are severely shocked; magnificent auroral displays hang out their tremulous banners in the northern heavens. Such disturbances are noted to occur at the times of the greatest development of sun-spots, and are termed magnetic storms.

About six o'clock on Saturday morning the recording needles at Greenwich began to move. The delicately poised magnet, under normal conditions, vibrates gently each day through an arc of seven or eight minutes' amplitude. On Saturday, during the storm, this arc was increased twentyfold. From midday until nearly midnight the declination magnet was violently agitated, oscillating through an arc of over two degrees.

By nine o'clock on Sunday morning the magnets had subsided into their accustomed calm; the storm was over. The probability is that more storms are to come, the sun being in an exceedingly disturbed condition.

There has been an immense amount of speculation on the relations existing between sun-spots and weather; but up to the present the facts remain undecided. It is justly argued that weather is local, and varies considerably all over the earth on the same day. Theories there are in plenty; but none have crystallised into concrete fact. The relation between sun-spots and magnetism is, however, established upon a firmer basis. At one time it was believed that the earth-currents produced magnetic disturbances. But more recently disclosed facts contradict this theory; and, failing accurate knowledge, the opinion generally held is that a cause *exterior* to the earth, and most probably located in the sun, is responsible for both excessive earth-magnetism and sun-spots.

During the days preceding Saturday the 31st, a large solar spot made its appearance on the edge of the disc. On Saturday that spot was situated nearly in the centre of the orb. It was crossing the central meridian, so that it practically fixed its eye full upon this earth. Astronomers know that terrestrial magnetic disturbances are always to be expected when a large spot arrives immediately opposite our globe, and they can, therefore, predict magnetic storms with some degree of accuracy.

The sun, by making a quarter of a rotation on its axis during the week preceding the storm, had carried round this great spot till its activities were focussed full upon this earth. As if pouring its subterranean forces through a funnel, it turned a blast upon our globe, which, even at the distance of ninety-three million miles, realised something of the awful force and terrific energy directed for a few hours upon it.

The question as to what really constitutes a sun-spot has not yet been conclusively answered. The surface of the sun frequently exhibits certain markings which are not permanent characteristics of the solar globe, such as we understand the moon-craters to be. Sun-spots are movable, and are varying features exhibited by the photosphere—or, in other words, the glowing clouds which surround and envelop the orb.

In this photosphere changes of the most vehement and titanic nature are incessantly in progress. During one of those mighty solar cataclysms it often happens that a rent is torn in the brilliant veil, and we on earth are enabled to catch a glimpse of the dark solar interior. The sun in its rotations carries with it this immense rent or gap, which gives the suggestion to the onlooker that the spot or cavity is travelling across the sun's face, in place of being borne along and round on its fiery bosom. The smaller spots, which frequently accompany and surround the great one, are rents of smaller extent, but similar in origin. They are not to be confounded with the permanent granular markings on the photosphere, the dark interior being rendered visible between the grains. Sun-spots are entirely different from those small pores which are scattered liberally over the solar surface, and are not to be observed save with instruments of large aperture.

The sun's photosphere, when seen under favourable conditions, is observed to be mottled with objects which have been compared to rice-grains or bright snowflakes. A true sun-spot is distinguished from these by its dark central core, which is surrounded by a lighter border, and suggests a hole or deep cavity. Surrounding this lighter edging may be seen the faculæ, or mountain-like excrescences which shoot outwards and upwards, assuming an extension of something like twenty thousand miles, and more than two hundred miles high, and which form an irregular network over the sun's entire surface.

These faculæ are supposed to be the direct result of the fierce storms which ever rage and tear at the solar envelope, and like the billows of an ever-turbulent ocean rise crest on crest in furious and never-subsiding agitation.

It sometimes happens that there breaks out a sun-spot of such vast magnitude as to be visible to the unaided eye. Such an example occurred in February 1892. The central spot of the group measured one hundred thousand miles long, and half as broad; the entire group one hundred and fifty thousand miles long, and seventy-five thousand miles broad.

Magnetic storms have been known to rage when there were no visible solar perturbations, and the assumption is that the activity was taking place beneath the photosphere, and was therefore hidden from observation. In calculating the date of a magnetic storm such erraticisms must be borne in mind, and a prophecy may be rendered null and void by the sudden closing up of the spot and its swift and total disappearance.

The change which a single day—nay, a single hour—may bring forth is very striking. An area as large as the United States may vanish in ten minutes; bridges may be thrown across the mighty cavity and vanish as rapidly as they have been formed. A spot may divide itself into two, and subdivide again, then reassume its single identity

in half-an-hour. Changeable and most varying in form, their life-duration is alike uncertain. A spot has been known to endure for a year and a half; the average length of life is from three to four weeks.

It has been said that no conclusive verdict has been arrived at upon the exact nature of sun-spots; but much speculation of an ingenious nature has been indulged in. The theory propounded by Professor Young, of Princeton University, is one which carries with it great probabilities of truth, appealing to the reason, and bearing considerable weight as coming from so eminent a student of the phenomena in question.

The professor holds that in any thin or weak place in the shell of the photosphere, the fiery gases imprisoned below burst forth, and the upward pressure against the shell is temporarily diminished in that locality. An irregular gaping cavity is therefore formed by the subsidence of the photosphere.

In the outer regions of the sun's envelope, the materials ejected by the violence of the eruption become cooled, and fall back again into the abyss. Striving to penetrate through this mass of cooled vapours, the glowing light from beneath is dimmed by absorption; hence the dark central part, or umbra, though really brilliantly luminous, sends forth less light than the surrounding photosphere, and appears dark by contrast with it.

Great instruction of a very varied nature may be derived from the study of sun-spots; but their most obvious use is to enable us to determine the rotation of the sun on its axis with some approach to accuracy. The conclusion is that every globe poised in space rotates on its axis, and the sun forms no exception to this accepted law. The circumstances of its revolution can be well determined by means of the spots, though they are not so perfectly adapted for this purpose as one would wish. *Faute de mieux*, they are, however, carefully watched with this end in view.

It is not within the scope of this simple little paper to go into the intricacies of this astronomical feat, nor to demonstrate how the period of the sun's rotation, as determined by sun-spots, has shown the length of that period to be dependent upon the latitude of the spots employed in the determination. Suffice it to say that such has been shown to be the case, and is only another example of the patience and persevering devotion our astronomers bring to bear upon their decipherment of the heavens, and their mighty and intricate significance.

Perhaps to no one man can the honour of the discovery of sun-spots be ascribed; but a German Jesuit Father named Scheiner was the first to direct serious attention to their existence. What Scheiner did for the Fatherland, Galileo did for Italy, and solar spots became henceforth recognised facts.

It is true that 'Man is placed between two infinities. We live without reflecting in the midst of the sublime.' As Flammarion the great French astronomer most truly says: 'It is sweet to live in the sphere of the mind; it is sweet to soar in the ethereal heights, and to devote the best moments of life to the study of the true, the infinite, and the eternal.'

CAST BREAD.

CHAPTER II.—PROFESSOR GEDDES ACTS THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

WHAT Elizabeth had christened 'our clerical fiasco' had taken place early in December. By Christmas the Dreghornes might have forgotten the fact of Colin MacCalman's existence had he not sent a Christmas card—of exact similarity in design—to each member of the family; while the evening of the first Thursday in January found him, silent, introspective, but wholly appreciative, again seated in the drawing-room at Park Terrace.

His visit was repeated on the first Thursday in February, when nobody was at home, and on the first Thursday in March, when he called with the intention of saying 'Good-bye' before his departure for the island of the Hebrides where he passed his vacation, labouring hard on the little croft and among the scant stock to save the rheumatic limbs of his grandparents, and filling in his spare time with abstruse study.

During the summer months the student with the dark eyes and the literal mind quite slipped from the memories of his Glasgow acquaintances. He recalled them to the knowledge of his existence by being announced one November evening just at the moment when a select dinner-party had reached the stage of repletion and coffee.

'This first-Thursdaying is becoming chronic with papa's Highland scholar,' remarked Elizabeth. 'I do wish he could be induced to take a pledge against it. The night of the party that failed chanced to be a first Thursday, so I suppose he thinks that is the proper night to call. And he always seems so dumb and uncomfortable that I 'm certain it is only a stern sense of duty that brings him. For his sake and ours we really must make a point of going out on first Thursdays.'

In spite of this projected precaution, the invitation cards for an evening reception had been sent out before Gertrude and Ellen Mary, to their extreme consternation, discovered that its date fell upon the taboo day of the month.

'What are we to do? We can hardly write to Mr MacCalman asking him *not* to come, and father won't allow the servants to say "Not at home" to anybody. Besides, if he came when a party was on,

he couldn't help seeing that we *were* at home. And if he does come in that awful ginger-coloured suit and those boots! Oh, it's too awful for words!'

It fell to Elizabeth to lighten her younger sisters' counsel of despair by the suggestion that they might save the situation by sending Mr MacCalman a formal invitation for the reception.

'It will at least prepare him for a crowd,' she argued. And Gerty and Nelly, who, having just left the schoolroom, were abnormally sensitive concerning matters of appearance, gladly obeyed her promptings.

Thus it came about that a dainty card, requesting the pleasure of Mr Colin MacCalman's company on the evening of Thursday the —th February found its way to the dingy street, somewhere off the Cowcaddens, where the student was tenant of a 'room' —with its 'concealed' bed—belonging to a respectable married couple.

The receipt of the invitation filled Colin with mingled delight and despondency. To have his presence specially requested by a printed ceremonial card instantly put to flight his ever-haunting fears that his visits to Park Terrace might have been unwelcome. But certain words printed in unobtrusive lettering in the corner of the card gradually assumed undue importance.

'Carriages at 12.30.'

So ran the enigmatic legend. Guests evidently were expected to have carriages come for them. Recalling the night when he had chanced upon the dinner-party, MacCalman remembered his surprise at the almost simultaneous announcement that the guests' carriages were waiting, and how a few moments later he found himself the sole remaining visitor.

'Must I have a carriage?' he wondered, the doubt close followed by the still more harrowing conviction that perhaps he ought always to have had one.

With the notion that he had committed a glaring social blunder, a chill perspiration broke over him. The idea spoiled his night's study and disturbed his slumbers, for he was eagerly desirous of attending the reception, and with the knowledge that after midnight the cab-fare would be doubled, the expense was one he scarcely felt justified in incurring.

It was on the way to College next morning that the resolve to consult his Greek professor occurred to him.

Professor Geddes, attracted by the tireless energy of the young Highlander, and interested by a certain strenuous originality of thought characterising his Greek verse, had evinced special interest in MacCalman's work, particularly advising his pupil to consult him upon any difficult points. MacCalman, interpreting this permission, as he did all else, literally, had brought him many hard nuts to crack. When, therefore, MacCalman lingered behind after the lecture, the professor was surprised to find his advice sought upon a social, not an etymological difficulty.

Though the corners of his mouth twitched under his grizzled moustache, Professor Geddes succeeded in maintaining an outward gravity in accordance with his interrogator's estimate of the gravity of the occasion.

'Carriages at 12.30—is it? Oh, that does not concern you at all. You know, people who drive object to keeping their horses standing in the cold, so the hour is mentioned that they may know exactly when to order them to come. Carriages are not for strong young fellows like you, MacCalman.'

After expressing his thanks the inquirer was leaving satisfied, when a thought struck his adviser.

'By-the-bye—don't think me inquisitive, MacCalman—but—have you a wedding garment?'

A wedding garment! MacCalman's dark eyes turned questioningly on the speaker. In his pupil's estimation the professor's one drawback had lain in the puzzling whimsicalities of speech wherein he frequently indulged.

'Wedding garment?' Colin queried uncomprehendingly.

'Yes. Swallow-tail coat, white tie. All the conventional nonsense. Evening-dress, you know.'

Colin's face lengthened. Illustrations of society-pictures had familiarised him with the costume. He now recollected that Mr Dreghorne and his friends had customarily worn it, though until now the notion of its being anything more than a matter of personal taste had not occurred to him.

'I'm thinking I'll better stop away,' he said despondently, turning to leave the room as though the question were for ever closed.

'Wait a moment. Don't be in such a hurry, man.'

MacCalman had barely reached the lecture-room door when the professor's voice recalled him.

'I wish you would do me a service, MacCalman, in relieving me of a dress-suit I've outgrown—elderly spread, you know. Not so slim about the waist now as I was—and it just lumbers up my wardrobe. If you'll be a good chap and accept the things, they'll fit all right. We're about the same height.' MacCalman topped the professor by a good two inches; but there lives not the man who has a just estimate of his own stature.

MacCalman hesitated. Highland pride strong within him warred with his overweening desire to be present at what he esteemed a great occasion. The professor's tactful entreaty to be relieved of what he affected to regard as an incubus finally gave inclination the victory over pride.

'I know who the first arrival will be,' Gerty Dreghorne remarked as she preened herself before a long mirror. The eventful night had come, and the ladies were ready in the drawing-room.

'So do I,' retorted Ellen Mary. 'It doesn't take much cleverness to foretell that. It will be Mr Colin MacCalman, and punctually at nine o'clock he will ring the door-bell; and he will wait till everybody else has gone. And if anybody speaks to him he'll say, "It is that, whateffer."'

Elizabeth, kneeling on the hearth-rug coaxing a pair of obdurate white kid gloves to mould themselves on her mother's plump hands, looked up sharply at the sound of MacCalman's name.

'He never says "whateffer."'

'He hasn't yet,' Nelly admitted. 'But I always keep expecting him to.'

Contrary to the girls' expectations, MacCalman was amongst the later arrivals. Professor Geddes's well-intentioned offering had wrought an amazing change in his appearance. It was a very handsome man, albeit a grave anxiety characterised his expression, who nervously scrutinised his own aspect in the eight-inch looking-glass.

To his relief, the image it reflected presented a plausible imitation of a society-man. The coat-sleeves, in place of being too short, merely showed a fashionable extent of cuff. It was when he glanced at his extremities that Colin's elation evaporated, blank despair rushing in to fill the void. For it was in length of leg that the difference between the professor's height and his own stood revealed. Between the broadcloth hem and the top of the stout country-made boots was an inch-wide gap inadequately filled by an expanse of gray-blue yarn stocking.

Misery possessing his soul, MacCalman sat brooding—wondering in a helpless, resigned fashion what the dire result of his not putting in an appearance at the reception, after having accepted the invitation, might be. In a fatalistic way, he inclined to take the worst view of the consequences, for, in his opinion, so flagrant a breach of good-breeding ranked as beyond forgiveness.

A tap at the door broke his reverie.

'Wee Maggie here says she'll no' gang tae her bed till she's seen ye dressed for your pairty, Mr MacCalman. I'm tellin' her she's just a bad wean. I'm black affronted at her.'

Unknown to Colin, the occasion was an important one, not only to his landlady, but also to her neighbours. The fact of her student-lodger having received an invitation to an evening-party in the West End had, in Mrs M'Phie's opinion, shed a reflected glory on her establishment. And the excitement had spread to those of her special friends amongst the inmates of the close who had been favoured by a private view of the invitation-card. The hour of the entertainment being known, already certain doors stood ajar, their owners all agog for a stolen peep at the unconscious object of their interest as he descended in his glory.

It was with a shock, therefore, that Mrs M'Phie gathered from her lodger's downcast bearing that something untoward had happened.

'Keep me! You're surely no' well!' she exclaimed, entering the room. 'An' you lookin' that braw. Will ye no' be able to gang to the pairty, d'ye think?'

With a groan, Colin indicated the unseemly exhibition of stocking, and Mrs M'Phie's quick wit grasped the situation. She had cherished a motherly regard for her reserved lodger ever since the time when he found her stuck in the middle of spring-cleaning her kitchen walls, a pail of whitewash by her side, a fretful baby in her arms, and against her protests insisted upon finishing the job for her.

'Hoots, Mr MacCalman! that's naething tae look sae down in the mouth about. If you had asket me I would soon ha'e lengthened them a wee. An' it's no' too late now. It's a mercy blessin' I've a het iron at the fire.'

'It is too late. I should have been there by nine, and it's nine now,' Colin demurred. But a very little insistence serves to overrule one who wishes to obey. Ten minutes later Colin sat by the kitchen fire in evening-dress to the waist, his nether limbs reclad in their workaday garb of homespun, amusing the wean, the while Mrs M'Phie's skilful fingers unpicked the hems, ironed them out to their fullest extent, and lined up the length thus gained with a strip of her wedding black silk.

Mrs M'Phie's ministrations proved entirely successful. At ten o'clock, when, during a lull in the music, MacCalman was announced, Elizabeth flushed with surprise to find this dubious guest not only presentable but actually distinguished in appearance.

She herself was looking her best in a gown that Colin instantly accepted as a realisation of his unexpressed ideal of feminine attire. It was pink in tone and diaphanous in texture; fascinatingly fluffy round the pretty naked shoulders and the long train, but clinging closely to the slender figure. A distractingly becoming wreath of tiny roses decked Miss Dreghorne's dark hair, and her fan was a whirl of pink feathers.

To Colin's delight, she proved gracious beyond all expectation. And she considerately refrained from routing her diffident guest out of the obscure corner he had chosen to introduce him to strangers. Perhaps intuition had already taught her that MacCalman's one idea of enjoyment lay in watching her.

Mrs Dreghorne, her affluent form encased in the black brocaded satin at that date the wear favoured of matrons, her plump hands inactive in the tight white kid gloves whose fitting had given Elizabeth so much trouble, sat in the chair whose curves best adapted themselves to the undulations of her figure, smiling benignly on the company. She was content that the duties of hostess should devolve upon her capable eldest daughter. And as Elizabeth moved about seeing that no one had reason to feel neglected, and supervising the musical programme so that the available talent showed to best advantage, in Colin's eyes her every motion was the epitome of grace, her most stereotyped social civilities marvels of diplomatic tact.

As the evening wore on he discovered, with a shock, that the fair man with the debonair manner who kept in close attendance on his deputy-hostess was Sir James Cambus, a shipowner who had recently filled the office of Lord Provost. From

overhearing casual gossip, Colin gathered that Cambus was a widower, and while envying him his assured bearing and facile speech, Colin envied him yet more the consciousness of equality of position that emboldened him openly to pay court to Miss Dreghorne.

When supper was announced MacCalman gloried in the skill wherewith Elizabeth paired off the guests, sending her mother down on the arm of Dr Enoch Paul, and whispering to her father a reminder that he was to take down the widow of Principal Netherlee.

Colin had risen to his feet, his heart beating quickly. He would fain have claimed Elizabeth as his companion; but a paralysing sense of unworthiness restrained him. Besides, Sir James Cambus was standing by in evident anticipation of escorting her downstairs.

Colin scarcely credited his hearing when he heard her say, 'You know Miss Logie, Sir James—Bailie Logie's daughter? Will you take her in to supper?'

'But I had hoped'——

Elizabeth, the ghost of a frown wrinkling her forehead, cast a meaning glance at the sofa whereon sat an elderly-young lady wearing that elaborate affectation of indifference noticeable in the deportment of women who imagine themselves slighted; and Sir James, abandoning his attempt at protest, moved quickly in her direction.

The little discussion had taken place close to the palm that sheltered MacCalman, and with its conclusion a tumult of possibilities sped his pulses; but though the room was fast emptying, he made no motion.

'Well, Mr MacCalman'—Elizabeth had turned and was regarding her obtuse guest with a quizzical smile—'am I to have no supper to-night? Everybody has gone now, and if you don't take pity on me I must go down alone!'

REPLENISHING THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

By W. V. Roberts.

IN the popular mind there is probably no institution more constant and unchanging than the House of Lords. The bishops of the Church may pass away, the judges on the bench may change from year to year, the members of the Commons' House may have their day and cease to be; but the House of Lords remains—the names of members passing on from sire to son no matter what other alterations time may bring. So at least many people think; and yet were Ministers to abandon the art and practice of replenishment, the House of Lords would soon become a very small body indeed. In numbers it would steadily diminish, and though some of its members might long remain, ultimate extinction would stare them in the face; for in all such matters Time is remorseless and relentless, and none can stay its hand.

At the present moment about five hundred and twenty peers sit in the House of Lords by reason of the hereditary principle. That excludes the Scotch and Irish representative peers and the bishops, whose numbers are indeed fixed, but who have no hereditary right to sit. Well, an aggregate of five hundred and twenty is not without strength; but on looking at it one sees that it is not without weakness also. During the century 1800–1900 no fewer than one hundred and twenty-four peerages became extinct, and during the same period as many as three hundred and eighty-six others were created. If, then, the five hundred and twenty be regarded with an eye to the extinctions and creations of a hundred years, it will be seen that had the House of Lords been left to itself, so to speak, its membership would by this time have become very small indeed. What would be the effect of that, supposing constitutional practice as it affects the House of Lords to be unchanged? In a Ministry room can be found for twenty or thirty peers. An equal number are supposed to be ready to serve in case of an alternative Government being formed. But a large proportion have no taste or aptitude for political work; and it is clear that, but for the replenishment of the last century, statesmen called to-day to the premiership might find difficulty in securing enough peers to fill the posts which members of the Upper House now hold. The process of change is, indeed, going on. During the year 1902, for instance, seven new peerages were created: those of Allerton, Barrymore, Grenfell, Kinross, Knollys, Redesdale, and Shuttleworth; while four others—those of Connemara, Malcolm, Pauncefote, and Rookwood—became extinct. In 1903 the creations of peerages numbered four—those of Armstrong, Biddulph, Burnham, and Estcourt; and the extinctions two—those of Pirbright and Rowton, the latter title, by the way, belonging to one who, when plain Mr Montagu Corry, achieved fame as the Earl of Beaconfield's private secretary. In a couple of years, therefore, the extinctions have been no fewer than six; so that, although new peerages have numbered eleven, the net gain to the House of Lords in two years is only five. If the rate of extinction of the last two years were maintained without any replenishment at all, the House of Lords would lose in a century no fewer than three hundred of its members.

Has any one ever paused to note how quickly some of the best-known names in the peerage—names that are for a time ever on the public tongue—pass away? The late Lord Derby, when near the end of his career, made a pathetic remark on one occasion that men live again in their children. Apply that to

the House of Lords, and especially to its most prominent members, peers who hold office in the Government. During last century twenty-one men were Prime-Ministers of this country, and of that number fourteen were peers. Of these fourteen, the titles of four have already become extinct, and regarding some of the others there is much to be said. First, there was Lord Grenville, who had been the colleague of Pitt, and who succeeded him in the premiership in 1806, when he formed the 'Ministry of all the Talents.' Grenville had been made a peer in 1790, and he lived till 1834, when the title became extinct with his death. After the short-lived Ministries of the Duke of Portland and Mr Perceval, Lord Liverpool became Premier in 1812, and continued to hold office for the long period of fifteen years. The end came with tragic suddenness in 1827, when he was stricken with paralysis that brought to a close his Ministry and his life. His title, however, continued till 1851, when, there being no further male issue, it passed away. Since then it has been partly revived in this way: the Earl of Liverpool was also Baron Hawkesbury, and in 1893, when Mr Cecil Foljambe was raised to the peerage, he did not fail to remember the fact that on the female side he was a descendant of this famous peer. In taking a title he therefore chose that of Lord Hawkesbury. In that he acted wisely and well, though few people, probably, connect the family of Foljambe and the barony of Hawkesbury with the family of Jenkinson and the earldom of Liverpool—Jenkinson, of course, having been the name of the Liverpools.

Then there is Lord Melbourne, who was Premier when Queen Victoria ascended the throne. With but a brief interval he was Prime-Minister from 1834 to 1841, and he lived till 1848, leaving no heir. The case of Lord Beaconsfield is more recent. He accepted a peerage during his premiership, which extended from 1874 to 1880. On April 19, 1881, about a year after the general election had ended his term of office, he died, and that peerage also became extinct. Few men, probably, have entered the House of Lords with more pleasure than 'Dizzy.' Sir Mountstuart Grant-Duff records that after taking his seat in that House he was asked how he felt, and he answered that he felt as if he were dead and in the Elysian fields. Thus the peerages of Lord Grenville, Lord Liverpool, Lord Melbourne, and Lord Beaconsfield, associated with the premiership during nearly a third of the last century, have all passed out of existence.

But what of other men who were Premiers in the last century? One may recall the case of George Canning, who succeeded Lord Liverpool, and who died about six months later, while still holding the premiership, at the Duke of Devonshire's villa at Chiswick, in the very room in which Charles James Fox had died twenty-one years before. The King (George IV.) was so deeply grieved at such a tragic termination of so brilliant a career that he conferred a peerage upon Canning's widow, with remainder to her children. The title was in due course borne by Canning's son Charles John, who succeeded to it in 1837, and who is best remembered as Governor-General of India. From that post of Governor-General he retired in 1862, and came home; but he came only to die a short time later. He passed away in 1862, leaving no issue, and the title thereupon lapsed. Nor should the case of Lord Palmerston be overlooked. Palmerston's peerage was an Irish one; and, having only an Irish peerage, he could not sit in the House of Lords. But he was free to be elected to the House of Commons, and he so much preferred being there that on more than one occasion he refused a peerage of the United Kingdom that would have removed him to the House of Lords. He was Premier from 1855 to 1858, and again from 1859 to 1865. In the latter year he faced a general election, and was again returned for Tiverton. But premonition of death seems to have come to him, for he appeared to feel that his 'time was up,' and he remarked to a friend that 'when a man's time is up there is no use in repining.' He died a few days afterwards at Brocket Hall, his wife's estate in Hertfordshire, at the age of eighty-one, while still holding the premiership; and with his death the Irish title of Palmerston passed away, for he left no heir to succeed him. So that, of twenty-one Prime-Ministers in a hundred years, six—Grenville, Canning, Liverpool, Melbourne, Beaconsfield, and Palmerston—have left no successor to perpetuate their name. They live by their own works.

Then there is also the interesting case of those who have passed from the Speakership of the House of Commons to membership of the House of Lords. It is a long-established custom which ordains that a Speaker on laying down office becomes a peer, the reason being that some mark of honour is conferred upon him for services rendered. Now, the Speaker is the highest commoner in the land, taking precedence of all privy councillors, baronets, knights, and members of various orders of distinction. Consequently, to give any of those titles would not be to raise him in any way in rank. Only a peerage seems left, and to the House of Lords Speakers accordingly go on retirement. Of the last five men who preceded Mr Gully in the Speakership, the titles of three have already passed into oblivion. These three are the titles borne by Lord Dunfermline, who sat in the House of Commons as Mr Abercromby; Viscount Eversley, remembered as Mr Charles Shaw Lefevre; and Viscount Ossington, who was Mr Evelyn Denison. The two titles that remain are those of Viscount Hampden (held by the son of Mr Speaker Brand) and Viscount Peel, happily still borne by one who was Mr Speaker Peel from 1884 to 1895.

Again, if one were to sit down and endeavour to recall some of the famous names that have in recent years been in the peerage but are now no more, he would have a relatively easy task.

In the law some notable names have disappeared. First may be mentioned Lord Lyndhurst, one of the most prominent of our Lord Chancellors, and who, by the way, according to Greville, had very serious qualms about taking the post at all, because of the loss of money which the giving up of his great professional position involved. The name of another recent Lord Chancellor, Lord Hatherley, has also passed out of the peerage; and so has that of Lord Penzance, who, though once a baron of the defunct Court of Exchequer, and later a baron of the Court of Probate, is best remembered, perhaps, for his ecclesiastical position of Dean of Arches. Lord Redesdale's title also became extinct; but in 1902 it was revived again by one of the Coronation peers—Mr Freeman Mitford.

Extinct, so far as the peerage is concerned, is the name of Lord Macaulay, though in literature it will continue as long as English letters exist. Gone also is the name of Viscount Sherbrooke, better known no doubt as 'Bobby Lowe,' the Chancellor of the Exchequer who proposed to tax the matches. The name of Lord Cardwell, who was one of the great pioneers of army reform, and who, indeed, introduced the short service system that has proved of such enormous benefit, has likewise gone. Lord Alcester, better known as Sir Beauchamp Seymour, who commanded at the bombardment of Alexandria a little over twenty years ago, died in 1895, leaving no heir. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, who played so prominent a part in various phases of the Turkish Question; the Duke of Buckingham, who made his mark as a politician and administrator in India; the Duke of Cleveland; Lord Sydney, who repeatedly held state appointments in Queen Victoria's household; Lord Hammond, who for many years held important posts at the Foreign Office; and many others, have in recent years died, leaving no heir to take their titles.

In some cases a name in the peerage has come almost like a flash and then has disappeared. It was so in the case of Sir Erskine May, possibly the most distinguished clerk the House of Commons has had, and the author of a work on parliamentary practice that is likely to last for generations to come. On his retirement from office a peerage was very properly conferred by Mr Gladstone, and the title of Lord Farnborough was chosen; but Sir Erskine, or rather Lord Farnborough, died before he could take his seat in the House of Lords. Equally tragic was the case of Sir Frederick Leighton, President of the Royal Academy. The peerage was conferred, the title of Lord Leighton was announced, but the new peer died without having entered the House of Lords as a member. Thus both of these peerages became extinct before they had been brought completely into existence. Again, in 1887, Lord Lyons retired from the post of ambassador at Paris, and it was announced that an earldom would be conferred upon him; but he was stricken with paralysis and died before the patent could be made out, and the title passed out of the peerage. It may be remembered, too, that Lord Rosebery, when Prime-Minister, created his private secretary—Viscount Drumlanrig, son of the Marquis of Queensberry—a peer with the title of Lord Kelhead. The marquis was understood to feel strongly upon the point; for, being only a Scotch peer, he had himself no seat in the House of Lords, and it seemed scarcely fitting that the son should be thus honoured while the father was left out. In the next year Lord Kelhead met with a fatal accident in the hunting-field, and that brought the title to a melancholy end after it had existed for only a few months. This, however, is only one instance out of many in which peerages created in the last century became extinct through there being no successor to the first holder of the title. Among others may be mentioned those of Lord Knightley of Fawsley, which lasted only from 1892 to 1895; Lord Pirbright, 1895 to 1903; Lord Connemara, once Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and afterwards governor of Madras, whose peerage continued only from 1887 to 1902; Lord Sandford, long and very widely known as Sir Francis Sandford, for his work at the Education Department, 1891 to 1893; Lord Pauncefote, who died when British ambassador at Washington, 1899 to 1902; Lord Rookwood, who, as Sir Henry Selwin Ibbetson, was once one of the members for Essex, 1892 to 1902; and Lord Malcolm of Poltalloch, 1896 to 1902. The list might be extended indefinitely by the inclusion of Lord Hammond, Permanent Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs; Lord Blachford, Under Secretary for the Colonies; and many others.

Another important aspect of the question of extinction and replenishment is that concerned with the number of peerages that must of necessity soon become extinct. At the present moment there are rather more than fifty peers who have no heirs to succeed them. That, in round numbers, is a proportion of one in ten of the whole peerage. In other words, if the present members of the House of Lords were to die without the creation of any new peerage, the membership would be reduced by a tenth forthwith. But the reduction would not end there, for with the flight of time it would be found that there were no successors to other peerages, and the process of diminution would continue. The peers who have no heirs to-day include some of the most-talked-of men. Lord Milner, for instance, has no heir; neither has Lord Kelvin, who is so prominent in the scientific world. The same may be said of Lord Lister, foremost among medical men as the discoverer of the antiseptic treatment in surgery. Lord Llandaff, who, as Mr Henry Matthews, filled the office of Home Secretary, has no relative who can succeed to his title. Nor has Lord James of Hereford, who, as Sir Henry James, was once Attorney-General, and who might have become Lord Chancellor in 1886 had he not differed from Mr Gladstone on the

question of Home Rule. Lord Field, a retired judge, has no heir to succeed him; nor has Lord Shand, a retired Scotch judge of great eminence; nor Lord Brampton, who, as Sir Henry Hawkins, was held by some to be the first criminal lawyer of his day. In the case of these three distinguished lawyers, the titles were conferred in the regular way, and they are doomed to extinction only because there are no heirs. Often a lawyer receives only a life-peerage. The late Lord Russell of Kilowen, for example, received only a life-peerage; while among lawyers living, Lord Lindley (who has been Master of the Rolls), Lord Davey, Lord Robertson, and Lord Macnaghten hold only life-peerages as lords of appeal. Lord Hobhouse, who has had a very brilliant legal career, especially in India, where he was law member of the Government, and who is now a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, has a full peerage but no heir to succeed to it. Prominent servants of the State like Lord Haliburton (son of the author of *Sam Slick*), who was Under Secretary at the War Office; Lord Lingen, for more than twenty years secretary to the Committee of Council on Education, and for fifteen years Permanent Secretary to the Treasury; and Lord Welby, who succeeded Lord Lingen as Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, have no heirs to titles conferred for conspicuous service to the State.

The position of our three most distinguished military peers is worth noting. Lord Kitchener remains a bachelor, and his brother is, therefore, heir to the title. Lord Wolseley has no son; but his viscountcy was conferred with special remainder to his daughter, and with remainder again to her male issue, so that in that way the title may be perpetuated. Lord Roberts, as everybody knows, lost his only son at Colenso at a very early stage of the South African war. In his case, also, the earldom was conferred with special remainder to his daughter. It was a heavy blow to Lord Roberts to lose his only son, and then to be called upon to take command in a war in which his son had lost his life. Few indeed will forget what sympathy was aroused for this great and gallant soldier upon the mournful occasion. But even here the arm of coincidence is sufficiently long to point to a very close parallel. In 1854 the Earl of Clare lost his only son and heir, Viscount Fitzgibbon, who fell in the famous charge of Balaklava when serving as lieutenant in the 8th Hussars, and the title soon afterwards became extinct. Again, during the Ashanti Expedition of 1873, Lord Elcho, the eldest surviving son of the Earl of Wemyss, died of fever and dysentery while attached to the staff of Sir Garnet (now Lord) Wolseley; but in that case there were other heirs to succeed, so that happily the title still remains. Other cases might be given, but the foregoing must suffice.

Reference has just been made to the fact that in the peerages of Lord Wolseley and Lord Roberts there are special remainders to their daughters and the male issue of their daughters. That leads one to remark that at the present time there are no fewer than nine ladies who are peeresses in their own right, most of them without heirs-male. One may mention among them the Lady Hambleden, widow of the late Mr W. H. Smith, for some years leader of the Conservative party in the House of Commons. On Mr Smith's death Queen Victoria conferred a peerage upon his widow, as Lady Hambleden, on whose death the title will devolve upon her son, the Hon. W. F. D. Smith, Conservative member for the Strand. On the other hand, Lady Macdonald, widow of a former Prime-Minister of Canada—'Old To-morrow,' as he was nicknamed—has no heir.

Some men have succeeded to the peerage although in their early days they appeared not to have the remotest chance of doing so. The late Marquis of Salisbury may be named as one of these. He was a younger son, and when, as Lord Robert Cecil, he entered Parliament, member for Stamford, it seemed very unlikely that he would ever be called to the House of Lords as Marquis of Salisbury. His elder brother, however, died, leaving no direct heir, and Lord Robert came into the line of succession as Lord Cranborne, and ultimately succeeded to the marquisate. But a volume might be written on peerages that have descended, or rather have been succeeded to, most unexpectedly. Is it not said that one of the Earls of Chesterfield succeeded by reason of being fifteenth cousin; while as to 'romantic claims' to titles that appear in the way of becoming extinct, are they not ever with us?

It may, however, be well to add a word about the men who have been the greatest peer-makers, though one need not go back into the far-off days for the purpose. A little about the peer-makers of the last century may be sufficient. In that period Mr Gladstone for some time held the record, and he was not deterred from adding to the peerage, even though many whom he created peers forthwith became his political opponents. But Lord Salisbury in the closing years of the century had a prolonged opportunity of making peers, and he did not hesitate to make full use of it. After the Liberals left office in 1895, Lord Salisbury created no fewer than thirty-seven peers of the United Kingdom before the century ended, and that very considerable effort not only brought him level with Mr Gladstone, but put him just ahead as peer-maker. During the latter half of the century peerages were made at a slightly faster rate than in the former half, the rate during the thirty years 1870 to 1900 having been very greatly accelerated. Like many other things, peer-making as an art very greatly developed during that period. Between the opening of the century and the passing of the first Reform Bill in 1832, about a hundred peerages were created. Then came something of a lull while the Whigs were in office. Finally, between Mr Gladstone's acceptance of the premiership in 1868 and the end of 1900, over a hundred and fifty peerages

were created—that is to say, in round numbers a hundred in the first thirty-two years of the century, and a hundred and fifty in the last thirty-two years of the century. More peers were created during the reign of Queen Victoria than during any other reign in our history. Here is a table showing upon whose nomination peers were made by Her Majesty:

	Peers Created.
Lord Melbourne	26
Sir Robert Peel	5
Earl Russell	21
Lord Palmerston	22
Earl of Derby	15
Earl of Beaconsfield	31
Mr Gladstone	74
Earl of Rosebery	6
Marquis of Salisbury	82
	282

In looking at these figures it must, of course, be remembered that Mr Gladstone and Lord Salisbury held office longer than any other Prime-Minister of the Queen. Mr Gladstone was four times Prime-Minister, and both entrance upon office and retirement from it seemed always to necessitate the creation of peers. Two of the half-dozen peerages created by Lord Rosebery were said to have been promised by Mr Gladstone, and Lord Rosebery in conferring them was simply carrying out a sort of promise that they should be given. The Earl of Beaconsfield, with six years of office, was in the matter of the rate of creating them almost as great a peer-maker as Mr Gladstone, who had something like fourteen years of office. Lord Salisbury's record was in every way that related to the creation of peers greater than Mr Gladstone's; for, while he made eight more peers than Mr Gladstone, his whole period of office (in three terms) was not much in excess of Mr Gladstone's in four. As a commoner, however, Mr Gladstone certainly took the palm as peer-maker.

THE ISLAND OF CORVO, AZORES.

THE part of the Old World usually first sighted by ships crossing from Boston or New York to Europe is a tiny island of steep and stern aspect, surrounded by stormy seas. This is the island of Corvo, discovered in 1452, so called, it is said, because of its resemblance to the *corvo-marinho*, or cormorant. Formerly it was known as the island of Marco (mark), as ship-masters went there to prick their charts; but originally its name was Santo Antaõ, after the first donee, the Portuguese Antaõ Vaz.

The ancient tradition that here, on a high rock overlooking the sea, an equestrian statue pointing out the route to America was found by the first inhabitants wants verification. If it were true, interesting disputes would arise as to who really was the discoverer of the New World. Signor Antonio Lourenço da Silveira Macedo, the Azorean historian, says that investigations—though there are no positive indications—make it appear probable that some capricious formation of nature, some rock which at a distance presented the form of a man on horseback, originated this tradition.

Corvo, in latitude forty degrees north and longitude thirty-four degrees west, is ten kilometres in length and five in width. It is visited by the mail-boat from Lisbon once in three months, and has occasional communication with the island of Flores, which is visible far away on the horizon. The Corvoites frequently visit the United States, where they acquire modern ideas and fashions. Though from almost any part of the island large vessels may constantly be seen crossing the ocean, they do not call there for coal or provisions nor for repairs, but make for the more distant islands of Fayal and Saõ Miguel; but I have known of a steamer in distress putting into Flores for sufficient wood for the fires until she could reach Fayal. From May till the end of August large open boats with lateen sails or whaling-boats often cross from Flores with one or two passengers, and sometimes a petty merchant with a pack of goods, for which he has but little sale, because, though the people of Corvo number nearly nine hundred, their clothing is generally made of linen woven on the island and excellent woollen stuffs manufactured there with wonderful skill. Under favourable conditions and with a fair wind, the trip is made in three or four hours, and the boats land at Porto Novo, Porto das Casas, or Porto da Arica; if at the latter, right in front of the bright little town, which is built partly on the level and partly on the slope of the hills which close it in to the north and west. Though small, the town boasts of some very good and well-furnished houses, lime-washed and with tiled roofs.

The streets of Corvo, however, are exceedingly narrow, some of them even too narrow for a bullock-cart; and, once in them, a stranger has some difficulty in finding his way out again, as they form a most perplexing labyrinth. There was a very good reason for this, as it seems these islands were formerly infested by Moorish pirates. The most formidable raids took place in 1632 and 1714. In the art of war the system of defence then adopted by the simple islanders is perhaps unique. On the occasion of one of the piratic raids, the population of the island had been terror-stricken by the landing of the wild marauders, to whom nothing was sacred, and who did not limit themselves to plunder of property, but also carried off the most beautiful girls and women. When the enemy had already landed and were forcing their way along the narrow, tortuous streets, a few Azoreans, more daring than

the rest, confronted by the terror of that unarmed population, were seized with a new idea. They hurried away to the pasture-lands, surrounded a herd of wild cattle, quickly chased them to the town, and succeeded in driving the now infuriated beasts into the passages crowded with the terrible corsairs. The doors had all been closed and barred; and from the windows, for want of more effective projectiles, a shower of enormous stones fell upon the heads of the assailants. Then the panting bulls, lashed and goaded, rushed along the narrow streets, and, seeing before them that clamorous rabble, dashed furiously into their midst. It was a fearful onslaught. Within a very few minutes men and animals were mingled together in a terrible death-struggle, and by this means about a hundred of the dreaded enemy were killed.

The Church of Our Lady of Miracles, the patron saint of the parish, is the only place of worship on the island. It has both a vicar and a curate; but only a few years ago a spiritual comforter arrived from Flores once in twelve months for the confessions and other Lenten services and ceremonies.

Corvo is an island of plenty, though provisions are not sold there, but only exchanged. For instance, those having more wheat than they need exchange it with some one for beans; or, if their potatoes are too plentiful for their family, they take some to a neighbour and get onions in return. They breed a large number of cattle and pigs, and fowls are plentiful. There is quite a variety of fruits: water-melons, sweet-melons, pears, figs, &c.; they have good spring water, and the milk is excellent. Even the poorest families in Corvo kill a pig at Christmas-time, most of the carcass being smoked for use during the year. Beef is also smoked; the flavour, though peculiar, is not at all unpleasant.

The Corvoites' mode of living is very simple. They rise at dawn and go to church to hear early mass, and thence to work in the fields. Between nine and ten o'clock they breakfast on fresh milk and Indian corn or rye bread—nothing more. At nightfall they return to their homes, where what they call *comida de panella* (pot-food) awaits them. This dish generally consists of cabbages, potatoes, beans, and turnips, or other produce of the soil, and serves them both as dinner and supper. Coffee and tea, already much used by the poor in the other islands of the group, are here almost unknown; if any one chances to have a little of either, it is reserved for cases of sickness. They have neither a doctor nor a chemist's shop on the island; indeed, there are no shops of any kind; but in most of the houses a bottle of 'pain-killer' is to be found, brought, of course, from the United States, their Land of Canaan.

The periodical visits of ships from Portugal are not looked upon in the light of blessings; they are associated principally with the fiscal exigencies, and so the people would much rather be without them. The Superintendent of the Exchequer and his clerk live at Santa Cruz, Flores, the capital of the district, and frequently cross to the sister-isle on business bent.

Nearly all those who go to Corvo go there against their will; it is like being exiled, with the prospect of getting news from the outer world only once in three months; but it is a singular fact that after a short stay on the island they are sorry to leave it, and do so with reluctance, as life there is so free from care and worries, and there is an abundance of everything. The ease and freedom in dress, together with the sincere and kindly hospitality of the inhabitants, and the magnificent views enjoyed, all tend to make us forget that beyond this insignificant spot in an immense ocean there are great, rich, and populous cities. And then, resting on the summit of some high rock, we say to the ships passing away in the distance, 'God take you in safety, and leave us here in peace.' Or, climbing still higher to the edge of the beautiful crater, in the bosom of which lies a lovely lake dotted with tiny islands brilliant in that glorious sunshine, with the air around full of the fragrance of broom and heather, and millions of flowers on every side, we bless the Providence that placed us there to enjoy such hours of tranquil existence.

HOME-THOUGHTS.

The fog flits over the moor,
And the wind drives up from the sea,
And the kerry flies on the low'ring skies,
And the pewits cry as they curve on high,
And the rain sweeps over the lea.

How oft have I seen you thus,
On a dark November day,
My native land, as I coursed the sand,
And sang to the sea, for it sang to me,
When the tide was sullen and gray!

How oft have I seen you thus!
For my spirit is one with your own—
As cheerless as those grim peaks
That leer in the tempest's moan.
And, oh, how I loved you thus!
And hated you, loving you more,
With the dismal bleat of the sheep in the sleet,
And the moor-hen's wail in the wintry gale,
And the distant torrent's roar.

And what though the sun may shine
On the fairest scenes afar,
Or the moonlight gleam on a poet's dream
By the palm, or the pine, if it is not mine
That I view by the evening star?

And what though the waves are blue,
And they break on the farthest earth?
My soul still yearns for the noisy burns,
The cold, bleak shore where the sea-caves roar,
And the fireside scene on a Hallowe'en,
In the land o' my birth.

Stephen Chalmers.

New York.

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GUIDANCE IN NOVEL-READING.

THE prevailing taste of the day is only too much in harmony with Jowett's saying that 'there are few ways in which people can be better employed than in reading a good novel.' As its field is human life, 'the experience of the race under countless conditions of existence,' so it makes the widest possible appeal and is the most universally popular of all forms of literature. People in every position of life, from the scavenger or washerwoman to Royalty, indulge in some form of fiction-reading, if they read at all. R. L. Stevenson, in writing of the books which influenced him, says that 'the most influential books, and the truest in their influence, are works of fiction. They do not pin the reader to a dogma which he must afterwards discover to be inexact; they do not teach him a lesson which he must afterwards unlearn. They repeat, they rearrange, they clarify the lessons of life; they disengage us from ourselves, they constrain us to the acquaintance of others. . . . The course of our education is answered best by those poems and romances where we breathe a magnanimous atmosphere of thought and meet generous and pious characters.' The child at its mother's knee drinks in with wonder and delight the old fairy-tales. Then comes the boy's and girl's book-shelf and the period of danger; then, all too early it may be, Master or Miss Precocity tackles the fiction that comes in an indiscriminate way, most of which had better be left unread so far as they are concerned. A novelist once penned a paper on novel-reading for a popular periodical, in which he said he trembled lest his own young people should read some of the problem novels, or those which described the seamy side of life, which had been left about! This is how he concludes: 'I—who, having written novels all my life, know more than most readers how to admire a great novelist—should esteem it a good sign of any son or daughter of mine who would throw a whole cartload of modern fiction into the gutter, often its fittest place, in order to clasp a huge, wholesome armful of Sir Walter Scott.' Nevertheless, the standard of purity and good taste is wonderfully high, as well as the literary execution.

We find from the reports of the American Commissioner of Education that a great deal of honest trouble is being taken to bridge over the period between school and business-life by means of reading-lists suitable for the public library. Reading-lists, supervised by the teacher, have been drawn up for school use. To a certain extent in this country there are school-libraries in connection with Board-schools. The *Schoolmaster* and *Journal of Education* both published useful lists for such libraries. But that omnipotent thing known as the Code has not yet attempted to lay down any rules for the training of children in the reading of imaginative literature. There is, therefore, some justification for what Professor Moulton says, that 'if novel-reading, as a whole, has been a curse rather than a blessing, the fault lies, not in our authors, but in our distracted educational system, which insists upon careful training in mathematics, or language, or physical science, subjects comparatively easy and remote from life, yet leaves literature, most difficult and vital of all studies, to take care of itself.'

An American educationist, Mr C. A. McMurray, in this connection says that the child who by the age of fourteen has not read *Robinson Crusoe*, *Hiawatha*, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Heroes* by Kingsley, the *Wonder Book* and *Tanglewood Tales* by Hawthorne, *The Lays of Ancient Rome*, *Paul Revere's Ride*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *The Arabian Nights*, *Sleepy Hollow*, *Rip Van Winkle*, the *Tales of the White Hills*, *Courtship of Miles Standish*, Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, *Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, the story of Ulysses and the Trojan War, William Tell, and Alfred—that 'the boy or girl who has grown up to the age of fourteen without a chance to read and thoroughly enjoy these books has been robbed of a great fundamental right, a right which can never be made good by any subsequent privileges or grants. It is not a question of learning how to read—all children who go to school learn that—it is the vastly greater question

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of appreciating and enjoying the best things which are worth reading.' In a St Louis library, when a reader asks for a bad novel it is handed to him; but inside the cover he finds pasted a list of better ones, so that when his own list is exhausted his taste will gradually be educated by drawing upon this fresh list. Booksellers, when they are genuine booksellers, as well as librarians, can do much in the way of recommendation of what is best. A writer in the *Pilot*, in considering the high percentage of novels read at the public library (80 per cent. or so) contrasted with more solid literature, urges a gradual reformation. 'Surely novels,' the writer says, 'the novels even of Hall Caine and Marie Corelli, are as educative as grammars and geographies. A tired shop-girl will hardly read George Meredith or work at French; but the novels of Hall Caine may be an improvement on the penny novelette; in making her dream of being a duchess or marrying a millionaire you have done something to educate her imagination,' and 'that is just the one form of education which nowadays is most needed. George Meredith may come later.'

Where most people are a law to themselves in this kind of reading, it is all the more important to educate the standard of taste; then the reader may safely be left to peruse what he likes and enjoys. A book has been edited by Ernest A. Baker, M.A., and published by Sonnenschein, which gives a clue to over four thousand good novels, more than the average reader will devour in a lifetime. It is entitled *Descriptive Guide to the Best Fiction, British and American, including Translations from Foreign Languages.* The Continental list is less useful than the British, and it was a mistake to have a separate list of Scottish and Irish writers. The writers may belong to these nationalities, but their works do not; they are contributions to the body of British literature. Otherwise the book is a very valuable and suggestive one. The compiler has started with the praiseworthy motive of supplying a fairly complete list of the best prose fiction in English, including not all that interests students, which may be found dealt with in such a work as Chambers's *Cyclopædia of English Literature*, but all that the ordinary reader is likely to care about. Of course, as no sane person would attempt to read all the fiction as it drops from the press, neither would he attempt to read systematically the four thousand or so of novels set down by Mr Baker. The list will, however, afford useful suggestions, and when the latest novel is insipid or worthless there are hints here as to what is best. The condensed paragraph after each novel gives an outline, with subject and plot, and a line or two of criticism, which is usually pointed and just. The editor believes that merely to select a few thousand novels from the legions that have issued from the press is in some degree to pass a criticism upon them. In any future edition, Mr Baker hints that doubtless a large proportion of recent authors will drop out and their places be occupied by others equally ephemeral.

One might be inclined to ask if sixpence could in any other way open the door to more entertainment than by the purchase of a good novel. For that sum novels of Scott, Blackmore, Stevenson, A. Conan Doyle, George Macdonald, and by a hundred other good writers, may be had. One booksellers' list, that of A. & F. Denny, of the Strand, London, gives the titles of nearly seven hundred sixpenny books, mostly novels. Only, discrimination is needed in the purchase of such paper-covered books.

The novel in three volumes is dead; it reaches back to the days of Richardson and Fielding; and Mr E. Marston, who ought to know, says there is as much rubbish now published in one-volume form as there formerly was in three. The story of the gradual growth in the popularity of Blackmore's *Lorna Doone* shows how difficult it is to forecast what public favour may be given to new-comers. Mr Heinemann has said that if he could predict what sort of fiction was to be most popular this year, next year, or at any given time, he would be a much richer man than he is. Reviews, small-talk in society journals, ordinary conversation, any or every way whereby a story gets talked about, may give it a start; only solid merit will keep it alive. Mr Baker in his cyclopædic volume leads us onward from *Gesta Romanorum* and *Reynard the Fox* to Marie Corelli and Hall Caine's latest. Even John Bunyan and Addison (for the sake of Sir Roger de Coverley) have a place. De Foe lives mainly in the public mind because of *Robinson Crusoe;* we question if Fielding, Richardson, Goldsmith, Smollett, and Sterne find many readers amongst those whose literature is mainly modern fiction. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century the novel was put on its present footing once and for all by Sir Walter Scott; it is awkward, however, to find all his novels appearing under a Scottish heading. We come to Jane Austen (whose works are neatly reproduced in more than one modern edition), Harriet Martineau (who has almost dropped out), J. J. Morier (author of *Hajji Baba*), and Jane Porter. In the second quarter of the nineteenth century we have the names of Harrison Ainsworth, Charlotte Brontë, Lord Lytton, Dickens, Thackeray, Disraeli, G. P. R. James, and Marryat, who alone made a brilliant period. In the third quarter of the century we have George Borrow, Wilkie Collins, Mrs Craik, George Eliot, Thomas Hughes, Charles and Henry Kingsley, Mrs Lynn Linton, Charles Reade, and Trollope. The present-day list, from about 1875 onwards, is both brilliant and bewildering, and certainly too long for these columns; it includes Sir Walter Besant, R. D. Blackmore, George Macdonald, William Black, M. E. Braddon, Marie Corelli, Hall Caine, Robert Barr, H. Rider Haggard, John Oxenham, Sir A. Conan Doyle, James Payn, Thomas Hardy, George Meredith, Rudyard Kipling, Mrs Humphry Ward, I. Zangwill, R. L. Stevenson, William Le Queux, S. R. Crockett, and J. M. Barrie. In the American list we find the names of Mrs Stowe, Howells, Irving, Poe, Hawthorne, Holmes, F. M. Crawford, E. P.

Roe, Henry James, S. L. Clemens, Louisa Alcott, Mary Wilkins, and Mary Johnston. What Mr Baker has to say of Holmes may stand as a specimen of his notes: 'The *Autocrat* only in a limited sense is a novel. The sayings, thoughts, and set discourses of a philosopher who holds forth on every chance topic to his fellow-lodgers in a lodging-house: full of alert wisdom, droll humour, and shrewd observation. The character-sketches and the little love-plot give the book a right to be classed as fiction.' The best of Josiah Gilbert Holland's stories are not in Mr Baker's list; these are *Arthur Bonnicastle*, *A Story of Sevenoaks*, and *Nicholas Minturn*. This last Dr Holland, the founder of *Scribner's Magazine*, thought the best thing he had written, and that it was doing good in America.

By reading the best in this list we shall, as a certain writer says, have grown to a wisdom which will enable us to ignore books 'concocted of hysteria, formal spite, and a fantasy that resembles madness rather than imagination.' The same writer says that 'to know the chief characters in George Macdonald's earlier books is a means of grace; but the meretricious, the erotic, the sensual, are bound to die as surely as the race is bound to mount still higher in the scale of life and civilisation,' and in the long-run the fiction which survives the test of years because it is true to all that is best and deepest in human nature will be found to contain some of the elements of a sound, trustworthy, and permanent theology.

At Backworth, Northumberland, after a series of University Extension lectures, a District Classical Novel-Reading Union was started to study fiction. The principle of the society was, that as literature is the science of life, and the great classical novels are among the best text-books of life: therefore, to study these is the best antidote to trashy and poisonous fiction. The purpose of the Union was to encourage systematic novel-reading at the rate of a novel a month. This novel was to be taken up by ordinary readers and students, the former reading and talking about the novels, the latter meeting to discuss and do work. *Martin Chuzzlewit* was the first book read; it was found that two months was needed to do justice to it. The points to be noted in the novel were suggested by Professor R. G. Moulton, who has related the experiment under the title of *Four Years of Novel-Reading: an Account of an Experiment in Popularising the Study of Fiction* (Isbister, 1896). The points raised formed subject for debate and essay. The other novels studied in this way were *Anne of Geierstein*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Westward Ho!* *Ninety-Three* (by Hugo), *Vanity Fair*, *Put Yourself in His Place*, *Silas Marner*, *Jane Eyre*, *Wives and Daughters*, *Romola*, *Persuasion* (by Jane Austen), *Alton Locke*, *Kenilworth*, *Wandering Jew*, *The Cloister and the Hearth* (by Charles Reade), *Esmond*, *The Egoist*, *David Copperfield*, *Elsie Venner*, *Woodstock*, *Shadow of the Sword*, *Lorna Doone*, *Our Mutual Friend*, *Monte Cristo*. The result has been that these great works have been a constant source of pleasure to those who thus read them under the guidance of skilled literary advisers.

For those who wish historical tales, Mr Jonathan Nield has prepared his *Guide to the Best Historical Novels and Tales* (Elkin Mathews). Mr Nield points out that where the text-book fails, the historic romance may help the attainment of a truer historic sense. He also points out that much discrimination is needed in this field, and as an assistance he prints a 'Suggested Course of Reading.' Mr Nield has spent two years over a new edition of his *Guide*, which should now be more useful than ever. Professor Raleigh in his *English Novel* lays down the rules for sound criticism. An older book is that by David Masson on *British Novelists and their Styles*.

The expiry of copyright in the works of some of the most eminent of the Victorian novelists has aided largely in the sale and popularity of the novel. Many publishers now make quite a feature of reprints of the works of Scott (and how many reprints of Scott front the twentieth century!), Jane Austen, Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, the Brontës, Lord Lytton, Mrs Gaskell, Trollope, and others. Editions of these authors in dainty and beautiful form, and wonderfully cheap, abound on the shelves of every good bookseller. They are pleasanter to read and handle than the dirty, well-thumbed volumes from the Circulating or Public Library, and the cheap rate at which they are published makes it easy and a positive pleasure to possess them. If one has not space for the whole, a selection may be a treasure and a delight. Such a work of reference as the new edition of Chambers's *Cyclopædia of English Literature*, already mentioned, especially the third volume, furnishes hints as to the relative importance of novels and novelists, with the names of their best works. Besides the extended notices of the great novelists in the body of that work, the additional complementary list of recent and contemporary British and American authors will be found useful. If we are in search of the names of works of living authors, and the library catalogue at hand does not have what we wish, then it is easy further to refer to the lists in notices of authors (if eminent enough) found in the pages of *Who's Who*, or to Low's *English Catalogue* and Whitaker's *Reference Catalogue of Current Literature*, which ought to be found on the shelves of every bookseller worthy of the name in the United Kingdom.

In spite of all that has been said and done, we are afraid that most people will go on reading what they like, or—what comes to the same thing—what chance throws in their way. But there are always a few strenuous, elect souls who will make a choice, and inevitably only read the best; and we have cause to be thankful for a superabundance of what is best, and also for those who will read that only.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER VIII.—CONCERNS A WOMAN'S SERFDOM.

AFTER long examination I came to the conclusion that the rudely executed sketch must have been placed there by another hand, as it seemed in somewhat different ink, a trifle more faded than the writing. As is so often the case in old manuscripts, blank spaces were used by subsequent possessors to note memoranda at a time when every inch of parchment or other writing surface was precious.

It apparently had no connection with the text; therefore, placing it aside for further examination, I turned over the page and continued to decipher this remarkable and forbidden document regarding the perfidy of the terrible House of Borgia.

As an antiquary I had become intensely interested in the strange record, for it apparently threw upon the notorious Lucrezia Borgia, the woman who had brought secret poisoning to a fine art, an entirely new light.

And as I proceeded, I found it continued as follows:

'IN MY MOST HUMBLE WISE I served my ladie Lucrezia, wrapping myself, I fear, in manifold errors, and being privy to the detestable crimes of the Cardinal Cesare. Both my ladie and myself knew that it was Cesare who, with his own hand, stabbed his elder brother Giovanni Duke of Gandia and threw him into the Tiber on the night of the feast given by his mother the Madonna Giovanna at San Pietro ad Vincula. We knew, too, of many dark and foul crimes beyond those in which my lady's father and brother compelled her to partake. After the assassination of the lord of Gandia, the Cardinal Cesare threw aside his scarlet hat and became capitain-general of the Church, with the title of the Lord Duke Cesare de Valentinois. He shrank from neither sacrilege or murder, readily doffing the purple to assume the breastplate, and at head of his army crushed the feudal power of the barons in the Romagna.

'For a short space, alas! did he tarry, and brief was my lady's respite from the horrors thrust upon her. You, mi reader, WHO HATH NOE FERE OF DEATH may still continue to scann this recorde; but I yet do warn and beseache of you to stay thine inquisitiveness, or the gaining of the secret, as it must be at thine own rysk and peril. Truely I affirm unto you that the thinges done in the palace of my lord Prince of Bisceglia at instigation and order of the fat-faced, double-chinned Borgia Pope were the foulest and blackest that ever man did conceive. To His Holiness's enemies the mere touch of my ladie's soft hand meant certain death, and feastes were given at the which those singled out were swept away like flies. None who dared to thwart the Borgia Pope or the lord Duke of Valentenois escaped swift and certain destruction. For them, death lurked at all times no matter how much care they took of their personal safetie. The fiendish ingenuity of Cesare Borgia showed itself in divers and sundry ways all to encompass the death of rivals that the House of Borgia might become paramount, and its power overwhelming.

'Pleas it your goodness to understande that I be so bold as to put it to writing that which I have seene that you who live after me shall know and learn this my secret contained herein.'

Here, again, was a second drawing, slightly more complicated than the former, and at the bottom was written, evidently in old Lovel's hand, the single and inexplicable word, in no language known to me, '*treyf.*'

At one corner was a sketch of a circle with radiating lines which might be intended to represent the sun; but so crude was the drawing that it might be meant for anything. Therefore, after a few minutes' minute examination, I came to the conclusion that my first theory was wrong, and that both had been drawn by the same hand that had inscribed the curious record.

Continuing my task of deciphering, I suddenly became seized by violent neuralgic pains in the head and back, attended by excruciating cramp in the hands, similar to that I had once experienced through writing too much. Notwithstanding this, however, I further prosecuted my investigation of the secret record, which, as will be seen, proved a very remarkable one. After the inexplicable design, it continued:

'I SUPPOSE IT TO BE the will of God that I remained the humble servante of my ladie Lucrezia, obstinatly determined to suffer all extremities rather than to leave her in the hands of those secret assassins. Many times did mi unhappie ladie seek my counsel, remorseful of the part she was forced to bear by His Holiness and the lord Duke of Valentenois. To mine own knowledge many who visited at the palace were envenomed in secret and went to their homes to die. Of these, one was my lord Don Ludovico Visconti, who had allied himself to the Doge and Senate of Venice, and upon the hilt of whose sword, whych he unbuckled while he sat at meat, was there placed a drop of the Borgia poison. Another was the lord Alessandro Farnese, cardinal-deaycon of San Cosina, who died suddenly after leaving the presence of His Holiness and my lady Lucrezia; a third victim was the Madonna Sancia, daughter of His Majesty Don Alonso II., to whom my lady Lucrezia was forced by her father to

sende a ringe of gold, and who died one hour after plaicinge it upon her finger. Again, my lady Lucrezia was compelled to invite to a great banquet the Don Oliverotto da Fermo, Don Giovanni Fogliani, Don Vitellozo of Citta di Castello, Don Paolo Orsini of Sinigaglia, Don Lorenzo Manfredi of Faenza, the white-faced cardinal-chamberlain Riarjo, and Don Juan Vera, cardinal of Santa Balbina. His Holiness and the Duke Cesare were both presente, the feaste beinge gyven in order to effect a peace with the fiefs of the Romagna. Myself I sat at the ende of the table next my lord Orsini; but a foule treachery was practised, for every guest, wythout exception, was secretely poisoned, and at breake of daye not one was alive, although no effect was felt by anyone before they left the palace. By such means as these did the Romagna fall beneath the power of the Borgias.

'Full many a woman hateful to the House of Borgia became envenomed by dainty comfits handed to her by my lady's lisping child the Duke Roderico, who was thus a poisoner at two years old, but of whose sweetemeats the ladies were unsuspecting. And be it known to you by this my record that my lady's husband, my lord Prince of Bisceglia, was but of the age of twenty and one years at this time, and helpless in the venomous hands of the Duke Cesare. Rome was filled wyth assassyns. Myself, like every man who valued his safety, put on a mail-shirt when I left my bed, and set no foote in the streetes till I had buckled a sword or at least a poignard at my side. But the red bull was rampant, for the whole power of the Borgias was contained in the deadly potency of those small phialls of glass and the impossibility of detection of the fatal *cantarella*.

'Think you, my reader, that any indifferent man, knowinge these things, and knowing also that the position of the lady Lucrezia was hateful unto her, could but suffer himselfe to remain as her faithful chamberlain, and seek to guard her from the fearsome perils that surrounded her. Furthermore, one night at nine of the clock, my ladie came to me in terror, saying that she having quarrelléd with her father, His Holiness had sent for her to his private apartment in the Vatican, where he spoke unto her and took her hand in forgiveness. As she withdrewe it she saw that he wore the venome ring the which is hollow, like that in my possession, and containeth the dedly *cantarella!* Then did my lady know that she had been victym of treachery, and was doomed. Already her beautiful face was pale, and upon her were the pains in the jaws and tongue, the whych told us the truth. Not losing a moment of time, I obtained the poignard containinge the antidote, and with it struck deep into her white forearm, the whych she held for me withoute flinching untill the blood flowed, and by this meanes was her life, attempted by His Holiness the lord Alexander P.P. VI., given back unto her.

'Twyce myself was I envenomed by the Duke Cesare (accursed be his memory for ever), and twice was I able to counteract the poison with the antydote that mi ladie Lucrezia had given me. The Borgia poison lurked in everything. A flower could be so impregnated that its perfume was rendered fatal; gloves were treated so that the wearer died wythin twelve hours; the hat, the boots, the staff, the mail-shirt, the woman's kirtle or the man's hose were all envenomed; nay, even unto the very chair upon the which a gueste sat. No poison was placed in the cup, it beinge always external and impossible to detect; beside which its action could be so regulated that I have known death to take place in an hour in some cases, while in others the fatal conclusion would not arrive for a week or even a month, according to the wishes of the Pope Alexander and his ambicious son. In very truth the possession of that secrete venom gave the Borgias power over both Church, state, and the riches of the world, all of whych they conquered by the vilest treachery known unto man.

'My singular good reader, my duty presupposed, pleseath it your good readership to understande that as in the case of my lorde Sforza of Pesaro, so in the case of my lorde Prince of Bisceglia, His Holiness finding himself foiled in the attempt to kill his daughter, soon wished to rid her of her husband, seeing that to marry her again unto one of the new lords of the Romagna would support the papal power in those parts. The crisis occurred on the morrow after my lord prince had returned from Naples, the VIIIth day of August in the year of grace 1500. My lord had been secretely envenomed twice, and escaped death by meanes of the antidote; but on the night aforenamed, at eleven of the clock, he went forthe to Saint Peter's, but while ascendinge the steps, was greviously stabbed by a bande of masqued men in the pay of the Duke Cesare. Weak from loss of blood, he dragged himselfe unto the Pope's apartmentes, where my ladie Lucrezia, chancing to be there, swooned at sight of him. There were fifteene wounds upon him, but his life had been saved by his mail-shirte; yet for three weekes he lay ill in the Borgia tower, my lady Lucrezia never leaving him, and, fearful of poison, preparinge his food with her own hands. None the less, before my lorde had recovered, the Duke Cesare, accompanied by one Don Michelotto, visited him one night, and havinge driven my lady and the Madonna Sancia from the room, they remained alone with him. My ladie flew down to the chamber of the Segnatura, that had been set apart for me duringe my lord's illness; and, hearinge what had transpired, I rushed up to my lord's apartment only to discover he had been foully strangled. The bravo Michelotto aimed a blow at me; but his blade being turned by my mail-shirte, he made his escape. When my brave lady came and found her lord dead, her sorrow knew no bounds, for she saw that he, like unto the others, had fallen at last a victim of the Borgia treachery. Both the lord Alexander P.P. VI. and his son

Cesare had the habit of saying "That which is not done at noon can be done at sunset."

'Reader who darest to seek within this book, curb thy curiosity and inquisitiveness, and stay thine hand, for herein is written strange things, secrets which concern you not, and have remained hidden mysteries from the world—things the knowledge of which must render you among the greatest on earth, yet must bring evil and destruction unto you. Having gained knowledge so far, I do entreat of you, brave as thou art, to seek no further to reopen this Closed Book. Again, harken to this warning of a dead man, and save thyself.'

Again those extraordinary, excruciating pains cramped my brow and limbs, while my throat once more became contracted, just as it had been on the previous night when I had commenced to make investigation.

But with my brain reeling and my senses confused I turned the time-stained page, and overleaf saw written there in capitals in the centre of one blank folio the ominous words:

'O AVARICIOUS READER WHO HAST HEEDED NOT THE WARNING! TRULY THOU ART ENVENOMED AND MUST DIE. TO THEE NO POWER OF ANTIDOTE CAN AVAIL, NO HAND CAN SAVE. THE SHARPNESS OF DEATH IS UPON THEE.'

Then, for the first time, the terrible truth flashed upon me. The vellum leaves of that secret record were impregnated by some unknown and subtle poison, probably that secret compound of the House of Borgia that could be used to envenom any object and render it deadly to the touch; and I, disregarding the premonition, was poisoned.

I cast the heavy volume from me with a cry of horror and despair. The pain was excruciating. The sting of death was already upon me.

Too well I knew the terrible power of that secret poison unknown to modern toxicologists.

I rose to my feet with the rigour of death upon me.

I had reopened The Closed Book—an action that was fatal.

SPORT IN ANCIENT ROME.

By Professor RODOLFO LANCIANI.

THE old saying, *Nil sub sole novum* ('Nothing new under the sun'), cannot be repeated too often when we compare ancient with modern civilisation. Many inventions which form the pride of the present age are to be found alluded to by classic writers, at least in their principles or rudimentary form. We are proud, for instance, of our postal arrangements, and of the facility with which we cross the sea; but the ancients had attained in this department a wonderful degree of efficiency without the help of steam.

There was at Ostia, the sea harbour of Rome, a post-office for transmarine imperial mails, the director of which was called *Procurator ad naves vagas*. The swift cutters detailed for the service could reach, under favourable circumstances, Alexandria and the Nile in eleven days, the Strait of Gibraltar in seven, the Strait of Messina in five, the coast of Barcelona in four, the ports of the Riviera in three, the coast of Africa in two.

This last fact is proved by the remarkable instance related by Plutarch in Chapter XVI. of the life of Cato, when, to impress the Senate with the necessity of destroying Carthage, he unfolded his mantle and showed the astonished assembly a batch of fresh figs which had been gathered on the African coast only some fifty hours before.

Telegraphic despatches were exchanged by means of signal-stations or semaphores by day, and by flashes of fire at night. The firemen, or *Vigiles*, a body of seven thousand men, instituted by Augustus in the year 6 B.C. as a night watch, to prevent fires and burglaries, were provided with engines, called *syphones*, corresponding to our double-action forcing-pumps. It is true that they were worked by hand and not by steam; but it is only within memory of the living generation that steam fire-engines have been brought into play.

Lastly, as regards newspapers, called *Acta Diurna:* they were compiled and published by a staff of clerks called *actarii* or *acctuarii*, assisted by judicial, military, financial, and general reporters, who took down in shorthand the proceedings in the courts, and made notes of births and deaths (registered at the temple of Venus and Libitina respectively), of parliamentary reports, of Court and shipping news, and of curious and thrilling occurrences, such as prodigies, meteorological phenomena, the erection of new buildings, fires, sports, races, arrivals and departures, and especially amatory tales and adventures, with the names of the parties *in extenso*. News of private affairs seems to have been communicated to the editor-in-chief by way of advertisement.

Scribes, called *operarii*, made it their business to copy the *Acta* by the hundreds, and sell them to the clubs or to private individuals, especially in the provinces, where they were eagerly sought after and extensively read.

The question has been asked whether the ancients were fond of sport in the true modern spirit of the word. I do not speak of athletics and gymnastics, like foot-racing, swimming, wrestling, fencing, boxing, weight-throwing, high and long jumping, because these exercises formed an essential part of the training of a Roman youth. There were

several 'greens,' or *campi*, set apart for these sports in Rome, bordering as a rule on the Tiber, because it was essential to wind up the morning practice with a plunge into the cooling stream.

What I mean by sport is more especially horse-training for racing and betting purposes, Alpine climbing, boat-racing, hunting big game, and other such noble pursuits, which are generally believed to be the outcome of modern civilisation. The ancients were fond of these exploits as much as we are, with the difference that the sporting craze was not half so general as it has grown to be in the present age.

First, as to mountain-climbing for the love of the thing. Owing to the loss of the Roman daily papers, which alone may have given an account of daring ascents made by private individuals, the information we possess concerns only crowned heads and generals famous in the annals of war. We must furthermore exclude from the list, thus restricted to eminent personages, the names of those who were compelled to get across mountain-ranges for reasons of warfare, from Barbarossa, Charlemagne, Hannibal, and Drusus the elder, to the old kings of Assyria, whose expeditions through the snow-capped chains of Armenia and Media are so graphically represented in the bas-reliefs of Nimrod and Nineveh.

Much could be said about the mountain journeys of Alexander the Great, were they not but mere incidents of his conquering career. Strabo says that while crossing one of the ranges of Bactriana he was so charmed with the beautiful scenery of those heights that he halted for some time on the top of the pass, and invited his generals to a banquet.

Instances are not wanting, however, of sovereigns who, out of sheer curiosity, or longing after new sensations, or to show their pluck, or to do something out of the ordinary routine, climbed difficult and perilous peaks.

Philip the Third, king of Macedonia, was the first known member of the Alpine brotherhood. His portrait ought to be given the place of honour in all our Alpine clubs. Livy, in Chapters XXI. and XXII. of the fortieth book, gives an account of his ascent of Mount Hæmus in the Rhodope range (the Heminah Dagh in the eastern Balkans), which took place in the year 181 B.C.

Philip had heard that from the summit of the mountain one could behold at the same time the Adriatic and the Black Sea, and follow the course of the Danube as far as its springs. Accordingly he determined to try the experiment in company with his sons; but the wise men of the place described to him the hardships of the ascent in such dark colours that the young princes were left in camp, and the journey undertaken only by the king, with the usual retinue of porters and guides.

It took the royal party three days to reach the summit, and two to descend. Livy says they were much affected by the cold and by the mist; in fact, I believe they were not repaid at all for their trouble. At all events, when questioned as to the extent of the view from the top, they confirmed the story about the Adriatic, the Black Sea, and the Alps being seen at one glance, which proves that either they had seen nothing on account of the mist, or that they did not speak the truth.

The Emperor Hadrian is the best known of Roman mountaineers. In contrast with his predecessor, Caligula, who fled from Messina at the first symptoms of an eruption from Mount Etna, he ascended that volcano in 126 A.D., to enjoy the world-renowned sight of the sunrise over the Ionian Sea. It is a wonderful sight indeed, accompanied by striking contrasts of light and shade, of refraction and reflection of the first rays of dawn over sea and over plain, from the Strait of Messina to the Bay of Palermo. Hadrian, called by Gregorovius the 'precursor of modern tourism,' was so enchanted with his climb that he built a 'refuge' or shelter-house at the height of eight thousand nine hundred and fifty feet, the remains of which are now named the 'Torre del Filosofo.'

In 132 A.D. the same emperor made the ascent of Mount Casius, the present Jebel Akra (five thousand four hundred and fifty feet), the Rigi of northern Syria, of which Pliny says that it afforded the view of the rising sun about the second crow of the cock, while the whole country below was plunged in the darkness of night. On reaching the top of the mountain Hadrian was preparing to offer a sacrifice, as it was customary with the Romans to do on these occasions, when a stroke of lightning killed at the same time the victim and the 'imperial chaplain.'

The same ascent was made by Julian, 'the Apostate,' more than once. Ammianus Marcellinus says that one day, after performing his devotions on the highest peak, the emperor granted free pardon to a certain Theophilus who had conspired against his life, which act of clemency from such a man shows that mountain-climbing makes men better, and elevates their souls to a purer and healthier atmosphere than that breathed by mankind below.

Let us now turn our attention to horse-breeding and horse-raising. The best stables and the best trainers were to be found in Spain, Sicily, Cappadocia, Epirus, and, above all, in Mauretania and Numidia.

A mosaic discovered in 1878 at Oued-Atmenia, in Algeria, gives us many details concerning the racing-stable of a certain Pompeianus, who was Procurator of Africa under Honorius. The colts and the racers are seen in their respective boxes, with their woollen covers on, and their names written above, such as Altus, Pullentianus, Delicatus, Polydoxus, &c. This great racing establishment was placed under the direction of a trainer-in-chief named Cresconius. A fac-simile of this interesting mosaic picture was sent to the Paris Exhibition of 1878.

Racing-stables were great centres of intrigue, and the bribing of jockeys seems to have been practised on a large scale. In fact, the passion of the Romans for races exceeded all bounds. Lists of the horses, with their names and colours, and those of their drivers or riders, were circulated some days before the race, and heavy bets made upon each colour, and upon the single horses and jockeys.

The training of colts was generally finished at the age of three years; and good racing horses were removed from the turf and pensioned at five. Among the hundreds of famous racers the names of which have come down to us there are hardly ten mares, which proves, as Friedlander says, '*equabus rarissime usos esse Romanos.*' Their power of endurance and resistance was simply marvellous. Tuscus, one of the favourite horses of Diocles the charioteer, ran and won not less than four hundred and twenty-nine races.

We must pay the same homage for strength and endurance to their drivers and riders. Diocles, whom I have just named—the prince of Roman charioteers towards the middle of the second century—claims in his epitaph to have outdistanced in his success all the racing men of the age, such as Scorpus, who boasted of two thousand and forty-eight victories, and Pompeius Musculus, who claimed three thousand five hundred and fifty-nine. Diocles himself, when pensioned at the age of forty-two, had won three thousand races with the *biga*, and one thousand four hundred and sixty-two with a larger number of horses.

An inscription discovered on 20th May 1878 in Rome, not far from the stables of the 'Greens,'* gives very curious details about the career of a young jockey named Crescens, who began racing in 115 A.D., when thirteen years of age, and died in 124. Crescens, a Mauretanian by birth, and belonging, therefore, to the best horsy race in the world, won his first laurels at the twenty-fourth and last run on 1st August 115, driving four horses—Circius, Acceptor, Delicatus, and Cotymus. During the ten years of his professional life he ran six hundred and sixty-eight times, and won forty-seven. The forty-seven victories are specified as follows: nineteen against three competitors, twenty-three against seven, five against eleven. He gained, besides, the second prize one hundred and thirty times, and the third one hundred and seventeen times.

During his brief life Crescens was able to put aside one million five hundred and fifty-eight thousand three hundred and ninety-six sestertii, or twelve thousand four hundred and sixty-seven pounds sterling, a real fortune in those days; but we know that it was a very money-making business. Scorpus, whom I have named above, won fifteen purses of gold in an hour's time, and Juvenal speaks of a trainer whose income surpassed that of a hundred famous lawyers.

A charming paper has been published by M. E. Rodocanachi, under the title, *Comment et pourquoi l'on voyageait dans l'antiquité* ('How and why People travelled in Ancient Times'). It is a mistake, he says, to believe that the Romans did not undertake long journeys unless compelled to do so for reasons of state or for trading purposes. One of them claims in his epitaph to have crossed over to Egypt and back seventy-two times.

Owing to the state of peace and prosperity which Roman rule maintained all over the world for the lapse of four centuries, it was possible to travel from Arabia to Scotland, from the Caucasus to the Atlas, in perfect security, without the necessity of speaking foreign languages, and without having to deal with functionaries other than Roman.

There was a network of sixty thousand miles of excellent post-roads, some of which are still in use, with stations and hotels at short intervals; there were travelling-maps giving information as to distances, accommodations, &c.; and persons travelling for reasons of state had the right of selecting lodgings for themselves and their retinue of servants in private houses, wherever they chose to halt for the night. And they did not hesitate to avail themselves of this privilege.

Cicero met one of these officials travelling somewhere in Asia Minor with a carriage, two carts, a sedan-chair, riding-horses, many slaves, some wild asses, and a monkey in a perambulator. We hear also of a God-fearing and law-abiding citizen who had a pet gazelle in his house, and found it roasting on the spit when he came home from paying his respects to a travelling magistrate, whose servants had been billeted on him.

Private individuals were left to their own devices. I speak essentially of those whose condition in life made it possible for them to travel fast and comfortably, without having recourse to official help. Milon never journeyed without his private gods and his private chaplains; Cæsar carried with him exquisitely designed mosaic pavements, which were laid down wherever he pitched his tent. Poppæa, the favourite of Nero, was followed in her peregrinations by five hundred asses, whose milk was used for her morning bath. The maids and valets of these personages usually wore a mask to save their complexions from the effects of the sun and of the biting north wind.

However, if they travelled comfortably they did not travel fast. It took generally ten days to reach Brindisi, a distance of four hundred miles, and three weeks to reach the banks of the Rhone at Lyons.

The travelling-carriages were a marvel of comfort. They were adapted to all possible requirements

* The imperial staff of charioteers was divided into four companies or squadrons (*factiones*), each distinguished by a different colour (green, white, red, and blue) to represent the four seasons of the year. Their barracks occupied the neighbourhood of the Palazzo della Cancelleria and the Palazzo Farnese.

for sleeping, eating, reading, writing, and gambling. There were books and reading-desks specially made for travelling; there were also revolving seats, like those of a Pullman drawing-room car, by means of which the occupants could turn towards the most interesting point of the landscape and face the cooling breeze from the hills. The travelling-coach of the Emperor Commodus was provided with a clock and a 'pedometer,' if I may use the word in connection with an arrangement by means of which a pebble was made to fall in a copper basin at every mile of advance on the road.

Hadrian, the prince of Roman tourists, showed a decided contempt for these luxuries. During the fourteen years he spent in visiting every single province of the empire, he always proceeded on foot and bareheaded, under the Caledonian snows as well as under the tropical sun, making his twenty miles a day in full military costume, swimming across the rivers, climbing over crags, and partaking of the ordinary mess of the Roman soldier: bread, lard, and cheese.

Hotels were decidedly inferior in quality; in fact, they were nothing but hostelries, with a tariff as high as the fare was indifferent, in spite of high-sounding advertisements. 'Here you are served *à la mode* of the capital' was the ordinary sign of these wayside inns. 'Here you find every imaginable commodity, cold and hot baths, good refreshments, excellent wine, and amiable attendance.'

An hotelkeeper of Lyons, whose house was frequented mostly by commercial travellers and small tradesmen, had put up the following signboard: 'Here Mercury promises you good business, Apollo health, and Septumanus [so the host was named] an excellent table. You will bless the moment you have put up at Septumanus's. Stranger, be careful in choosing your lodgings!'

As a rule the names of public-houses and country inns were short and to the point: 'The Dragon and Eagle,' 'The Great Stork,' 'The hatted Bear, 'The Sun and Moon,' &c.

You must remember that the Romans have been also the originators of 'watering-places' in the strictest sense of the word. Aix-la-Chapelle, Aix-les-Bains, Baden in Aargau, Plombières, Bath, &c. were as much frequented in old times as they are now, more as pleasure-resorts than for reasons of health. The bay of Naples was the Brighton of classic times *par excellence;* from the point of Misenum to the peninsula of Sorrento, every inch of that delightful coast was occupied mile after mile by villas, cottages, gardens, club-houses, casinos, temples, theatres, the remains of which still excite our wonder. These facts give some reason for stating at the outset that there is nothing new under the sun.

CAST BREAD.

CHAPTER III.—THE BAN-TIGHEARNA BHRIADHA.

TIME wore on. Yet another long vacation found Colin returning to the island-home, where he arrived in time to till the ground against the sowing of the crop, and remained late enough to reap it.

In May he cut peats on the moss topping the steep hill that rose above the thatched cottage. In summer he returned to the moor to turn the half-dried fuel, that the unexposed surfaces might share the benefit of the sun's rays. In autumn he harnessed the old mare to the peat-creel, and, bringing down load after load of the sun-dried fuel, would help his grandfather to build a goodly stack sufficient to keep the hearth warm until the following year brought a renewed supply.

The evenings found him fishing from the old boat in the little bay, that when he returned to college there might be left behind an abundance of dried fish and salted herring in store against the necessities of the winter. But wherever MacCalman was, or with whatsoever duty occupied, a book was never farther away than his pocket, and while his hands were busy his brain was not idle.

'An' the *ban-tighearna bhriadha*—is it of her you will be thinking?' his grandmother would sometimes inquire when she saw him spend the long, still hours of the Sabbath lying on the sunny knowe beside the shieling. But Colin's only answer was a slow smile and a 'maybe.'

It was a healthy, hearty life, and one that strengthened his muscles and braced his intellect in preparation for the protracted winter session in the big city, with its restricted opportunities of exercise and its interminable hours of study.

His grandparents showed signs of failing strength, yet Colin contemplated the coming winter with confidence. Sundry bursaries of considerable value that had fallen to his lot enabled him not only to feel easy respecting personal ways and means, but to arrange with the daughter of a neighbouring crofter to stay with the old folks, and to attend to their comfort during his absence.

Colin was happy. Many gracious influences—the knowledge that he had done well at the University, the vivifying exertion, the pure air—all wrought together for physical content, while the prospect of a return to Glasgow and Miss Dreghorne lent a roseate rapture to the future.

The summer, with its practical labour and unpractical dreaming, would have lingered in his memory as one of unruffled peace and hope save for an incident whose unexpected occurrence banished the glamour in which poor Colin was living, and

brought him back with a jar to the bald realities of life.

The day had been one of rare beauty: a day endowed with brilliant sunshine, balmy air, and soft, whispering winds. Colin had spent it alone on the moor turning the peats, far aloof from human being, with only the cry of sea-birds to break the silence.

At noon a small boy clad in a ragged tartan kilt, who had been chartered for the service by the solicitous grandmother, climbed the hill bearing Colin's dinner packed in a bowl tied in a red cotton pocket-handkerchief.

The provender consisted of a stew of wild rabbit covered with a crust of well-browned mashed potato; and Colin shared the savoury fare with the messenger, who ate his portion from a scrap of newspaper. Then, when the faded kilt and sun-tanned legs had vanished in company with the empty dish, Colin, before resuming work, indulged himself with half-an-hour's keen enjoyment of Harrison's *Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens*, which he had received by post from Professor Geddes. And throughout the hot afternoon hours, though his body mechanically turned the peats on the heather-clad Highland moor, Colin's wayward fancy personally conducted him and Elizabeth on an enthralling tour among the relics of ancient Greece.

The sun was sinking in the far west when, his work having reached a triumphant conclusion, Colin set off homewards.

To his surprise, the first glimpse of the lonely little bay revealed a smart steam-yacht lying at anchorage. The presence of a dingy manned by two smart oarsmen waiting by the rocks that served as pier prompted the idea that visitors must be on shore, though with the exception of the seamen no one was in sight.

The odour of new-baked scones that mingled with the peat-reek sharpened an already sharp appetite. With no thought of anything more romantic than supper occupying his mind, Colin, hastening downhill, had reached the corner of the house when his quick ears caught the sound of familiar voices. With the blood rushing in a deafening flood to his head, he shrank back behind the remains of last year's peat-stack.

The unseen speaker, in tones that, but for the stark improbability of the notion, he could have sworn were Miss Dreghorne's, was enthusiastically admiring the great fuchsia-bushes growing against the white-walled cottage.

'The fuchsias are simply amazing. Do they really grow out-of-doors all the year round? And with no special care at all?—Sir James, isn't that wonderful? They certainly would not exist near Glasgow. How mild it must be here!'

Some talk followed about provender. Colin could hear his grandmother pledge herself to replenish the yacht's commissariat with fowls, eggs, and milk, and Sir James Cambus promise to send his steward ashore an hour later to fetch the supplies.

Torn by conflicting emotions, Colin kept close in his shelter. He would fain have disclosed himself, have made Elizabeth welcome to his home; but the thought of the inevitable scrutiny that would be accorded him by the well-groomed Sir James restrained him. How could he appear in toil-sullied garments and with soil-stained hands before one whom he secretly—until now almost unconsciously—esteemed a dangerous rival?

Hidden from view, but with his ears straining to catch every word, he waited until the party, which included Mr Dreghorne and an elderly lady, had picked their steps over the rocky strip of beach and were well on their way back to the yacht.

When he entered the low-roofed kitchen the grandmother was already busy counting out her store of milk-white eggs, and packing them into a basket.

'An' it 's yersel' that 's the unlucky one, Colin, my man,' she said, raising her head in its sow-backed mutch to accost him, a flush on her cheek, something of pride in the sparkle of her dark eyes. 'An' it 's yersel' that 'll be wae to have missed the grand gentry. I 'm thinkin' that even the *ban-tighearna bhriadha* hersel' will be no finer nor yon miss that was sittin' there—ay, just on that chair. But ye 'll be wearit an' hungry, an' there 'll be no scones left for yer tea. They were that set on gettin' them that I couldna refuse. Ye 'll have to put by wi' a bannock.'

A hasty meal snatched, Colin perforce forgot his secret worries in the labour of killing and preparing the fowls. When they were ready for the expected messenger Colin slipped out, and, stealing through the dusk down to the shore, seated himself in a cranny of the rocks where he could see the yacht, now gay with lights.

Evidently dinner was just over, for from the deck came the sound of voices. At nightfall the light wind had died away. The wavelets lap-lapped upon the beach. Had the yacht been nearer he might almost have followed the conversation. As it was, he could catch the melody of Elizabeth's speech, distinguishing it from the others.

The long day's work in the strong sea-air had tired even one so inured to fatigue as Colin; but he lingered on as though held by a spell till the purple-black sky was starred with gold. A little later his heart throbbed in unison with the music of Elizabeth's singing. The song she had chosen—'The Lass with the Delicate Air'—was a special favourite of his. It was the first song he had heard her sing, and he felt as though he knew every turn of the dainty, tripping melody.

The song ended, silence stole over the scene; and Colin, returning to the cottage, was surprised to find his grandfather still up, smoking by the fire.

Disinclined for gossip, he would have retired with a brief good-night; but the old man, excited with the unwonted sight of strangers, was not to be defrauded of his grandson's company before he had unfolded the budget of news he had garnered by forgathering with the steward.

'Ay, but they 'll be real gentry yon.' Complacent satisfaction marked his tone, as though he

rejoiced in their reflected glory. 'He's a Sir, the one that belongs to the boat. The old leddy 'll be his sister, an' I 'm thinkin' if it's true what the men are tellin' me, it 'll no' be that long afore the young one 'll be his wife.'

Colin, turning restlessly on his chaff-bed, writhed under the intolerable conviction that the rumour was a true one. But a yet keener pang lay in the thought that the *ban-tighearna bhriadha* had come to his home, and he had made no effort to speak with her. But for the accursed Highland pride that prompted his fear of intrusion, he could easily have dressed and rowed out to the yacht to pay his respects and welcome his friends to his own country. It was worse than unmanly, he told himself, it was cowardly to lurk on shore striving to catch a stray note of her voice when he might have passed the hours in her company.

Fate had guided her to his home. It would be a shame on him if he permitted her to leave in ignorance of his proximity. Comforting himself with the resolve that morning would see him hasten to make amends for his foolish diffidence, Colin at length fell asleep.

He awoke with a start to the consciousness that he had overslept, and that the sun was already up. Springing to his feet, he looked eagerly through the tiny window, to find that the yacht had vanished.

Yes, the *ban-tighearna bhriadha* had come and gone, and the only tangible evidence of her visit lay in the film of ashes floating on the tranquil waters of the bay, in the diminished number of the fowls clucking hunger by the byre-door, and in the broad silver pieces that were already tucked snugly away in his grandmother's stocking.

. . . . . .

When Colin promised himself that on his return to Glasgow he would make full confession of his *gaucherie* to Elizabeth, he did not guess that years were to elapse before their paths again touched.

By a fortunate chance, the Brown-Brodie Exhibition—one of the plums of the University, which, in addition to a considerable monetary benefit, carried the privilege of the gainer completing his course of study at Oxford—had fallen to MacCalman. So when in autumn he returned to Glasgow, it was only for a night to pack up his belongings on his way south.

Supported by the knowledge that at length he had something worth telling, Colin paid an afternoon call at Park Terrace.

Poor Colin! he had a genius for arriving at the untoward moment. Mrs Dreghorne was upstairs enjoying the protracted afternoon siesta dignified by the family as her 'rest.' Though why a lady who passed her time in pleasant indolence should require to bisect her days by a period devoted to post-meridian repose none paused to explain. Ellen Mary and the young officer who were the sole occupants of the drawing-room had reached that acute stage of mutual attraction when the entire population of the world rank as intruders.

Colin's courage, that had waxed high, shrank in that chilly atmosphere, and neither Ellen Mary nor Captain Farquhar made the slightest attempt to make him feel at ease.

'Oh yes; we are all well, thank you. Mamma is taking her rest. She always lies down in the afternoon, you know.'

Having delivered herself of this restricted information and handed Colin a cup of half-cold tea, Ellen Mary seemed to consider her duty towards this unwelcome guest fulfilled, and resumed her conversation with Captain Farquhar at the engrossing point where it had been interrupted.

'Yes, that is the very latest photograph. Do you really like it? Oh *no*, you really mustn't say that. I 'm sure it flatters me awfully.'

Unhappily conscious that he was regarded as an interloper, Colin lingered, unwilling to leave without gaining any information as to Elizabeth's whereabouts, or disburdening his soul of his great news. To-morrow would put several hundred miles between Elizabeth and himself, and he felt as though he could hardly quit Scotland without knowing whether the yachtsmen's gossip about her and Sir James Cambus was true.

As he rose to say good-bye a moment of desperate courage enabled him to ask the crucial question.

'And is it travelling that Miss Dreghorne will be?'

Ellen Mary, all graciousness now that Colin was actually on his feet to go, gave him full information.

'Oh yes! Didn't I tell you? How stupid of me! Papa and she and Gerty are at Harrogate. Papa had rheumatism—he got a chill when he was in the West Highlands yachting with Sir James Cambus, so he has gone to Harrogate to try the baths. Sir James is there too. He is dreadfully anxious about papa's health!'

The little laugh wherewith she punctuated her insinuation was still ringing in his ears when Colin reached the street.

It was true, then. The *ban-tighearna bhriadha* was not for him, he decided; and, with his heart locked close upon its untold secret, he, turning, set his face resolutely south.

THE TWO GLENGARRYS.

THE DIARY OF MRS ROBERT ELLICE, GLENGARRY, THE LAST SURVIVING PRISONER OF THE FRENCH-CANADIAN REBELLION OF 1838.

By NORMAN MACLEAN.

THERE are two Glengarrys, mother and daughter, separated by four thousand miles of sea. The mother occupies one of the most romantic and beautiful stretches of country in the Highlands of Inverness-shire; the daughter possesses a fertile land washed by the broad St Lawrence River. While the old Glengarry is mostly peopled by phantoms, the new is filled by a teeming population; for the old glen has given its life to the new. Shortly after the fateful '45, that old race, turbulent and strong, which had made the throne of three kingdoms rock, turned with wistful eyes to the West, where they heard there was a land that could give them bread. Their chief had no longer a use for them; the days of warring and reaving were over. He wanted money, and sheep alone could give money. So the cadet families bade farewell to the places they loved, sailed across the Atlantic, and settled in the Mohawk Valley in New York. They sought peace, but found war. These men, who had joined in the mad rush to Derby, took up arms for the once-hated House of Hanover when the war of American Independence broke out, and fought with all their might for the mother-land; and when the fortunes of war went against them they fought their way through the wilderness to the banks of the St Lawrence, and sacrificed their homes and possessions in the Mohawk Valley that, on Canadian soil, they might still call themselves subjects of a king. A large stretch of territory was assigned them, and they called their new home by the name of the glen of their dreams: Glengarry.

That was the beginning of the Canadian Glengarry. Still a large population was left in the old glen—a population which the thin, stony, rain-sodden soil could not support; and as these heard of the new land where their friends were prospering and their own language was spoken, the stream of emigration which emptied the old glen into the new set in. An extract from an old Canadian newspaper makes that stream visible to us: 'QUEBEC, *7th September* 1786.—Arrived ship *M'Donald*, from Greenock, with emigrants, nearly the whole of a parish in the north of Scotland, who emigrated with their priest—nineteen cabin passengers, with five hundred and twenty steerage passengers—to better their case.' These were on their way from the Scotch to the Canadian Glengarry; and without any doubt they 'bettered their case.' The last large band that thus set forth for the West—perhaps the most important of all—sailed in 1802. It was composed of the Glengarry Fencibles, whom that redoubtable and patriotic priest Alexander Macdonell was instrumental in raising, and to whom he ministered as chaplain while they fought in Ireland for that same Government which their fathers once tried to destroy. When the regiment was disbanded in 1802, the chaplain went to London to arrange for emigrating them to the new Glengarry. Mr Addington, the Premier, objected that the Government considered the hold they had of the Canadas so slender that a person in his position could not be justified in putting his hand in the public purse to assist British subjects to that colony. Father Macdonell stood firm: he would not agree to Trinidad or any other place of settlement—the new Glengarry was calling to the children of the old! The priest pointed out to the Premier that by diverting the tide of emigration from the United States to the British colonies their population would be increased by enthusiastic British settlers, and the hold of the mother-country on the colonies strengthened. The priest was the better statesman, and he prevailed. In spite of opposition in high places, and from the Scotch lairds, an emigrant-ship sailed from Liverpool with eleven hundred souls, and after a several months' voyage landed them in Canada. That was the last band to swell the population of the new Glengarry; and they were a band of soldiers. 'If I were a young man,' said Tennyson once to Carlyle, 'I would lead a colony out somewhere or other.' 'Oh ay,' answered Carlyle, 'so would I too—to India or somewhere; but the scraggiest bit of heath in Scotland is dearer to me than all the forests of Brazil.' Father Macdonell was fortunate in realising the poet's wish—he led out his colony; but doubtless he and his thousand men, every one of them, felt as they sailed west that the scraggiest bit of heather growing on the mountain-sides of their own glen was dearer to them than aught they could ever get in that new land whither they were going. The love of the old land—the mist-caressed hills that rise from the sides of many a winding loch—never died in the hearts of these exiles. In a new Glengarry their hearts were in the old.

Right well did these men fulfil their priest's word that by their going the Empire would be strengthened; for when the States invaded Canada in 1812, and both the Canadas were seething with disaffection, the men of Glengarry rose as one man to fight for the old country. Their chaplain, now

the Catholic Bishop of Upper Canada, stirred to flame the ardour of their patriotism. It was a Macdonell who had crossed the sea as a boy that died beside his General—General Brock—on the hill of Queenstown. He was but a youth, yet a Colonel and Attorney-General for the colony; and he shares his General's glory and grave. It was the Glengarry men who, under Colonel George Macdonell of Greenfield (how familiar that name is to us!), crossed the river on the ice and stormed the fort of Ogdensburg, thus bringing to nought a plan by which five thousand men were to be thrown into Canada. It was the same Colonel Macdonell who by a march of unprecedented swiftness saved Montreal. When Bishop Macdonell promised the 'Little Englander' Prime-Minister that his colony would strengthen the Empire, he probably little thought how good he would make his word. For more than any others these Glengarry men helped to save the greatest of our colonies for the British Crown.

Thirty-five years later, when the French Canadians broke out into rebellion, the sons of these Glengarry men proved worthy of their sires. The French Canadians, with the help of the States, were sworn to relieve the continent of the 'absurdities of monarchy.' In a few days two thousand Glengarry men enrolled themselves as willing to fight and die for these same 'absurdities of monarchy.' In the course of that rebellion a link was forged which unites the old Glengarry to the new with a romantic bond. In those days the late Mr Edward Ellice (who was afterwards for over forty years M.P. for St Andrews) and his young wife, with her sister Miss Balfour, went to Canada to see the family estate there, and were residing at Beauharnois when the rebellion broke out. Miss Balfour kept a diary of the daily incidents, and it gives a vivid glimpse of events which are well-nigh forgotten. Mrs Robert Ellice can claim, no doubt, the distinction of being the last surviving prisoner of the Canadian rebellion of 1838. As one reads the faded diary one feels how much it is possible for one human life to see! This, then, is part of Mrs Robert Ellice's (Miss Balfour as she then was) narrative of events:

'*November* 4.—When we went to bed last night we had a strange presentiment as if something was going to happen, of what nature we could not define. We were both undrest ready to go to bed when the watch-dogs began barking under our windows and all round the house. My sister went and awoke Mr Ellice, and asked him to send and see what it was; but he said it was all nonsense. However, soon after, finding the dogs continued to bark, he sent Prevot (the servant) to go and see what was happening; but he returned and reported all safe. And so we went to bed, but not to sleep, for I felt a strange sensation of listening and watching. At one o'clock Prevot came and awoke Mr Ellice, saying that Mr Brown was below, and that a person had just arrived post-haste from Chateauguay saying that the rebels had risen there, and had taken possession of the town. This alarmed us; but, as reports were always going about, Mr Ellice did not give great credit to it. He said, however, that as soon as the *Henry Brougham* steamboat arrived we should go to Montreal. Again we went to bed; but in about half-an-hour we heard two *woo-hoops* which sounded from the hills. Mr Ellice looked out and saw nothing but an old cow, and he tried to make us believe it was only the cow! But in a few minutes the woo-hooping, yelling, and firing were terrible. We jumped out of bed and ran between two doors to protect us from the shots, which were coming in at all the windows. Mr Ellice then drew us down to the cellar, shut the trap-door on us, and left us there. There we sat huddled in a corner, with the light of one tallow-candle, without shoes or stockings, or any warm clothing, in the damp, cold cellar, not knowing what was going on above. In a little while down came Georgine (our Swiss maid) in a dreadful state of misery, having been wounded in the eye on looking out to see what was going on. Then came the other maids, and the cook crying and making herself very silly. So there we sat silent and miserable. At last the trap-door opened, and slowly and stealthily we saw coming down the ladder a man in the Canadian dress, with a long musket in his hand. We asked what he wanted, and what he was come to do; but he spoke never a word till he got to the bottom. Oh, the intense agony of that moment! But when he reached the floor and turned to us what a joy it was to see Scott (the Scotch grieve)! He had come to hide guns from the rebels. At last Mr Ellice came and told us that the rebels were going to take him and Mr Brown and Mr Norval prisoners to Chateauguay first, but where afterwards they would not say. We went up with him, and almost immediately he was taken away with the others, and we were left alone with thirty or forty rebels in the house, most of them in the kitchen (where we had to sit), and five hundred outside the house. What ruffians they looked—all the image of Robespierre—with their muskets, pitchforks, swords, poles with iron and spikes at the end of them, hoes out of the garden—in short, anything they could get hold of in the shape of weapons; and their red caps, blue caps, and greatcoats with the capots and red sash! The horror and desolation we felt when they took away Mr Ellice and the other prisoners, and left us among these malefactors without a creature we could look to for advice or guidance! The rebels found the muskets in the cellar, and that infuriated them all the more. They came about us with loaded guns. "*Oh, nous ne voulons pas vous faire du mal; n'avez pas peur, nous ne voulons que les armes,*" they said assuringly. Mr Ellice's last words to us were, "Get to Montreal if you can; do everything

in your power to get away from this." The steamboat *Henry Brougham* came in at six o'clock as usual. She was instantly boarded by the rebels and captured, as also a great many passengers who were on board. They took the screws out of the paddle-boxes, and other parts of the machinery they put on the ends of long poles as weapons. About ten o'clock we thought of breakfast, and sent for Prevot and told him to get what he could. He fortunately found half a loaf and a little mug of cream. All else had been sacked and pillaged. Three hundred lbs. of maple-sugar already gone. We saw them breaking it in lumps and cracking it and throwing it in the air to whoever would catch it. We sent for one of the captains—so called, more like a butcher—and asked him if he would allow us to go to Montreal, as we could go in our own canoe. He said he would go and hold a consultation with the other "chiefs," and bring us the result in ten minutes. We saw them walk round the house and run their swords and pikes through the canoe, and then they returned and told us we might go to Montreal if we could! As a last resource we sent to Mr Quintal the priest, and asked him to come and see us. He sent word he would come after mass. Our guards, who had got down to the cellar and drank everything, were now mostly tipsy—jumping, firing, and roaring. The only friends we had were Scott and one of the ploughmen; and they, terrified out of their wits, came creeping about us and saying, "There will not be one of us left alive to-morrow morning," so destroying the little courage we had. We watched the church, thinking mass would never come to an end. How slowly the hands went round on our watches—every minute seemed an hour! At last the curé came, and after a long consultation we decided the best thing we could do was to go to his house, all of us. It was a dreadful day, pouring rain, and they allowed us to come up in our own wagon! Thankful we were to find ourselves here, away from these fierce-looking faces.

'*November* 5.—What a dreadfully anxious and tedious night we have had! Every noise we heard we fancied it was a rebel. We did not undress, but just threw ourselves on the bed. We spent the morning watching a steamboat which we vainly hoped was coming in with troops, as redcoats were seen on board; but it was only a small steamboat, and we suppose she had not enough men on board. Our disappointment was great as we watched her pass on. From the curé's house we can see all that is going on. All our good horses and carriages are being used for sending despatches about the country. It makes us melancholy to look at them. A large party of the rebels (or patriots, as they call themselves) have stationed themselves at the mill, and a constant communication is kept up between the village, the Seigneurie House, and the kirk, which are both used as stations for their troops.

'Captain Whipple came as we were going to dinner, and Mr Mason—both prisoners. Mr Parker came to see us last night—one of the prisoners, an English officer in the artillery. He had been taken with the rest to Chateauguay, where they found they had too many, so they brought some of them back again. Mr Parker had seen Mr Ellice, and brought reassuring messages.

'We spoke to two or three of the rebels to-day, who all said it was not their fault. They were forced to it—drawn out of their beds and ordered either to follow or have their houses burnt. They gave their names to Mrs Ellice, and hoped to be remembered in better days. They are in tears when they talk of it, and I believe it is the case. Different rumours and reports come every minute. Some say that the Indians are coming; others, that the volunteers from Huntingdon are on the way; others, troops from Montreal. But one thing is sure which all say, that the rebels are very much disappointed at the Yankees not being here. They expected them for a certainty on Sunday. It is a dreadful day of wind, rain, and snow by turns.

'*November* 6 (*Tuesday*).—At two o'clock in the morning we were alarmed by hearing the door-bell ring violently and people walking about. When the door was opened we found that all the prisoners from the *Henry Brougham* were brought up here for safety. A report prevailed that the Glengarry men were coming, and that they were within five miles, and would be down immediately, and that the rebels would probably burn the village, the steamboat, and everything else ere they came. The poor curé has hard work lodging them all. Thirty additional visitors is no joke. It was a long time before we could settle them all—children and babies, mothers worse than their babies; men, captains and majors! There were hysterics, faintings, and much use of smelling-bottles and cold water. Among them is a Mrs Usher, with two infants—a great heiress in this country. She evidently thinks so herself, for she takes no more care of her infants than if they were the Great Mogul's, sits in a corner, sighs and smells her salt-bottle, and talks of her sore bones. Another person, a Miss Griffen, very pretty, sits in another corner and stares through her large dark eyes, smiles at what is going on, and talks to a man, her brother—if man he can be called—in ringlets! He walks about, clapping his hands, shaking his locks, and looking interesting. Mr Parker is a gentleman—that is enough, and makes up for almost every deficiency—handsome, full of good spirits, talkative; in short, an Englishman. The rest are mediocre. . . . We were obliged to send and ask permission to milk the cows and kill some sheep, as all these prisoners live at our expense.

'*November* 7 (*Wednesday*).—We begin every day wondering if before night there will be any change in our destiny, and still always disappointed. It was said that the Huntingdon volunteers were coming, and five hundred rebels instantly rushed up the country to attack them, and left the village nearly deserted, but placed more guards on us. . . . I wonder what the rebels want. When we ask them they do not know what to say. Some say they wish all Canada to be made a free state like the Yankees. I do not believe they know what they want, but are imposed on by a few leaders. If you ask them who are their masters, they say, "*Ah, je ne sais pas; nous n'avons point de maîtres; nous sommes tous maîtres, nous faisons ce que nous voulons.*" And still they have captains. Altogether, it is an extraordinary business, and sometimes I can hardly help laughing. It is so absurd to be imprisoned at one's own place, in the curé's house, with a lot of people one has never seen before; and the house where a few days ago we were walking sole masters and lords of everything, we are now obliged to ask leave to send to for milk and food which are our own. But when one looks at the other side of the picture —at the many anxious hours we spend thinking of others and watching for ourselves, listening for noises and hearing reports, with the terror of cannon or the Indians' war-cry over our heads, then our situation is truly lamentable. Our only comfort is that as prisoners of war we might be worse. As I expected, they have not brought Mr Ellice back [the rebels had promised that] nor the others from Chateauguay.'

While these events were occurring the authorities adopted energetic measures for quelling the rebellion. Sir John Colborne, the commander-in-chief, sent orders to Major Carmichael to assemble as many battalions in Glengarry as he could collect without delay, and proceed at once to Beauharnois to release the prisoners and punish the insurgents. These Glengarry men proved worthy sons of that Fencible Regiment which their chaplain led to Canada, and which had done so much to roll back the invasion from the United States in 1812. The chaplain still survived: he was now the Catholic Bishop of Upper Canada; and, though he was seventy-eight years of age, the ardour of his patriotism was not abated. In those days he published an address to the Glengarry men, calling them to arms. 'I am far from thinking it necessary in the present critical situation of your country,' wrote the noble bishop, 'to address you on the score of loyalty to your Sovereign. When a Prime-Minister of England in 1802 expressed to me his reluctance to permit Scottish Highlanders to emigrate to the Canadas, from his apprehension that the hold which the parent state had on the Canadas was too slender to be permanent, I took the liberty of assuring him that the most effective way to render that hold strong and permanent was to encourage the emigration of Scottish Highlanders into these colonies. Your brave and loyal conduct during the late war with the United States verified my prediction. It is a most consoling reflection that I have been so fortunate as to possess the confidence of you all, Protestants as well as Catholics, because on all occasions when my humble exertions could forward your interests I never made any distinction between Protestants and Catholics; and I have no hesitation to declare that among my warmest, my most sincere, and most attached friends are persons of a different persuasion from my own. To the credit and honour of Scots Highlanders be it said, that the difference of religion was never known to weaken the bonds of friendship, and Catholics and Protestants have always stood shoulder to shoulder nobly supporting one another during the fiercest tug of battle. . . . That the God of Battles may be your protector, and grant success to the righteousness of your cause, is the ardent prayer and sincere wish of your obedient servant, ALEXANDER MACDONELL.' Truly a catholic and generous bishop! That he knew no distinction of sect is shown by his once having received an address from an Orange Lodge, and by his having been called upon to arbitrate between the Presbyterian minister and his congregation when they had a quarrel, on which occasion the bishop spoke plain and forcible words to the minister's congregation on their duty! When such a man sent the fiery-cross through Glengarry, what wonder that the commanding-officer was besieged with people eager to enrol! In a few days a thousand Glengarry men were ready to march on Beauharnois to stamp out the fire of rebellion.

Let us now return to the diary of the young prisoner in Beauharnois. Two more days passed without any incident. The rebels were daily expecting Yankee reinforcements; the prisoners were hoping against hope that relief was near. On the 9th of November their hopes were raised by the sight of a steamboat:

'A steamboat was reported and seen in the distance, on which we all ran to the windows, straining our eyes watching it creeping gradually up. We were, alas! doomed to disappointment again. It passed, and we could hardly believe it, so sure did we feel that it was bringing us relief.'

But at last relief came. The faded diary tells the story well:

'*November* 10 (*Saturday*).—The morning we spent as usual watching and looking for succour from Montreal. We had not a morsel of food in the house. A man came to see us in secret, to tell us that the Glengarrys would be down this evening, and hoped, if circumstances changed, Mrs Ellice would remember him. We had heard that report so often, and had been expecting them every night, we did not put more faith in it than usual. Mr Parker sat on our stretcher a long time before tea, and we talked a long while of what we should do if the Glengarrys really did come. The curé came in looking as pale as death, evidently in a great fright and expecting something. We thought no more of it, bade Mr Parker good-night, and advised

him to drink a cup of strong green-tea to keep him awake. We were writing our journals when we exclaimed at the same minute, "Surely that was a shot at the mill?" We opened the door into the other room and asked our fellow-prisoners if they had heard it. They assured us it was nothing, and went on with their various occupations. So convinced, however, were we that it was something that we both shut up our books and put any little things we had lying about into our boxes. We had not done so five minutes when we heard shots, and *rat-tat, rat-tat* all round the house, the balls coming whizzing everywhere. We seized each other's hands and stood in the doorway, when all of a sudden we heard the doors breaking open, and such a rush from the other end of the house of men, women, and children—all our fellow-prisoners, headed by the two doctors, as pale as death. They were flying out of a little room beyond ours already filled with our servants, screaming, crying, and wailing. We were carried on by the multitude much against our wills; such a pushing and squeezing there was—children and women falling and being trampled on. I wonder we were not crushed to death. And those two cowardly doctors, instead of showing presence of mind and trying to comfort us, only cried out, "It's the rebels; we are all going to be murdered." It was a fearful moment, not knowing which party was going to be victorious. Oh! how relieved we were when in a little while Colonel Phillpots rushed into the room shouting, "Are Mrs Ellice and Miss Balfour here?"'

Colonel Phillpots was one of the officers in command of the Glengarry relief-expedition. Two of the Glengarry men were slain in the brief conflict ere the rebels were driven from their positions. Mrs Ellice and Miss Balfour attended the funeral of the two Highlanders on the following day, and the Glengarry men were delighted to find that the ladies were able to address a few words of Gaelic to them.

On the second night after their own release, the one great anxiety which weighed on the ladies was removed. Suddenly the door opened, and Mr Ellice walked in clothed in a buffalo-skin, unshaven and unshorn. He had been kept a close prisoner by the rebels until the day on which the Glengarry men relieved Beauharnois. On that day the rebels resolved to send their prisoners to Napierville, and two hundred men with them as escort. While on their way they heard the news that Napierville was captured by the troops. A panic thereupon seized the escort, and in a little while the prisoners found that their guards had vanished into the woods. Mr Ellice found his way to Montreal and reported himself to Sir John Colborne, then hurried to Beauharnois to set the minds of the ladies at rest. On the 12th of November the little party embarked in a jollyboat belonging to the captured steamer *Henry Brougham*, and, rowed by four Glengarry men, made their way to Montreal, which they reached in safety, but not without further adventures.

Thus did the brave men of the Canadian Glengarry rescue those who were destined to live much of their after-lives in the old Glengarry beyond the sea. For, a few years later, Mr Ellice bought the old glen whence these men had gone, and the remnant that was left in it had no longer any need to turn with longing eyes to that land in the far West which bore a well-loved name. And if the memory of those stirring days in Canada, and of what the Glengarry men did for him there when they marched to the relief of Beauharnois, had anything to do with Mr Ellice's purchasing the old Glengarry, then the old glen owes a debt to the new.

THE OUTLOOK.

I KNEW a man whose rich delight
Was but to keep his garden bright,
And train the shrubs of green and gold,
And boast: 'Did ever eyes behold
Such bush and leaf of giant build
As those my hands and soul have tilled?'

And morn by morn he opened wide
The window with contented pride,
And viewed his work, as day on day
It spread its branches wide and gay,
Till soon, with hungry growth, it drew
The sunlight from his latticed view.

There lived a poor wise man of Greece,
Who breathed the air of happy peace,
Who moved within a garden small,
E'en smaller than his neighbour's hall;
Nor murmured at his narrow path,
Nor grudged the rich the fields he hath.

When asked how he so wise could rove
Within so small a garden grove,
He answered, 'Friend, 'tis large; come, view it.
Upward I find no limit to it!
For, earthward, though the plot be small,
Upward—'tis boundless, heaven, and all!'

'Tis as the first with men who move
Within a world's appointed groove,
Who never greet the golden dawn
Nor sorrow when the light grows wan;
For o'er the lattice of the soul
The shrubs of earth have gained control.

But wise the man, as he of Greece,
Who gives the curtained soul release,
Outstrips the earth-locked ants that toil,
And finds that far beyond the soil
His little groove of life extends,
Upward, unlimited, ascends!

Small though the plot from wall to wall,
From earth to heaven 'tis more than all!
A view unbroken, when the soul
At outlook marks God's hand unroll
His splendours 'mid the hosts of heaven,
For upward there's no limit given!

JAS. BLACKHALL.

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MIXED MARRIAGES.

LET it at once be understood that the purport of this article is entirely unconcerned with difference of rank between contracting parties in the marriage ceremony; the matter on which I propose to write—namely, the joinder of East and West, of Europe and Asia, in such intimate and practically insoluble bonds—is, I consider, a question infinitely more grave and far-reaching in its effects than a mere gradation in social standing.

I refer principally to *so-called* (I use the word advisedly) unions between sons and daughters of Great Britain and of Hindustan, other nations scarce entering on the field of discussion; and again, to narrow the scope of treatment, to marriages between males of the latter with females of the former country. In the early days of the British rule in India, when English women were indeed few in the land, and intercourse with the mother-country both tedious and costly, connections of another description, almost invariably of a temporary nature, between Englishmen and daughters of the Orient were unhappily but too common to excite comment. Such a state of affairs has long since completely passed away, and I refer to it only in order to adduce its results as an additional and cogent argument against the slow yet perceptible advance of the practice which I know no words strong enough to deprecate.

Putting the matter in plain terms: an Eurasian race was created, almost limitless in numbers, and ever increasing by intermarriage, generally weak in physique, difficult to educate and provide for. It is unnecessary, as it would be invidious, to enter into the causes for such difficulty of provision, which are more to be attributed to the working of natural laws than to defective individuality. Still, the fact remains, the Eurasian problem is as far from satisfactory solution as at its genesis; and now, when the original cause has been removed, we are threatened with the production of a race even more effete and undesirable, both mentally and physically.

Disregarding, however, this latter aspect of the question, which is not likely to become one of prominent importance in the near future, the object of this article is to draw serious attention to and urge the prevention by any and every lawful means of the growing evil to which I have adverted; one which, though practically non-existent in India, is suffered, and through ignorance of its character and effects meets with scant if any discouragement, at home.

It dates its origin from the period, a very recent one, since which it has become the custom—I had almost said the fashion—for opulent native families to send their sons to England to study and obtain degrees in law and medicine, the candidates for the former honours of course predominating in countless proportion.

The youths thus selected are usually of good appearance, *always* by their own account of noble if not royal descent. For the time being well supplied with means, and possessed of pleasing surface-manners, the impression they make upon the female mind, ever prone to romance and as yet both unformed and uninformed, is but too likely to be a favourable one. *But*—and here lies the pity and the danger of it—England's daughters are utterly ignorant of the diametrical opposition which exists between the inmost nature of the men who pay court to them and their own.

Far be it from me to raise the ancient and deplorable arguments as to racial distinctions; yet no more can oil commingle with water than can the Eastern, with all his tradition of women's inferiority and impregnable sense of self-superiority, blend with the English maiden's conception of him whom she would fain constitute her second self, her most intimate of friends, as well as her husband, *the man she can trust as he would trust her:* conditions on the one side as impossible as on the other never even dreamt of. And should the ill-omened but irrevocable union take place—the delicately nurtured English girl have given herself over, body and soul, to a man of whom her knowledge is absolutely nil, whose secret thoughts and springs of action are as

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effectually concealed from her as a cuneiform cryptogram—what manner of existence lies before her?

Leaving behind her home, with its refinements and innocent gaieties, her relatives and friends, what has she gained in place of all that has hitherto made life good and pleasant to live?

Her initiation will probably commence on the voyage, for then she will come in contact with few, if any, who are her equals in inexperience; but it will be when she reaches her future home (Heaven save the mark!) that the full extent of her irreparable disaster will burst upon her.

I will first take the most favourable possible view of her position. Her husband may be genuinely fond of his English wife, and have determined to make all things smooth for her, as far as in his power lies. We will even assume that he has, for her sake, embraced Christianity. Sufferance is the highest welcome to which he can hope to attain, for even the best of Englishmen can never feel to him, in their heart of hearts, as to each other; while for *her*, the warmest sentiment she can arouse among her sister women can never escape commixture with the sincerest pity, verging, it must be feared, upon contempt.

Nor, let her be ever so optimistically constituted, can she escape the knowledge that she is not looked upon as others are; that she lies under a social stigma which nothing can permanently remove. Add to this the ever-present jealousy which is so indigenous a component of Oriental nature, and which, in its utter ignorance and incapacity to grasp the pure converse and intimacy which exists between English men and English women, will either assert itself sooner or later or be the more dangerous from its concealment. This is, indeed, a certain factor to be reckoned with, unless she elects to keep herself apart from her kind. How long can she endure an existence which offers tolerance as its supreme goal? And this, as I have said, is depicting her lot in the most roseate of possible colours.

And what of her less fortunate sisters? Had it been within the bounds of my argument that the higher class of Oriental is exempt from the disabilities and incongruities of habit and disposition to which I have adverted, I should have alluded at an earlier period to the fact that the large—very large—majority of students who betake themselves to England for the purpose of qualifying for a livelihood are by no means members of the aristocracy of the East, being drawn, with few exceptions, from the trading community, who alone are rich enough to afford such expenditure; many being of the 'Bunniah' caste, grain-dealers and money-lenders, a race an appreciation of whom, even among their fellow-countrymen, it needs but a few days' sojourn in the East to acquire.

What, then, are the prospects of happiness or even endurance for a girl allied to one of these? Even supposing the almost inconceivable circumstance that her husband is not already possessed of one or more legitimate consorts, in which case she would naturally become the junior inmate of the 'harem,' with no recognised position but that of its menial slave. If there were no predecessors, for her that harem would be constituted, and no English face would ever again be seen by her, no sound of her mother-tongue reach her ears, save perchance that of some kind missionary lady who might, on rare occasions, be permitted to have audience, only again to abandon her to lifelong (in ignorance) self-imposed misery.

I have in nowise overdrawn the picture; nay, for fear of possible misconception, I have omitted to fill in many of its details. The facts are known to every resident of India. Than the gallant band of missionaries who with their estimable helpmates devote their lives to dissemination of the gospel, there are none more intimately acquainted with the Oriental or more attached to him in his personality. Do they give their daughters, their sisters, in marriage to men of the alien race? In the course of more than forty years' sojourn in India I have heard of no such instance. Could more irrefragable or convincing proof be furnished of the unadvisability of such arrangement, of its worse than deplorability? I think I have said enough.

Whether or no the prevention of such unions in church or the registrar's office is possible by legal means is matter for consideration of the jurisconsult; but I would draw the earnest and most serious attention of all parents and guardians to the facts and arguments which I have brought forward, and cannot in any words at my command too strongly urge absolute prohibition by them of such *mixed marriages*.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER IX.—DOCTOR PELLEGRINI'S OPINION.

I HAVE very little recollection of what occurred immediately afterwards, for I was far too confused and full of pain.

All I remember was that I rushed downstairs to old Nello, crying that I had been suddenly taken unwell; and he, seeing my pale, distorted features, was greatly alarmed. I recollected at the moment that I had an appointment with the wife of a wine-grower, with whom I was in treaty for the purchase of an exquisite little fourteenth-century picture of St Francis of Assisi; and, telling my faithful man that if a lady called he was to ask her to wait, I dashed out, sprang into a cab, and drove along the sun-blanched sea-road into Leghorn, where, in a high,

old palace in an unfashionable quarter, I discovered my friend Doctor Pellegrini, a short, stout, round-faced Italian, with iron-gray hair and a pair of dark eyes which had a hard and severe expression.

'Why, my dear signore,' he cried in Italian as I entered his big, half-darkened study, the marble floor carpetless, and furnished barely in Tuscan style, 'whatever ails you?'

'I've been poisoned, Signor Dottore!' I gasped.

'What are your symptoms? Tell me quickly,' he demanded, springing towards me and taking my wrist, evidently being convinced that there was no time to lose.

'I have a difficulty in breathing,' I managed to gasp. 'In my mouth there seems a strange, bitter taste as though I'd swallowed some quinine. My neck is stiff and seems to be bending back, and all my body's shaking.'

'Very much like strychnia,' the professor remarked thoughtfully. 'How did you take it? Was it an accident?'

'I'll tell you all later,' I responded. 'Do give me something to relieve these terrible pains. The poison, I can explain, is not strychnia, but the actual secret compound of the Borgias.'

'The Borgias! Rubbish!' he snapped. 'All imagination, most probably.'

'But I tell you it is. I have been envenomed by a poison, the secret of which is unknown, and the antidote was lost ages ago.'

The doctor smiled in disbelief, probably remarking within himself that the English were a queer race, with all their fads, fancies, tea-drinking, and smart tailoring.

'Well,' he said, 'I'll first give you a little chloroform, and then see what we can do. Don't upset yourself, my dear signore. We shall find an antidote somehow.'

And he gave me some chloroform, which produced insensibility. Then, on recovering consciousness, I found myself on a bed in a room almost totally dark, with blankets piled upon me until they had reduced me to a state of profuse perspiration.

My head felt as though bound tightly with a band of steel, but I had no further difficulty in breathing. My limbs were no longer cramped, and my neck was again movable.

I was better, and told Pellegrini, who was seated patiently by my side watching me.

'Of course,' he said, with that cool, cynical air of his which caused one to instinctively dislike him on first acquaintance.

'But I was very bad,' I declared. 'I've never experienced such excruciating pains before in all my life.'

'And I may tell you,' he said in the same calm tone, 'that you've never been nearer death than you were an hour ago. I certainly thought you wouldn't pull through. I telephoned to Cassuto at the hospital, and he rushed round and helped me. I didn't believe you had really been poisoned. It certainly was not strychnia after all, although the symptoms were very like it. Tell me how it happened.'

I turned on my bed towards him and briefly related how I had purchased the curious volume, and how, on two separate occasions, I had been suddenly seized while examining the secret history written at the end.

'H'm,' he grunted dubiously; 'very remarkable, especially as the record mentions the unknown poison used by Lucrezia Borgia and her brother. A matter for investigation, certainly. You must allow me to submit one of the vellum pages to analysis; and perhaps we might clear up for ever the ingredients of the compound which has so long remained a mystery.'

'Most willingly,' I answered. 'We may make a discovery of the utmost interest to toxicologists. Hitherto they have declared that to produce a substance sufficiently venomous to penetrate the skin and cause death to those who touch it is impossible. Here, however, I think we have an illustration of it.'

'It really seems so,' he answered thoughtfully. 'I should strongly advise you, when handling the book again, to wear gloves as a precaution. Having once narrowly escaped death, as you have, you cannot be too careful.'

'I'll take your advice, Signor Dottore,' I responded. 'And I've to thank you for saving me, as you've done to-day.'

'You had a narrow escape—a very narrow one,' he remarked. 'I do not think that in all my experience I have seen a man succumb so near death, and then recover. When you first told me that your hands had become impregnated with the Borgia poison, I was, of course, sceptical. You English sometimes become so very imaginative when you live here in our climate. But I am compelled to admit that the symptoms are not those of any known poison; and if what you tell me is correct, then it really appears as though we are at last actually in possession of an object envenomed with the ancient compound about which so much has been written during the past three centuries. For my own part, I am deeply interested in the curious affair, and shall only be too happy to investigate it analytically, if you will allow me. My friend Marini, the professor of chemistry at Pavia, is at present here for the sea-bathing, and he will, I am sure, help me. As you know, he is one of the most expert analysts in Italy.'

And so it was agreed that a chemical investigation should be made, in order to discover, if possible, the secret of the Borgia poison which was so subtle and could be so regulated that no effect might be felt for half-an-hour or for a month, as the poisoner wished, but the end was always the same—death.

By secret use of that fatal compound, the Duke Cæsar detto Borgia undoubtedly swept away his enemies, and more than one old chronicler allege that his father, the Pope Alexander VI. himself, did not hesitate to use it to rid himself of obnoxious cardinals who were wealthy, or other persons who aroused his enmity. He fully lived up to his official title of Ruler of the World, and it is more than likely that by the aid of his secret compound he broke the back of the turbulent, selfish baronage which had ravaged the papal states for centuries. Certainly his reign was full of diabolical atrocities and wanton, ingenious cruelty, documentary evidence of which is still preserved in the secret archives of the Vatican and of Venice. As to the alleged crimes of the beautiful Lucrezia, a long tress of whose yellow hair is still preserved in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, those who have read Italian history know well how she has been represented as placed outside the pale of humanity by her wantonness, her vices, and her crimes. Yet what was written in that curious record of Godfrey Lovel, soldier, courtier, and monk by turns, seemed to demonstrate that in her youth, with no initiative, no choice permitted to her, she was rather the too pliant instrument in the hands of Alexander and his son Cæsar.

Anyhow, the fact remained that the writer of that secret record was absolutely in the confidence of Lucrezia Borgia, and also in possession of some of the venom, with which, in all probability, he envenomed the book in order that those who gained the secrets it contained should never live to profit by them.

Knowledge of the secret written there, he alleged, would place its possessor among the greatest upon earth. Was not that sufficient to arouse one's curiosity to proceed—to continue handling those envenomed pages, unconsciously seeking his own doom?

I ask you, my reader, who peruse and follow this remarkable history of what occurred to me, what would you have done? Would you not have returned to your home, and, with your hands protected by the thickest gloves you could procure, have continued to decipher the remarkable record to the very end?

I think you would have hurried home, just as I did, eager to obtain the knowledge forbidden, and determined to elucidate the mystery.

Surely the secret must be an important one, placed on record upon vellum, and yet so protected that the seeker after it must inevitably die ere the entire truth could be revealed.

The whole affair was most puzzling. As I sat in the swift, open cab that took me back along the sea-road to Antignano, the crimson sun was setting, and the gaily dressed Italian crowd was promenading under the ilexes and acacias beside the Mediterranean. Leghorn is a fashionable bathing-place during July and August, and from the hour when the sun sinks behind Gorgona until far into the night no fairer prospect than the Viale Regina Margherita, as the beautiful promenade is called, with its open-air *cafés* and big bathing establishments, can be found in the south of Europe.

Through the little wood that lies between the fashionable village of Ardenza and the sea, where the oleanders were in the full blaze of their glory, my cab sped homeward; and having left the gaiety of the outskirts of Leghorn behind, I fell to reflecting upon the future, and wondering what, after all, was the hidden truth contained in The Closed Book—the knowledge that would place its possessor among the greatest on earth?

I thought of the strange circumstances in which I had purchased the old tome, of the inexplicable manner of Father Bernardo, of the old hunchback's evil face at the church window, and most of all of that singularly handsome young woman in black whom I had encountered in the prior's study—the woman with whom the fat priest had spoken in private.

Why should Father Bernardo have urged me to relinquish my bargain? Why should Graniani have come to me on the same errand, and have warned me? Surely they could not be aware that the pages were envenomed, and just as surely they could have no motive in preventing my falling a victim!

If they were acting from purely humane motives, they would surely have explained the truth to me.

Besides, when I reflected, it became apparent that the vellum leaves at the end whereon was inscribed old Godfrey's chronicle had not been opened for many years, as a number of them had become stuck together by damp at the edge, and I had been compelled to separate them with a knife.

At last I sprang out, paid the driver, passed through the echoing marble hall of the *villino*, and up the stairs towards my study.

Old Nello, who followed me, greeted me with the usual '*Ben tornato*, signore,' and then added, 'The lady called to see you, waited about a quarter of an hour in your study, and then left, promising to call to-morrow.'

'She said nothing about the little panel of St Francis?'

'Nothing, signore. But she seemed an inquisitive young lady—from Bologna, I should say from her accent.'

'Young lady!' I exclaimed. 'Why, the wine-grower's wife is sixty, if a day. Was this lady young?'

'About twenty-six, signore,' was his reply. 'Hers was a pretty face—like a picture—only she seemed to wear a very sad look. She was dressed all in black, as though in mourning.'

'What!' I cried, halting on the stairs, for the description of my visitor tallied with that of the woman I had seen in the priest's study in

Florence and afterwards in Leghorn. 'Had she black eyes and a rather protruding, pointed chin?'

'She had, signore.'

'And she was alone in my study a quarter of an hour?' I exclaimed.

'Yes. I looked through the keyhole, and, seeing her prying over your papers, I entered. Then she excused herself from remaining longer, and said she would call again.'

'But that's not the woman I expected, Nello!' And with a bound I rushed up the remaining stairs into the room.

A single glance around told me the truth.

The Closed Book had disappeared! It had been stolen by that woman, who had been following me, and whose face lived in my memory every hour.

I rushed around the room like a madman, asking Nello if he had placed the volume anywhere; but he had not. He recollected seeing it open upon my writing-table when he had ushered the visitor in, and had not thought of it until I now recalled the truth to him.

My treasure had been stolen; and as I turned towards my table I saw lying upon the blotting-pad a sheet of my own note-paper, upon which was written in Italian, in an educated feminine hand, the axiom of Cæsar Borgia as chronicled in the missing book:

'*That which is not done at noon can be done at sunset.*'

THE COST OF COLLECTING THE REVENUE.

By W. M. J. Williams.

SOME inquiries regarding the cost of collection have been made since our recent publication of an article on 'Curious Facts about the Revenue;' but as the investigation deals with the four departments of the State—namely, the Customs, the Inland Revenue, the Post-Office, and the Telegraphs, with all their ramifications—it will be readily understood that we can deal only very briefly with the various heads of such a wide subject, which touches questions of far greater moment than the mere collection of revenue or the administration of these departments, however important.

It is most convenient to deal with the figures of the year which ended with March 1902. In that year, we find, the collections cost: for the Customs, £878,300; the Inland Revenue, £2,051,713; the Post-Office (including the packet service), £10,104,045; and the Telegraphs, £4,034,930—total, £17,068,988. All these are officially designated revenue departments; but only a little reflection is necessary to distinguish between the revenue departments proper—the Customs and the Inland Revenue—and such departments as the Post-Office and Telegraphs. It would, however, be a mistake to overlook this official classification, as we very commonly do, for this classification is only too correct according to the use and issue of the work done in these departments nowadays. As regards the Customs and Inland Revenue departments, they are plainly for the collection of revenue only, for they levy taxes imposed by Parliament; but the cost of working the Post-Office and Telegraphs departments is the working expense of great commercial departments of the State, though it is not quite incidentally that they become revenue departments, and are so designated. Indeed, in the year ending March 1902 the Telegraphs did not yield a revenue to the State, for the receipts were only £3,450,000, and the cost of working them was £4,034,930, leaving a deficit of £584,930. Very much otherwise was it with the Post-Office, which received no less than £14,300,000, the cost of working being only £10,104,045, thus leaving a surplus revenue of £4,195,955; or, taking Posts and Telegraphs together, £3,611,025. It is only necessary to state these facts to justify the suggestion made above that these great commercial services are quietly but deliberately turned into revenue departments. Connected with this fact that the Post-Office and Telegraphs departments are now used to collect over £3,500,000 of revenue, in addition to discharging the duties for which they are ostensibly founded, are some questions of policy and administration, such as the pay of the lower branches of the service, the pay of mail-carriers, and that of young women in the telegraph service, all of which are in great need of attention from our public men; and there is also the perennial question of the improvement of the service rendered. For our present purpose, however, it is sufficient to point out that were it not for the profit on the Post-Office it would be necessary to raise the amount of that surplus annually by taxation. Again, if upon mature consideration—which Parliament of recent years has not devoted to this matter—it is thought undesirable to reduce the charges for postal service, then those who call for improved postal services, especially within the British Empire, have an opportunity and a vantage-ground from which to press their point.

The following figures show the volume of business in the Posts and Telegraphs departments for the year ending March 1901, the latest available. The Post-Office dealt with 2,323,600,000

letters, 419,000,000 post-cards, 732,400,000 book-packets and circulars, 167,800,000 newspapers, and 81,017,000 parcels. It dealt with money orders to the number of 13,263,567, of the value of £39,374,665; and with postal orders numbering 85,390,029, amounting to £29,881,726, upon which it made a commission of £359,296. The Post-Office Savings Bank up to December 1900 had 8,439,983 depositors, with £135,549,645 to their credit, or an average of £16, 1s. 3d. each. This average was only £15, 18s. 5d. in England and Wales, and £13, 15s. in Scotland, though it reached to no less a figure than £21, 2s. 1d. in Ireland; but too much importance should not be given to the latter average, though the figures are very interesting. The Telegraphs department, too, transacts business which tabulates in big figures. For the year ending March 1901 it despatched 73,184,864 inland messages of an ordinary kind, 6,961,761 press messages, 7,641,090 foreign, 1,280,876 free railway messages, and 31,106 at a reduced rate; and in addition there were 477,264 Government messages—a total of 89,576,961 messages. The telegraph charges to Cape Colony are at the reduced rate of three shillings and sixpence a word, and to North Rhodesia at three shillings and elevenpence; but it is arranged that when the new Government cables round the world shall be ready the reductions shall be on a sliding scale to two shillings and sixpence a word. The telephone is a new department of this service; and at March 1901, 312 post-offices were open for trunk telephone business, the circuits in use being about 84,500 miles of wire. Out of the sum of £2,300,000 authorised by Parliament for the purchase and development of the trunk system, the expenditure to the above date had reached £1,695,822, and doubtless it has now considerably increased. The Post-Office is employed, too, on behalf of the Inland Revenue department in the collection of revenue, as it receives money in licenses for brewers, dogs, male servants, carriages, armorial bearings, guns, and game; and during the year ending March 1901 it issued no fewer than 2,113,849 licenses, and received for them no less than £1,194,585, 12s. To transact this huge business there were open 999 post-offices in London, 15,876 in England and Wales (outside of London), 2306 in Scotland, and 3008 in Ireland—total, 22,189. It is well known that all these were not general offices, for only 13,394 were open for money-order and savings-bank purposes, and 9171 for telegraph business, which is also transacted at 2341 railway stations. The staff employed in this world-embracing service, from the Postmaster-General down to the messenger boy, numbered 173,184 persons, of whom 79,052 were filling unestablished situations, some of them employed only for an hour or two daily. Of the total no less than 20,161 were females. These huge details are sufficient to make it clear to the man in the street that the purposes for which the Posts and Telegraphs are established are in themselves matters of the utmost moment, and that this organisation renders public services of very great value and complexity.

When the £2,930,013 which was shown above to be the cost of the Customs and Inland Revenue departments during the year ending March 1902 is approached, we enter really on the main branch of the subject. To estimate the cost of collection of the revenue it is necessary to make a preliminary explanation. Of the £143,255,000, the total estimated revenue for the year ending March 1902, some £21,055,000, which are the gross receipts from the Posts and Telegraphs, the Crown Lands, the Suez Canal shares, and sundry loans, and £2,000,000 from miscellaneous sources which are paid into the Treasury, should be deducted. On the other hand, there is a sum of £9,491,366 raised by our revenue departments and paid in the Local Taxation Account at the Bank, and applied to local purposes, which should be added. This leaves a sum of no less than £131,691,366 raised from imperial taxation by the services rendered by the Customs and Inland Revenue departments. Now, it was shown that the cost of these two revenue departments was £2,930,013, and it follows that the cost is about 2·225 per cent. of the total sum collected. This result is a very satisfactory one, and looks even better when it is compared with the tendency of our growing expenditure. In 1892, when these two departments collected £80,428,074, at a cost of £2,954,192, the charge was equal to 3·67; in 1897, when £91,391,271, at £2,979,351, it was 3·25; in 1900, when £105,538,054, at £3,044,605, it was 2·88; and in 1901, when £116,655,800, at £3,105,510, it was equal to about 2·66 per cent. So that the percentage of cost has fallen within the past ten years from 3·67 in 1892 to 2·225 in 1902. That is a satisfactory and even a gratifying result; but it is subject to the drawback shown by the figures that there is a tendency in the amount of cost to grow in proportion to the increasing sums raised by taxation. A supplementary estimate was recently placed before the House of Commons for an extra £11,000 on account of salaries and allowances at the port establishments. There can be no doubt that this was in consequence of the late corn and flour tax. Such taxes always swell the cost of collection.

We have thus placed before the reader the combined cost of both Customs and Inland Revenue departments, partly to afford the truest view of the subject, and partly because it is impossible to sever these services completely. In the year 1901, for instance, the Inland Revenue collected £2,778,893, or 10·32 per cent. of the Customs; and the Customs, on the other hand, collected the sum of £7,155,384 for the Inland Revenue, being 34·52 per cent. of the total duty

levied on home-made spirits. It is, however, a legitimate curiosity upon the part of the taxpayer when he seeks to know the cost not only of each department separately, but also of the various sub-departments of the service. For reasons already suggested, this is not an easy task, though some phases of the question will be dealt with in the following remarks.

Of the £2,930,013 which the Customs and Inland Revenue departments cost in the year ending March 1902, £878,300 is the portion due to the cost of the Customs. According to another return (which adds some other expenses, such as the cost of collecting the spirit-duty for the Inland Revenue), the cost of collection in 1901 was £928,510, and the amount collected £25,656,615; so that the cost was 3·6 per cent.; the Customs themselves returned the cost on gross receipts—that is, including the sum collected for the Inland Revenue—at £2, 16s. 7d. per cent. For the year 1902 the estimated cost is £878,300 on £30,800,000, or about 2·85 per cent. It will be instructive to compare these figures with those for the Inland Revenue for the same years. For 1901 the Inland Revenue cost £2,177,000 on £90,999,185, or about 2·4 per cent.; in 1902 the figures were estimated at about £2,052,000 on £91,400,000, or about 2·24 per cent. The principle is found here also that the cost of collection is in inverse proportion to the amount.

Looking at the estimates for 1902 and those now published for 1903 together, we discover some suggestive hints. Not only has the total for all the revenue departments, including the Posts and Telegraphs, risen from £17,068,988 to £17,791,250, an increase of £722,262; but omitting the Posts and Telegraphs, which are, happily, expanding services and pay their own expenses, we find that an increase is estimated for each of the other services; the Customs rising from £878,300 to £892,500, and the Inland Revenue from £2,051,713 to £2,146,770. We are not in a position to trace this rising tendency; but it is not surprising at a time when income is increasing, and especially when indirect taxes, such as the taxes on sugar and coal, are being imposed. A shilling income-tax is as cheaply collected as a sixpenny or eightpenny one. The estimated increase between the cost of Customs in 1903 and that of 1902 is £14,200. More than the whole of this increase can be traced to the recent fiscal legislation, which involves an addition chiefly to the outdoor departments of the Customs. The total amount to be collected is increasing. However, the charges for superintending establishments, for the law charges, &c., are reduced by £2016; but those for the port establishments, for vessels and boats, for instruments, such as hydrometers, polariscopes, &c., used in testing sugar and other materials, and for rewards for the capture of smugglers, &c., have to grow by £15,916. That last item is particularly interesting, as showing smuggling in quantitative relation to the severity of Customs duties; but the necessity to provide for more men at the ports, and for more testing apparatus, &c., points also very conclusively to the inevitable concomitants of the costly system of indirect taxes. An item in this account which must be stated before we drop this branch of the subject is that, of the £878,300 for the Customs, the sum of £192,338 is for superannuations and other annuities, or nearly 22 per cent. of the total, so that the actual service only costs 78 per cent. of the sum charged. It would be very suggestive were it possible to trace the cost of administering the chief taxes collected by the Customs, such as the tea and coffee duties, the tobacco duty, and the several duties on foreign spirits and on wines; but the official accounts are presented in such a form that it is impossible to do so, and even such calculations as are presented must be regarded as approximate only, because of the inevitable interrelations of the various departments, especially the Customs and the Inland Revenue offices.

One of the weak places of the Customs from the point of view of cost is the port system which it involves. We have just seen that, of the £15,916 increase in the cost of the Customs for the current year, nearly the whole is due to what is termed the port establishments. When we remember how the Customs system involves the declaration of certain inlets as the only ports at which dutiable articles may be imported, we find how costly the system must necessarily be. The list of ports given in the estimates confirms this deduction. No less than fourteen classes of ports are given, ranging from London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Belfast, Bristol, and Cardiff to Wells and Weston-super-Mare in Somersetshire, and Tobermory. Of course, at the large ports duties are many and incessant; at other places scarcely worthy of the name of port, duties are only nominal and very intermittent, and yet in all some sort of Customs staff has to be kept. A few years ago a return showed a large number of these smaller ports costing much more than they collected, and this must be the case while a Custom-House is one of our institutions. Of £22,246,598 collected in customs in England and Wales in 1901, £11,487,951 were collected in London, £4,450,460 in Liverpool, £3,961,783 at other ports; and £2,107,624 were collected in Scottish ports, while £2,139,069 were received at the Irish; the rest of the total up to £26,928,780 having been received by the Inland Revenue on behalf of the Customs. This makes it clear that at many nominal ports very little could have been collected. Of the one hundred and eighty-five ports enumerated in the United Kingdom, not more than twenty-five probably justify their existence by the amount of customs collected.

The official returns of the cost of collecting the Inland Revenue are also in such a form as to

make it very difficult, almost impossible, to calculate the cost of the various sections of this great department. For 1901 one return enables us to say that the revenue collected by this department was £94,176,185, at a cost of £2,177,000, which shows it to amount to about 2·3 per cent. of the total. The taxes administered by this department, all the Excise, the estate duties, the stamps, the land-tax, the inhabited house duty, and the income-tax, are such as attract the chief attention of the taxpayer; but the cost of administration of these several taxes cannot be told. The department would afford much instruction regarding this collection were it officially shown how much the cost of collecting the Excise duties came to apart from that on account of the taxes. The Customs department is concerned in collecting imposts which are all of an indirect kind; but, as has just been hinted, the Inland Revenue department administers imposts both direct and indirect. The department has never been very ready to afford such information as would show the difference in the cost of collecting these two classes of taxes. By an analysis of the figures given in the annual report of the year 1901, the totals for which have just been given, it is possible to arrive at a figure which, though an estimate only, may be taken as approximating to the truth. Of the £94,176,185 collected, it is found that only £39,378,766 were derived from the Excise duties, thus leaving £54,797,419 collected by means of the direct taxes. The cost of collection was £2,177,000; and an examination of the details of the estimates leads to the conclusion that of this sum about £1,227,000 should be debited as the cost of collecting the Excise, and £950,000 as that of the direct taxes—a conclusion erring, probably, against the direct side. Consequently it is found that the cost in 1901 of collecting the direct taxes was about 1·73 per cent., whereas the Excise cost about 3·12 per cent., or not far from double the cost of collecting the direct taxes.

As with the Customs, the vote on account of superannuations in the Inland Revenue department is a solid item in the estimates. The proportions, however, to the total cost of collection are very different. In the year ending March 1902 the Customs cost was £878,300, of which £192,338 were for 'non-effective charges,' or about 22 per cent. of the whole. The cost of the Inland Revenue was £2,051,713, and of this £262,222 went for 'non-effective charges,' or only 12·77 per cent. of the whole. Some further light is thrown on this aspect of affairs by reference to the number of persons superannuated in each service, which was 1350 in the Inland Revenue, and 1355, or almost an even number, in the Customs, though the former service collected £91,400,000 to the latter's £30,800,000. But by a further reference to the numbers employed, some reason, perhaps the chief reason, for the greater expense of the Customs is disclosed. The Customs employed 3990 persons, and superannuated 1355; the Inland Revenue employed 5808, and superannuated 1350; but, further, it is found that, whereas the Inland Revenue only required 374 men in the outdoor collection of the taxes, which amounted to £58,300,000 in 1902, it required no less than 3853 on the outdoor establishment of the Excise, which collected only £33,100,000. It is impossible to resist the conclusion that the larger part of the superannuation list is due to the Excise rather than the taxes side of the department; and, coupled with facts already adduced respecting the cost of the Customs, we find it clear that where the public imposts are collected indirectly, there the cost of collection, in men and in money, is far greater than when funds are got by direct taxation. This appears in several ways. Not only do the salaries to different grades of officers show this, but the various allowances in lieu of expenses and commission point in the same direction, such allowances being much heavier on the Excise than on the tax side of the department. As in the case of the Customs, there are also some signs in the estimates for 1902–3 that charges of a certain kind are going up consequent upon resort to new taxes on commodities. Rewards to officers for detection of evasions of the revenue laws last year cost £8000 instead of £7000; and it is not too much to say that such deductions are expected from Excise quarters, where the duties on glucose and on saccharine have now to be levied in connection with the new duty on sugar. It is not necessary to labour this point longer, for the same result is always found—namely, that it is more economical to collect direct than indirect taxes. Regarding the collection of the British revenue as a whole, it may be said to be done at a very moderate cost, but that were our rulers to see their way to levy our taxes more directly, which would also be more justly done, the collection might be made at a considerably lower figure.

CAST BREAD.

CHAPTER IV.—IT IS FOUND AFTER MANY DAYS.

THE years that elapsed after Colin MacCalman vanished from the Dreghornes' lives brought radical changes to the hitherto united family in Park Terrace.

Ellen Mary had married her soldier-sweetheart, Captain Farquhar, and had accompanied him to India; Gertrude had wed Renton Dawson, a rising young Edinburgh lawyer; and worthy Mr Dreghorne was dead. A carriage accident that occurred during one of their summer visits to the coast house at Innellan had ended fatally for him, and had endowed Elizabeth—who alone was with her father when the horses took fright—with a slight limp that threatened to be permanent.

A handsome tombstone marked Mr Dreghorne's resting-place in the Glasgow Necropolis; and Mrs Dreghorne and Elizabeth, their first poignancy of grief abated, were living together in the house in Park Terrace that now felt so empty and silent, when there befell a dark day for Scotland. The City of Glasgow Bank closed its doors; and in company with many others the Dreghornes shared the dire misfortune of being shareholders.

The widow, after a life of easeful affluence, awoke one black Monday morning in early October to find herself penniless, with the knowledge that all she possessed had, as in the twinkling of an eye, ceased to be hers.

Being of an apathetically optimistic turn of thought, Mrs Dreghorne would probably not have realised the full extent of her monetary loss but that Gerty's husband, himself chagrined at the loss of the fortune he had confidently anticipated coming to his wife, took especial pains to make the probable extent of the disaster clear to her.

'But we haven't so very many shares in the City of Glasgow Bank, Renton. And there is nothing wrong with our other investments—is there? So, surely everything will come right, even if we do lose that money. Now that Elizabeth and I are alone, we can send away the second-housemaid, and manage quite nicely on a smaller income.'

Most men, seeing that Mrs Dreghorne failed to grasp the situation, would mercifully have permitted the gradual development of circumstances to enlighten her. But Renton Dawson (he it was whose attentions to Joanna Erskine ceased abruptly when her father died intestate) did not spare his mother-in-law a single detail. He drew a picture of the exhaustive exactions awaiting the ill-starred shareholders that sent the poor lady into a flood of flaccid tears and futile lamentations, and projected Elizabeth into a passion of righteous wrath that impelled her, for the first time in their acquaintance, to enlighten Mr Dawson as to her just estimate of his character.

'You must come to us, mamma,' Gerty said when she came next day to pay her visit of commiseration. 'Renton has decided it all. Yes, of course I I know you have always lived here; but that is impossible now. And Renton says the sooner you leave this house the better. Renton says he told you the week before last that he had heard rumours against the Bank.' Gerty's natural irritation at her mother's obduracy showed in the aggrieved inflection of her voice. 'I do wish you had paid attention to him, and sold out before it was too late.'

'My dear, I thought your papa knew best, and that whatever investments he had chosen would be quite safe.'

'Well, it's too late now. I don't know what Elizabeth is to do. You know Renton and she never got on very well, and yesterday she quite lost her temper and said such dreadful things to him! He didn't tell me what they were, but he says he can *never* excuse her. So I don't know what she's going to do. We can't afford to let her have a house of her own, and nobody wants a governess who has no experience. Besides, she is lame. Elizabeth ought to have married, like Nelly and me.' Mrs Dawson spoke with the satisfaction of a woman who has ordered her life well.

'Elizabeth always did her own way.' The feeble acquiescence of an easy-going mother was in Mrs Dreghorne's accent. 'I suppose she did not fancy anybody who offered.'

'Well, she has only herself to blame for throwing away such good chances as she's had. And she has gone off terribly since father's death. She has aged ten years. Renton says so. He says she was daft to refuse Sir James Cambus. Do you know, I sometimes wonder if she hadn't a fancy for that raw Highland student that used to come here. I never saw her so cross as she was at Nelly for forgetting to tell us he had called before he went to Oxford, when we were at Harrogate.'

'Sir James Cambus would have made a good husband,' Mrs Dreghorne agreed. 'And it would have been a most suitable match. I'm sure he asked her often enough, but Elizabeth always does her own way. She has rejected lots of proposals.'

'Well, she won't have any more, that's clear.' Mrs Dreghorne's calm acceptance of facts was beginning to tell upon her young daughter's already irritated nerves. 'No sensible man thinks of marrying a beggar.' Mrs Dawson estimated all mankind by the low standard of her own husband. 'The difficulty is to know what to do when nobody wants Elizabeth.'

'*Nobody wants Elizabeth.*' The words, catching Elizabeth's alert ears as she entered the room,

sank deep into her heart. During the long, dreary unsettled days that followed they formed an accompaniment to her sad thoughts. Even when she packed her mother's belongings and saw her off one Saturday morning to Edinburgh, where Gerty was to meet her at the station, the stultifying words marked time to her movements, and droned her home to the big, lonely house, where, the sense of ownership gone, she already felt like a stranger.

The servants had not insisted upon remaining without wages. Outside the regions of fiction and melodrama such magnanimity is of the rarest. The Park Terrace servitors had acted the part more frequently played by their class in scurrying like rats from a sinking ship. The capable cook, knowing that her services would soon be dispensed with, had accepted the increase of wages offered by a friend of the family who had long coveted Mrs Dreghorne her possession. The parlour-maid had lost no time in 'suiting herself.' Only the under-housemaid was left; and, as she was more willing than experienced, her ministrations left much to be desired.

It was Sabbath, and Elizabeth's last day in the old home. On the morrow the house must be vacated. Elizabeth had arranged to spend a few weeks with a married friend at Lanark. Beyond that she had no plans. When she thought of the future a thick veil of uncertainty seemed to drape the possibilities.

Occupied with the care of her mother and home affairs, she had as yet made no effort to obtain work; but the home-ties once completely severed, she proposed a search for some employment that would render her independent.

During the previous night, as she lay awake, half-consciously noting the sonorous boom of the University clock as it told the hours, Elizabeth's vagrant thoughts made painful retrospect of her past. She remembered Cambus with scant regret. He had been an ardent suitor, although when finally rejected he had not tarried long before selecting another mistress for his new house in West Kelvinside. His second choice had fallen upon a wealthy and complaisant widow, and they were now enjoying a protracted bridal-tour, which embraced the various Colonies and included a glance at China and Japan.

In her bitterness of heart Elizabeth wondered if she had acted foolishly in rejecting him; then, even in that bitterness of heart, she decided that she had not. Sir James had been an attractive man; but Elizabeth's soul demanded something more in a husband than an agreeable companion. She wanted a man with reserved power; one whose mind was broader, his range of thought wider, than her own.

Oddly enough, the only man who had impressed her as owning these qualities was the Highland student. Her cheeks flushed hot in the darkness at the memory. She had understanding enough to recognise that MacCalman's disguise of *gaucherie* cloaked a master.

Though no word had been spoken, she had guessed that he admired her. Now all was changed. She had sunk, he had climbed far above her. Her eager ears had caught many rumours that had reached Glasgow of the successes attending his brilliant career at Oxford. And Elizabeth knew that lately he had been unanimously chosen as pastor to a highly important Presbyterian church in London. On the day that was tardily breaking he was to preach at St George's—she had seen the announcement in the *Herald*. The gray dawn was stealing in through the chinks of the venetian blinds, as, with a sense of dreary fatality, Elizabeth realised how completely the tables had turned.

Now that her work in Park Terrace was complete, Elizabeth was conscious of a fatigue that was both bodily and mental. She had meant to spend the Sabbath resting; but as the hour for morning service approached, the restlessness of the accustomed church-goer possessed her.

Putting on her wraps, she went out. She had left home with the intention of attending their old church; but as she passed along the familiar way Elizabeth realised that, without danger of breaking down, she could not sit alone in the big pew where, as a family, they had sat so often. The idea of going to St George's to hear MacCalman officiate came to her as a relief.

Service had just begun when she reached St George's, and the church was packed. Some one, taking pity on the fragile-looking lady in mourning, procured her a chair, and Elizabeth accepted it gratefully.

From her post at the end of the aisle under the back-gallery Elizabeth, herself unseen, noted that the gawky lad had developed into a handsome man. As to his power of oratory there could be no manner of doubt. There was something electrical in his grip of the heart-strings of his hearers: a subtle magnetism in his vibrant voice, a compelling force in his bearing.

Sitting unnoticed, Elizabeth thought wonderingly of their first meeting, of his awkwardness, of her own self-possession. Now it was he who commanded the situation, she who felt the outsider.

The service ended, a nervous dread of encountering her old friend fell upon her; and, slipping out in the thick of the crowd, she hastened homewards, overhearing as she went many tributes to the brilliance of the lately risen theological star.

Standing before the mirror as she unpinned her veil and took off her crape hat, Elizabeth, trying to view herself through the eyes of her former friend, saw reflected in the glass a wan face with shadows under the eyes, lines around the mouth, a thread or two of silver in the wavy dark hair.

The afternoon passed slowly. Her solitary meal—half-tea, half-dinner—cleared away, Elizabeth sent the maid to church, and, sitting in the dusk, mused sadly.

Even in the twilight the drawing-room seemed gaunt and eerie. Mr Dreghorne's portrait still hung

over the mantelpiece. It was the one thing Elizabeth had craved to keep, and when she left the old home it was to accompany her on her quest of a new one. Till the last moment it occupied its accustomed place, for when it was taken down to be packed the lack of the silent benison of the kindly face seemed so to change the atmosphere of the room that Elizabeth hastily replaced it.

As she looked up at it the tears that had all day been imminent welled to her eyes.

'Oh, dear, dear father! Why did I not realise how good you were—how happy I was?' she marvelled, as many another short-sighted mortal has marvelled when the bright days have passed.

Though the day was mild, Elizabeth would fain have had the solace of a fire. But, in view of the approaching sale of the household plenishing, the grates had received a final polish, and she hesitated to tarnish their chilly lustre.

Turning from the cold hearth with its elaborate if somewhat old-fashioned garniture of steel and brass, she walked across the room and stood by the window looking westwards across the park, where lights were already twinkling. Evening mists obscured the middle distance. The hollows of the park were vague, indefinite; but behind the stately towers of the University the sun was setting in a crimson glow.

It was still too early for evening service, and, except for an occasional servant-maid clad in her Sunday bravery hurrying past to keep tryst with her sweetheart, or a pair of sauntering lovers, the Terrace was almost deserted.

As Elizabeth stood silent, the knowledge that never again would she look with the same eyes upon this familiar view was depressing; as she gazed out of the window, with a weight on her heart, an approaching figure caught her attention. She might not have noticed it but that as he approached the man slackened his pace, and stood looking at the house as though uncertain whether to proceed. Just as a pang, half-pain, half-pleasure, told Elizabeth that it was MacCalman, he mounted the steps and rang the bell.

For a moment Elizabeth, in her perturbation of thought, and oblivious of changed conditions, forgot that the only maid was at church. Then, as a second summons broke the silence, she hastened downstairs and opened the door.

No facile greeting passed between them. With the shock of her deep mourning, her altered appearance, speech deserted Colin.

'Miss Dreghorne?' he faltered.

'It is good of you to call,' Elizabeth answered. 'Come in.'

She led the way upwards, and they mounted the wide staircase, from which the heavy Axminster carpet had already been removed, and on whose naked stone their footsteps made an uncanny noise.

When they reached the drawing-room Elizabeth made a motion to light the gas; but MacCalman preferred to sit in the gloaming.

'Are you all well at home?' he asked, glancing round the empty room as though expecting the others to appear. With the surroundings something of his old awkwardness had returned.

Elizabeth gave the ghost of a laugh.

'Oh yes! We are all well at home, for I'm the only one at home now.' Despite her bravery she could not quite control the tremor in her voice. 'And to-morrow there will be no home any more.'

MacCalman was himself again.

'I know. I heard only to-day. This afternoon I called on my old friend Professor Geddes, and he told me. What are your plans?'

'They are quite simple.' Elizabeth tried to speak more lightly than she felt. 'Mother has gone to Edinburgh to stay with Gerty—you know she was married? Yes, and Nelly too. Nelly is in India, and I leave here to-morrow to seek my fortune.'

The tell-tale quiver had returned to mock the brave words, and she abandoned the effort to appear unmoved.

'This is the last night in the old home—the home my father loved. And I am glad to be able to speak of him to one who knew what he was.'

Moving to a chair nearer, MacCalman began talking of Mr Dreghorne, telling of what his cheery good-fellowship had been to him, a friendless student in that big city; of how his hearty welcome had made him feel less an outcast.

Gradually his sympathy drew from Elizabeth her story. More from what she did not say than from what she did, Colin learned of the dread of going among strangers that warred so cruelly with her craving for independence.

The room was dark save for the ray of a street lamp, that cast a weird illumination on the roof, when Colin told her, in simple, picturesque language, his story: of how, while he was yet a child, his parents had both been drowned when cruising between the islands in a fishing-smack, and his care had devolved upon his grandparents, who, when he showed a desire for learning, had sacrificed themselves to send him to Glasgow University. Elizabeth heard that theirs was the first refined home-circle wherein he had been received on terms of equality, and how to him, an uncouth Highland lad who had never before spoken familiarly with a gracious, beautiful woman, she had seemed more than mortal.

Unburdening his mind, Colin told of his much-deplored self-effacement during her fleeting island-visit, and confessed that until he had heard her name coupled with that of Sir James Cambus he had never quite realised the hopelessness of his passion; though since then, hearing that a daughter of Mr Dreghorne's was married, he had schooled himself to think of her as espoused to another.

'It must have been Nelly's wedding you heard of. She was married first. Gerty was married only a few months before papa died,' Elizabeth murmured.

'This evening, when the Professor told me you were still unwed, my heart waxed hot within me' —MacCalman had an unconscious way of lapsing occasionally into Scriptural phraseology: it was the language of emotion with him—'I felt as though mountains had been removed, and the rough places made plain.'

Joyful tears overflowed Elizabeth's eyes as he went on to speak of his grandparents, who could not be induced to quit the sea-girt home where they had passed their lives, and who regarded him, the only child of their only child, as their sole link with the outer world.

'They have known of my love for you ever since I used to unburden my heart by writing of you to them. But when you went to the island, though she did not know who you were, my grandmother said that surely even the *ban-tighearna bhriadha* herself could not be more beautiful than you. She always spoke of you, whom she had never seen, as the *ban-tighearna bhriadha*. It means "magnificent lady."'

'Oh, no, no! I am only a beggar-maid.'

'Elizabeth, just think what a proud day it would be for them if I took them a magnificent lady as my wife. May I?'

'Yes, yes!' Elizabeth said, and 'Yes' again when, her hands clasped close in his, she sat amazed under the manifestation of the wondrous way of Providence.

'It will make mother so happy to think you want her too. I don't think she would feel quite at home away from me. But, remember,' she added, with a flash of her old spirit as he pleaded for an immediate marriage, 'I'm not going to be defrauded of my rights. I must be courted!'

'Yes, you shall be courted,' Colin agreed with alacrity. 'If there is little time for courting before marriage, there will be plenty afterwards.' The tone of his voice, a light in his eyes, told Elizabeth that no further assurance was needed.

That night, as she unbound her thick hair before the mirror, Elizabeth caught a glimpse of rose-flushed cheeks, of joy-diffused eyes, and, leaning forward, she whispered softly to her reflection:

'It wasn't true, Elizabeth. Somebody wants you, Elizabeth. Somebody does want you!'

THE END.

LITERARY RECREATION.

A CENTURY before the poet Cowper wrote the lines,

> Absence of occupation is not rest,
> A mind quite vacant is a mind distress'd,

John Locke had written, 'Our short lives will not serve us for the attainment of all things; nor can our minds be always intent on something to be learned. The weakness of our constitutions, both of mind and body, requires that we should be often unbent; and he that will make a good use of any part of his life must allow a large portion of it to recreation;' and he goes on to tell us that 'recreation is not being idle (as every one may observe), but easing the wearied part by change of business.' Just, then, as an active body after a hard day's work in shop or factory will seek its necessary refreshment in some open-air pastime, so the active mind of men of letters finds its apt diversion in some sport of the brain.

The first to greet us on opening an edition of Lord Byron's works is a collection of light fragments included under the generic term 'Hours of Idleness.' Macaulay frequently relinquished his scholarly essay-writing to compose a nursery rhyme for the amusement of his little nieces; and Edgar Allan Poe would banish for a while his weird conceptions to indulge in the sport of a valentine or enigma. We have selected these three men in opening because, judged by their works, they were of entirely different natures; yet each was wont to indulge in what Sir James Mackintosh would style 'the frivolous work of polished idleness,' finding, maybe, like the great Newton, their necessary recreation in the mere transfer of thought from one subject to another; for, as the old writer Phædrus tells us in one of his fables, the mind ought sometimes to be diverted, that it may return the better to thinking.*

The selected trio are by no means alone in their play. George Canning, Pope, Matthew Prior, and Dr Doddridge, to name but a few, would give rest to the weary brain by composing an epigram. That by the last-named on the motto of the arms of his family, *Dum vivimus vivamus*, was considered by Dr Johnson one of the finest in the English language:

> 'Live while you live,' the epicure would say,
> 'And seize the pleasures of the present day.'
> 'Live while you live,' the sacred Preacher cries,
> 'And give to God each moment as it flies.'
> Lord, in my views let both united be;
> I live in pleasure when I live to Thee.

Others would compound a riddle like that which Hallam the historian sent to a lady to solve, giving her a year in which to solve it; but, he dying before the year was out, it has been left unanswered. Here it is:

> I sit on a rock whilst I'm raising the wind,
> But, the storm once abated, I'm gentle and kind;
> I've kings at my feet who await but my nod,
> To kneel in the dust on the ground I have trod.
> Tho' seen to the world, I'm known to but few,
> The Gentile detests me, I'm pork to the Jew.

* Lusus animo debent aliquando dari,
Ad cogitandum melior ut redeat sibi.
Phædrus, Fable XII. 1, 2.

I never have passed but one night in the dark,
And that was with Noah alone in the Ark.
My weight is three pounds, my length is a mile,
And when I'm discovered you'll say, with a smile,
That my first and my last are the best of our isle.

During the present century Southey in *The Doctor*, and D'Israeli in his *Curiosities of Literature*, have indulged in anagram-making, the torturing of a poor word or sentence a thousand ways, as Dryden calls it in his *Macflecknoe*. When George Thompson, the eloquent anti-slavery advocate, was asked to enter Parliament with a view to his more efficiently serving the cause of negro emancipation, he submitted the matter to the consideration of his friends, one of whom sent the following reply, composed of the letters of his name: 'O go, the negro's M.P.'

Countless charades have been penned, notably by Praed and Calverley, whose versification, irrespective of their purport, is very often beautiful.

'Punning grows upon everybody,' wrote Sydney Smith; and it certainly appears to have flourished among all sorts and conditions of men. The writings of Aristotle, Cicero, Isocrates, and Plato, the serious sermons of Bishop Andrewes, the tragedies of Shakespeare, the comic poems of Thomas Hood, are freely sprinkled with puns. Theodore Hook's amusing account of a quondam general strike among the working-men of Paris is a good example of such play upon words: 'The bakers, being ambitious to extend their *do*-mains, declared that a revolution was *needed;* and, though not exactly *bred* up to arms, soon reduced their *crusty* masters to terms. The tailors called a council of the *board* to see what *measures* should be taken, and, looking upon the bakers as the *flower* of chivalry, decided to follow *suit;* the consequence of which was that a *cereous* insurrection was *lighted up* among the candle-makers, which, however *wick*-ed it might appear in the eyes of some persons, developed traits of character not unworthy of ancient *Greece*.'

The palindrome and acrostic are other favourite varieties, the combination of which in a palindromic acrostic, such as the specimen given below on the name of Lord Glenelg, Secretary of State for War during the reign of William IV., calls for the exercise of considerable ingenuity:

G o G Of a noted giant I am the name,
And backwards or forwards I'm just the same.
L eve L Of a dull uniformity I'm the name,
And backwards or forwards I'm just the same.
E y E Of the light of a countenance I'm the name,
And backwards or forwards I'm just the same.
N oo N Of the sun's mid journey I am the name,
And backwards or forwards I'm just the same.
E v E Of the mother of mankind I am the name,
And backwards or forwards I'm just the same.
L e L Of a fair young Mary I was the name,
And backwards or forwards I'm just the same.
G a G Of what compels silence I am the name,
And backwards or forwards I'm just the same.

These initials combine, you will find they frame
Of a son of Britain the noble name,
A peer and statesman of fairest fame,
And backwards or forwards 'tis still the same.

The oldest form of such play would appear to be the rebus, a pictorial representation of some word or sentence, for we find Cicero in the second century B.C. devising one for a public monument to himself.

Several other classes of literary conceit are detailed in Addison's contributions Nos. 58 and 59 to the *Spectator*, which may best be described as the labours of those who have been 'busy about nothing.' They smack of a man stretching out his arms to yawn rather than of stretching them out for relaxation; of idleness, which Montesquieu declared should be ranked among the punishments of hell rather than of recreation, that breathing of the mind which Fuller opined would otherwise be stifled with continual business.

A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR.

AT five o'clock in the evening the *Snapping Turtle* cruiser, second-class, five thousand six hundred tons, ten thousand I.H.P., hauled off from the Tan-jong-paga wharf at Singapore and anchored in the stream. She had been coaling, and all day long the stream of basket-laden coolies had discharged their loads into her capacious bunkers until she literally would not hold another ounce. She was, by order of 'My Lords,' starting on a coal-endurance trial with a new brand of coal from Pulu-Lombang, which its owner, Donald MacPherson, averred to be the finest fuel ever put on board of a man-of-war.

'Ye'll obsairve,' he had remarked to the chief-engineer of the *Snapping Turtle*, 'when it comes aboard, a peculiar shine on it, and now ye'll never have known the joy that comes of it until ye've used it. Talk of best Welsh—pooh!'

The chief-engineer, being a man of few illusions and much experience, had sniffed contemptuously, and now the stuff was aboard he was remarking to his senior engineer:

'Shiny! I should jolly well think it is shiny, and if it don't run pure pitch into the ash-pits I shall be agreeably surprised.'

The captain came off from the club at ten P.M. and ordered steam to be ready at six the next morning, and punctually to the moment the cruiser weighed and stood northwards through the Malacca Straits. It was the fine-weather season in the Indian Ocean, and as they were simply ordered to experiment on the coal, it was a case of 'there and back again,' and the captain could please himself

where he went; he was to return to Singapore when his bunkers were empty—that was all. The usual routine of a man-of-war at sea went on with its clockwork regularity; but on the second day out, just as the captain had lighted his after-luncheon cigar, and had composed himself in the depths of an arm-chair to read the *Pink Un*, a knock came at the cabin door, and the sentry thrust in his head.

'Staff-surgeon, sir, if you please, would like to speak to you.'

'Ask him to come in.'

The staff-surgeon, a tall, middle-aged man, made his appearance.

'Anything wrong, Holmes?' asked the captain. 'You don't usually favour me at this time of day. Sit down and have a cheroot.'

The staff-surgeon sat down opposite to his superior officer, but declined the proffered cheroot.

'I regret to say, sir, that I have very bad news. Hi-Fong, the Chinese ward-room second-steward, has an attack of smallpox.'

The captain took his cigar out of his mouth, whistled, and put it back again.

'That's bad,' he said after a pause, staring at the man opposite to him. 'What's to do now, doctor?'

'I have quite made up my mind as to my course of action, sir, and I have come to you for your approval.'

'Well, tell us what you propose.'

'It is a bad case—a very bad case—and the isolation must be complete. I had thought, with your permission, of rigging a shelter over the starboard quarter-boat and putting the patient in there. In this fine weather he can come to no harm. The officer of the watch can see to it that no one is allowed to get into the boat save myself and the sick-bay man who will attend upon him.'

'Capital plan. Anything else to propose?'

'Only this. As I knew that smallpox was hanging about in Singapore, I provided myself with enough lymph to vaccinate the whole ship's company. It should be done at once.'

'I quite agree, doctor; and you shall make a start on me. If I'm done it will show the whole ship's company the necessity of it, and we shan't have any trouble about the matter.'

'Then I will get Hi-Fong into the cutter at once, sir, and will start the vaccination to-morrow morning.'

'Very good.'

The news of the unpleasant visitation soon got noised about the ship, and after quarters that evening, when the men were dismissed, the bugle sounded the 'still.' Every blue-jacket, stoker, and marine became as a graven image.

'Carry on with that pipe, chief-boatswain's mate,' said the commander.

Long and shrill came the call from the silver whistle, and then a mighty voice which proclaimed 'D'you 'ear there? Smallpox 'aving broken out aboard, all 'ands will be vaccinated, beginning to-morrow morning. When the orficers 'as been done the starboard watch o' fo'c'sle-men will lay aft to the sick-bay, and then the other parts o' the ship according as ordered.'

The bugle sounded the 'carry on,' and the men were piped to supper. The men swallowed their tea in a hurry, and then lighting their pipes, proceeded to discuss the situation. Alexander Hetherington was an engine-room artificer, a stocky, red-faced, obstinate man from one of the northern shipyards, who at the age of twenty-seven was making his first acquaintance with His Majesty's Service on board the *Snapping Turtle*. He had merely been a year at it, and did not like it a bit; and it is only fair to add that the service liked him even less. Steeped to the lips in the modern doctrines of trade unionism, he was perpetually inveighing against the discipline to which he was subjected, and wearied both his superiors and his messmates with his grumbling. He, then, it was who stood pipe in mouth and discoursed loudly on the iniquity of the recent order.

'To tell me,' he was saying, 'as 'ow that I am to be put to the degradation of an absurd operation like vaccination is to tell me that I am a slave and no free Englishman. What right, I ask, 'as any orficer to command me to undergo it?'

'I don't know much about what right the skipper 'as to give an order, Snubby' (for thus was his long-winded name abbreviated on the lower deck, having a personal reference to the shortness of his nose), replied the armourer's mate. 'Per'aps you don't know what 'appened in my last ship to an ordinary seaman?'

'I do not,' retorted Snubby disdainfully.

'Well, it was like this 'ere. You knows that a boy is rated a man when 'e's eighteen years of age, and this boy 'e done something—I forget what—on 'is eighteenth birthday, and the first lootenant 'e 'ad 'im across the breech of a gun and twelve o' the very best lammed into 'im afore 'e 'ardly knew where 'e was. Well, 'e goes down on the lower deck rubbing of 'isself, and meets 'is chum. "'Ullo," says the chum, who was a bit o' a sea-lawyer, same as you, Snubby'—Snubby grunted—'"what's up along o' you?" "I've 'ad a dozen with the cane." "What!" says 'is chum, "and you eighteen? Why, I tell you that the first lootenant can't do it. 'E can't even order it, I says." "Oh, dry up!" says the boy; "don't you see, you silly blighter, that I've 'ad it?" That's the same as what you'll be, Snubby, afore you're much older. You'll 'ave 'ad it, and much good may it do you.'

So saying, the armourer's mate knocked the ashes out of his pipe and departed.

'I am a conscientious objector to this absurd practice,' said Snubby, 'and I shall refuse to submit.'

An unholy joy pervaded the lower deck. They knew the man to be an obstinate fool; but they also knew their captain, and gleefully awaited developments. The following day the master-at-arms reported to the commander that Hetherington, E.R.A., wished to see him with regard to the vaccination-order, and at a quarter to twelve the inter-

view took place. The lower deck was all agog with excitement; but the master-at-arms knew his business, and the interview was as private as circumstances permitted, although he could not prevent the quarterdeck sweepers from pretending great zeal in the sweeping of the deck in the immediate neighbourhood. The report was transmitted by 'Nobby' Clarke, A.B., to a highly appreciative audience during the dinner-hour:

'Me and Tiger [this was a meek ordinary seaman so christened] was a-sweeping o' the quarterdeck when Snubby came afore the commander. "What do you want to see me about?" says the commander. "About this 'ere vaccination turn-out, sir," answered Snubby as bold as you like. "Well, what about it?" "Only as I'm a conscientious objector and a something Primitive something."—Did you catch them words, Tiger?'

'No,' replied Tiger.

'Well, any'ow, 'e goes on and 'e says, using all o' them long words that 'e's so fond o': "I asseverate it to be the inali—something—privilege o' an Englishman to be a Primitive something and not to submit to no degrading operations," 'e says. "Oh, you do, do you?" answers the commander very quiet. "Them, sir, is the sentiments o' the Primitive somethings what 'aven't never submitted." "Indeed?" says the commander, even quieter than before; and then 'e turns to Jorndy [this is the generic name for the master-at-arms, and is supposed in some mystic way to be derived from gendarme!] and says, "Dismiss this man. I'll give 'im 'is answer to-morrow."'

''E's always gassing about something, is that there Snubby, 'im and 'is Primitive somethings,' remarked a quartermaster, with much disdain. 'I don't 'old myself with none o' them there fancy religions, so to speak, and no more did the skipper o' my last ship. There was one o' them fat-headed Tiffies, just such another as Snubby, and 'e comes on the quarterdeck and wants to see the captain about 'is religion. "Well," says the old man, "what's all this? What do these three men want, master-at-arms?" There was a ordinary seaman and a ship-steward's assistant along o' 'im. "They says," answers Jorndy, "something about religion, but I don't rightly understand myself, sir, what they wants to be at." "There's Church o' England," says the old man, "there's Roman Catholic," 'e says, "and there's Wesleyan: which o' 'em do you belong to?" "If you please, sir," says the Tiffy, "me and these other two good men 'ere we belong to the Church o' the Lord." "The Church o' *what?*" says the old man. "Now, let me tell you I don't have no fancy religions aboard 'ere. There's three laid down in the Admiralty Instructions," says 'e, "and you can take your choice. And, damme!" 'e says, "what's good enough for me is good enough for the likes o' you, I'd 'ave you to know."'

'And what did the Tiffy do?' asked a leading stoker.

'Dried up, same as what Snubby'll 'ave to do afore 'e's very much older.'

'We 'ad a rum turn-out up to Stonehouse barracks all along o' religion one time,' said the sergeant of marines. 'Parson come there and wants to drill the choir in church like; but the choir couldn't get the hang o' it nohow, and one day the parson was talking to the sergeant-major and tells 'im all about it. "I wants 'em," 'e says, "to assume the eastward position," 'e says. "What's that there?" asks the major. Well, the parson 'e turns to and 'e explains it all to the major; and the major 'e says, "You leave 'em to me. I'll give 'em preliminary drill, and you'll see 'em face round like as if they was in the barrack square."'

''Ow did 'e do it?' put in the armourer's mate.

'Well, 'e falls in the choir in the schoolroom, one row on 'em the starboard side, and the other row on the port, and then 'e says, "Just you attend to me while I gives the detail for the eastward position. That there blackboard," 'e says, "is where the parson is supposed to be a-standing in church, and what you 'as to do is this: when you 'ears the parson say, 'I believe,' don't none o' you stir; them words is only a caution; but as soon as ever 'e goes on, round on your 'eels together." That there choir was a fair treat to see after that, the way they'd turn.'

. . . . . .

'What!' ejaculated the captain, 'a conscientious objector? Shades of Nelson, Sharpe, are you quite sure that you're awake and that I'm sober?'

The commander grinned.

'It's that pudding-headed fool of an engine-room artificer Hetherington, sir—the man they call Snubby on the lower deck—and he pitched a yarn as long as the maintop-bowline into me about conscientious objections and how he belonged to the Primitive something or other which never had and never would be vaccinated, and a lot more stuff of the same sort.'

'Let's have the doctor here and see what he thinks about it.'

The doctor was sent for, and appeared. He looked very grave.

'That Chinaman's dead, sir,' he announced, 'and the sick-bay man and I have sewn him up in a hammock and then thrown our clothes overboard. He should be buried at once.'

This was done, and then the topic of Snubby became once more uppermost.

'He must be isolated at all costs, sir,' said the doctor, 'unless he is vaccinated.'

'All right; I'll settle him,' replied the captain. 'Have him up on the quarterdeck now; and I want you to attend, doctor.'

So once again Snubby stood in the presence of his superiors. He used all the longest words in his vocabulary, and had raised himself greatly in his own estimation before he had finished. The captain stood looking quietly at the self-assertive, obstinate, excited man before him, and allowed him to come to a standstill. Then he turned to the doctor.

'I understand that it is your opinion that the safety of the whole ship's company demands that every one on board should be vaccinated?'

The doctor bowed.

'That is decidedly my opinion, sir.'

'Have you formed any opinion on the case of this conscientious objector?'

'No, sir.'

'In that case I propose to submit for your professional opinion a plan of my own to see if it meets with your concurrence.'

The doctor bowed again. The captain then turned to the complacent Snubby, who thought that things were all going his way, and that in a very few minutes he would be sent forward unvaccinated, an object of admiration to all the lower deck.

'I won't call you an obstinate fool,' remarked the captain slowly, 'because if I did I should be paying you a compliment; but I am now about to explain exactly what I am going to do with you.—I suppose,' turning to the doctor, 'that if this man is segregated from the rest of the ship's company for a period of three weeks, and if he does not develop the disease, he may be considered as fairly safe?'

'I should prefer a month, sir,' answered the doctor gravely.

'He shall certainly have it. In that case he will have to finish his period of quarantine ashore, as our cruise only lasts another three weeks.—And now,' continued the captain, 'for you. Poor Hi-Fong is dead and buried; he was put in the starboard quarter-boat; you shall live in the port quarter-boat until we reach Singapore.—Master-at-arms, march this engine-room artificer aft. See him into the quarter-boat, and report to me when he is there.'

'Right turn, quick march,' came the order.

'But, sir'—— said Snubby.

'Ah, yes,' said the captain, with the ghost of a smile hovering round his clean-shaven mouth, 'one moment, doctor, please. Under the circumstances I have but very little doubt you will agree with me in what I am going to say now, and that is, that owing to the space in which this engine-room artificer will be confined it would be decidedly unadvisable to give him full rations?'

'It would decidedly be most detrimental to his health,' replied the doctor.

'And the question of his grog also arises,' pursued the captain.

'Rum,' said the doctor in a grave voice, 'would under the circumstances be most unadvisable.'

'Right turn,' came the inexorable voice of the master-at-arms; 'quick march.'

'But, sir'—— began Snubby again.

'Silence!' thundered the captain, his blue eyes flashing fire. The pride of the trade-union quailed visibly, and, followed by the master-at-arms, made his way to the quarter-boat, into which he humbly climbed. The yeoman of the signals had been an undetected listener and spectator of the whole performance from the break of the poop. Once Snubby was safely disposed of in the cutter the yeoman fled like a lapwing to the lower deck, and the whole ship's company gave themselves over to a restrained and decorous mirth.

Once again did the 'still' ring out from the bugle after quarters, and the men absolutely held their breath with curiosity. The pipe shrilled through the quiet evening air. 'D' you 'ear there? Engine-room artificer Hetherington is a conscientious objector to vaccination; consequently 'e will not be vaccinated same as the rest o' the ship's company; but considering that an unvaccinated man is a great danger aboard, 'e is put in quarantine for a month. The first three weeks will be in the port quarter-boat till we return to Singapore, when 'e will be sent to the quarantine station. As 'e will not 'ave no opportunity for to take exercise, 'is rations will be reduced to "six-upon-four;" and as rum is bad for the disease, 'e will not be allowed no grog. Any one communicating with 'im in any way whatever will be considered as liable to quarantine, and will be placed in one o' the other boats under the same restrictions.'

The chief-boatswain's mate paused and studied the paper which he held in his hand, and from which he had made this long announcement. Then he gave another chirp on his silver call and proceeded: 'The captain will be very pleased to interview any other men aboard o' this 'ere ship what considers themselves to be conscientious objectors.'

There was dead silence, and then a man laughed; and then, discipline notwithstanding, such a shout of merriment arose as had never been heard on board a man-of-war before. The captain was a discreet man; he retired to his cabin. At six that evening, or exactly one hour afterwards, the contrite Snubby was vaccinated at his own request.

FLAGSTAFF HILL.

The wind, from where the sunset dies,
Comes rushing through the fading light,
And tears the weary trees, and flies
Over the hills to meet the night.

He makes the corded flagstaff groan
And rattle on this barren crest,
Whither we climbed an hour agone
To watch the colours in the west.

And now there is no more to see,
And, as with care we wander down,
He sways our steps and trifles free
With Lili's hair and twirls her gown.

So that together we must cling,
And hardly, oft, escape a fall;
And pause to mind our balancing,
And gasp to breathe, if breathe at all.

But while we wrestle with his will,
And strive and turn in his embrace,
I reck not of him, watching still
Her flying hair, her glowing face.

E. K. L.

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THE AUSTRALIAN CINDERELLA.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA is at present the most interesting of the Australian states. While the eastern colonies were pushing ahead all through the fifties and sixties, and developing their resources with good judgment and feverish activity, the western colony appeared to be wrapped in slumber, except for her fine exploratory work and occasional spurts of energy in the matter of gold-finding. But very little steady work was actually done until Bayley and Ford, having discovered at Coolgardie the gold-reef which made Western Australia famous throughout the world, before they went to bed on a certain Sunday in September 1892 picked up and 'dollied' with a tomahawk five hundred ounces from the cap of the reef. Then Rip Van Winkle woke up, rubbed his sleepy eyes, jumped out of bed, seized his pick and his axe and his farming implements, and set to work in dead earnest to develop the wonderful resources of his great country. And he has stuck to it ever since with such grim determination that he now leads the van of all the states in material progress. For sixty-three years this huge territory was practically unknown, and had no more influence in the world than the Solomon Islands; but in the subsequent ten short years she has surprised every one by the magnitude of her public works, by her dauntless courage in overcoming difficulties, and by the extreme rapidity of her development. One can scarcely credit that all this visible progress has been made in a single decade; but a glance at the official records shows that this is undoubtedly the case. In 1892 the population was only fifty-eight thousand; to-day it is two hundred and twenty-four thousand.

The total value of the gold produced during half a century ending 1892 was rather less than five hundred and twenty thousand pounds, while for the subsequent ten years the production was over thirty-seven million pounds sterling. It reads like an Oriental fable. Her output in 1892 was two hundred and twenty-six thousand two hundred and eighty-four pounds; in 1902 it rose to seven million nine hundred and forty-seven thousand six hundred and sixty-three pounds. Her railways have expanded sevenfold; in 1892 they barely covered working expenses, now they not only pay costs of operation, but provide full interest on capital, and a small margin of profit in addition.

COOLGARDIE WATER SCHEME.

This great venture has been completed under difficulties which might well have daunted the stoutest heart; and although many persons are entitled to some credit for its creation, there is no doubt that to Sir John Forrest's indomitable energy, foresight, and determination the success of this magnificent project is mainly due. To pump water through pipes stretching three hundred and eighty miles into the far interior, on a constantly ascending grade, may surely be called, without exaggeration, a great conception; but to finance it required no ordinary courage, in view of the fact that at the outset the phenomenally rich Kalgoorlie had not been born, and there was then only a population of some one hundred and fifty thousand to face a contemplated expenditure of three million pounds. Yet the work has been successfully accomplished, in flat contradiction of all the sneers and dismal predictions of detractors; and the mines and townships all along the route are now supplied with water at the rate of six shillings and sixpence per thousand gallons, instead of having to pay two pounds for that quantity.

To one from the home country six shillings and sixpence for common water looks an appalling and unconscionable extortion, but on these happy goldfields, where a lemon-squash costs a shilling, the miner parts with half-crowns more readily than they spend 'crummies' (threepence) in other parts of Australia. And a never-failing supply of water must greatly stimulate the development of the goldfields, and at the same time conduce to the health and happiness of the inhabitants, who have to endure much in that arid belt of sand and flies and torrid heat, and dreariness indescribable.

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THE EASTERN GOLDFIELDS.

These were, of course, the main attraction which drew so many visitors from all parts of Australia, some of whom had come distances over four thousand miles. There were two special trains from Perth, filled with invited guests, and the journey to and fro was run strictly to time. The water-opening ceremony at Coolgardie passed off successfully: procession of visitors in buggies, eight tall, quick-paced camels with their Afghan drivers in full dress, military officers in all their glory, volunteers in khaki, mounted police, crowds of civilians, brass band, flags, banners, mottoes, and decorations; shops closed, and the entire town *en fête*. Coolgardie at its foundation rose like a rocket, and a desert was suddenly transformed into a settled town; but as soon as the greater riches of Kalgoorlie were unveiled, about half the inhabitants deserted the older settlement in a wild stampede to the superior attractions of its rival. We found Kalgoorlie a wonderful place—everything on a big scale—broad avenues and streets lighted at short intervals with electric lamps, electric cars running incessantly, telephone bells ringing continually, the clubs and hotels overcrowded, and the streets full of colour and animation, and literally blazing with light. Who has not heard of the famous 'golden mile'? We were all anxious to see this 'world's wonder.' What a hive of ceaseless industry it is! The visitors to the mines were divided into groups, and each of the big mining companies provided buggies for its own particular set. Our party visited the 'Ivanhoe,' and were much impressed with the magnitude of the plant, and the various cunning processes for the economical extraction of the precious metal. All the rough-and-ready methods of the early days have been abandoned, and mines are now making large profits which could not possibly have paid wages under the old hap-hazard and extravagant systems. We went down to eight hundred feet and saw the compressor-drills working. The ventilation was good, and it was agreeably cool underground, but on the surface the heat was frightful.

Lunch was provided under cover, on a spacious veranda, but all the time the thermometer stood steady at 112° in the shade. It was almost too hot to eat anything but lumps of ice, washed down with iced lager, Belfast ginger-ale, and 'schweppes.' The worker gets high wages on the goldfields, but most people will agree that he fairly earns every shilling he receives. A few years ago some wise-acres shook their heads, and predicted that the rapid development of the fields would soon produce its inevitable result—the gold would be worked out, and the yield would fall just as suddenly as it had risen. But the official records, which are carefully checked, tell quite another tale.

The year 1896 was the first in which gold values reached one million pounds; the following year they rose to two million five hundred thousand pounds. In 1898 the output was four million pounds; then followed in 1899 a huge leap to six million two hundred and fifty thousand pounds. In 1900 there was a slight check, for the product dropped to six million pounds; but in 1901 it rose again as high as seven million two hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds; and in 1902 the yield was an absolute record for Western Australia, being close upon eight million pounds.

Most of the old practical miners ridicule the idea of Kalgoorlie having any monopoly in gold-veins, and maintain that there are indications of as rich deposits elsewhere if the prospectors will only spread out and thoroughly examine them, instead of fossicking round in the neighbourhood of the big mines.

WAGES.

At present there are no inducements for station hands, tanners, saddlers, wheelwrights, compositors, coachmen, railwaymen, dressmakers, or milliners. The current wage for gold-miners is twelve shillings and sixpence a day; forest sawyers, twelve shillings; wharf-labourers, ten shillings; ploughmen, seven shillings; orchardmen, six shillings and sixpence; farm-labourers, six shillings; carters, seven shillings and sixpence and twelve shillings; painters, ten shillings and twelve shillings and sixpence; tailors, eleven shillings and fourteen shillings; carpenters, blacksmiths, plumbers, iron-moulders, eleven shillings and fifteen shillings; stone-masons, twelve shillings and sixpence and fifteen shillings. Male cooks receive fifty shillings and eighty shillings with board per week; female cooks, thirty shillings and fifty shillings; general servants, twenty shillings and thirty shillings; nursemaids, fifteen shillings and thirty shillings; laundresses, twenty-five shillings and thirty shillings; barmen, forty shillings and forty-five shillings; barmaids, forty shillings and fifty shillings. Where two rates are quoted, the higher is the ruling rate on the goldfields. There is absolutely no demand for clerks, actuaries, or men of commercial experience, however wide. Gentlemen of culture, *savants* and *literati*, are also out of the running, for there is a constant glut of intellect running to waste in the streets and highways. In our youthful days we used to spout with modest pride, 'The mind's the measure of the man,' and we really believed it; but in Western Australia the measure of a man is his muscle or his skill as a craftsman. These hard-headed Australians have got neither soul nor sentiment. I verily believe they would pay more to secure the services of a skilled slaughterman than for a Senior Wrangler or a Royal Academician. They do not require men to think, suggest, or direct, but to do something that is visible to the eye, were it only to knock a man down. A champion of the ring would count for much more than a poet-laureate. Perhaps, after all, they are right. At this early stage of their history a miner, or a carpenter, or an iron-moulder is of more value than many poets. Women are eagerly sought after, not to type letters or trim hats, but to nurse baby, to cook beefsteaks, and to wash and iron clothes; and

they command high wages everywhere; while an irreproachably respectable barmaid on the gold-fields may get as much as four pounds a week, and in addition be lodged and boarded like a princess.

There is abundance of cultivable land in the cool and healthy southern districts to be had cheap, and the prices of local produce are nearly always good, viewed from a farmer's standpoint. Fruit-growing is increasing greatly, and the fine quality of Westralian fruit surprised me quite as much as anything else I observed.

PERTH.

I was agreeably surprised to find the capital so charming a little city, full of bustle and energy, with well-constructed and well-kept pavements, crowded with well-dressed people; handsome shops filled with customers; long, straight, clean streets busy with traffic; and electric tram-cars plying to and from the suburbs.

Some of the older streets are, perhaps, rather narrow and provincial, but St George's Terrace would be reckoned a noble thoroughfare anywhere in the wide world. I had a suspicion that, owing to the water-opening ceremony, there might be more people than usual in the city; but none of the residents would admit for a moment that the traffic was in any degree unusual, and what certainly lent colour to their opinion was the fact that the leading hotels were by no means overcrowded. Not only are the public buildings constructed in good style and with some regard to future requirements, but the private buildings, wholesale warehouses, merchants' offices, and leading retail shops are solid and artistic constructions worthy of a capital city; and the principal hotels are unusually fine, with lofty vestibules, wide staircases, beautiful fittings, rich furniture, electric lights, telephones, and telegraph-offices. But the greatest surprise of all is the large number of tasteful villas and handsome two-story residences in and around the city, indicating an amount of wealth and luxury for which we were hardly prepared. For we must not forget that Perth is for the most part quite a new city; ten years ago the population was under ten thousand, while to-day it numbers forty thousand inhabitants. We expected to see wooden buildings everywhere, with a liberal sprinkling of the hateful iron crib so common in these colonies; but these were rare exceptions, and the great majority of the residences of the well-to-do were of solid brick, tastefully built with stone facings and artistic woodwork, and having a comfortable air of prosperity about them.

If there is one thing about which the good people of Perth are jealous, it is the character of its climate. They do not simply insinuate that the Garden of Eden is not in it compared with Perth, but they say it openly and fearlessly. We laugh at the Sydney man when he asks for a perfectly frank expression of our opinion as to their beautiful harbour; but the Perth citizen thinks nothing of his harbour, nor his beautiful parks, nor his fine city, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his, save and except his glorious climate; and if you do not at once acknowledge that the climates of Nice, Algiers, and Madeira are not worthy to be compared with the celestial atmospheric conditions of Perth, then, my worthy friend, you must be prepared for a somewhat chilly reception. It is a curious idiosyncrasy. But speaking seriously, I do not think a word can be said against its climate; it is much less torrid than the climate of Rockhampton, and I like it better than that of Brisbane, but I have not travelled around the world sufficiently to be able to certify that it is absolutely the finest climate on this planet.

THE LEGEND OF THE SIX FAMILIES.

For years past I had heard it rumoured that a ring of six families ruled the commercial interests of Westralia with a rod of iron, and committed enormous atrocities quite after the style of the fearful Council of Ten, who were top-dogs in the ancient republic of Venice, and whose tyranny and misgovernment ultimately destroyed it.

I was determined to get to the bottom of this modern mystery of iniquity, or perish in the attempt. With cautious circumspection I interviewed many of the old identities whose actual experience dated nearly as far back as the foundation of the colony, and I was careful to write down the six names given by each of my informants, who were reckoned to have special knowledge on this interesting subject. The unexpected result of my investigation was that no two of the lists agreed; and when the roll of the celebrated families had expanded to five-and-twenty original and distinct species, I judged that it was time to cry a halt. And the funny part of it was, that most of my informants were anxious to prove to me that their family was undoubtedly one of the six, and that their neighbour over the way had not the ghost of a show to establish a claim for such honour. After thinking the matter over, I came to a somewhat similar conclusion as the illustrious Betsy Prig arrived at when she said that 'she didn't believe there never was no sich pusson as Mrs 'Arris.'

HOSPITALITIES.

Within the short space of ten days we had thirteen receptions, public functions, banquets, and lunches —not thirteen of each, but thirteen in all—accompanied by the usual variety of mirthful and distressing speeches, a few of them really bright, terse, and instructive. The Western Australian members of Parliament treated their visitors with consummate courtesy and brotherly kindness; indeed, in their anxiety to do honour to their guests, I fear lest they may have caused offence by overlooking their own men of mark. 'Our distinguished visitors' were so frequently referred to in the speeches that it called to my mind Mark Twain's

famous story of the interview between the Czar of Russia and the *Quaker City* excursionists: 'We are a handful of American citizens travelling unostentatiously for pleasure.' But it was all done with the kindest intentions, in absolute good faith, and without the faintest idea of poking 'borak' at 'our distinguished visitors' aforesaid. Then the hospitalities were not a mere empty rhetorical display of elegant compliments, for the tables were spread with a profusion of everything that was rare and costly. In this connection I am reminded of a certain Lord Provost in Scotland, who was compelled to file his schedule some time after entertaining royalty, and I sincerely trust that no such peculiarly hard fate will befall our friends in the West as a consequence of their too generous entertainment of their astonished and grateful visitors from the East. But I have my fears.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER X.—ACROSS EUROPE.

THE Closed Book had been filched from me at the very moment when I was about to learn the secret it contained.

I put a few well-directed questions to Nello, and became confirmed in my suspicion that the woman who had stolen it was actually the same whose face had so attracted me that it had lived within my memory every moment since our first meeting.

Curious how the faces of some women haunt us, even when we have no desire for their affection! The fascination of a woman's eyes is one of the unaccountable mysteries of life, being far beyond human ken or human control, and yet one of the most potent factors in man's existence.

In the half-open drawer of my writing-table were certain private papers that I had taken from my despatch-box two days before, intending to send them to my solicitors in London, and these the unknown in black had apparently been examining. She had called with a fixed purpose, which she had accomplished—namely, to pry into my private affairs and to gain possession of my treasured Arnoldus, the Book of Secrets.

As I knew Tuscany and the Tuscans so well, this ingenious conspiracy was scarcely surprising. The little plots, often harmless enough, that I had detected about me during my residence by the Mediterranean had showed me what a cleverly diplomatic race they were, and with what patient secretiveness they work towards their own ends. It annoyed me, however, to think that I should thus fall a victim to that handsome woman's ingenuity. Veiled as she had been in Father Bernardo's study, I had judged her to be much older than I found she was when I had noticed her in the streets of Leghorn. Who could she be, and what could be her motive in stealing my property if she were not in league with the Prior himself?

My old servant Nello, standing there beside me, knew something more than he would tell. Of that I felt convinced. Possibly he had participated in the plot, admitting her, well knowing her errand. He had warned me; therefore he must know something. What was the object of it all I utterly failed to conceive.

'That woman is a thief!' I exclaimed angrily a few moments later. 'Who is she?'

'I—I do not know her, signor *padrone*,' stammered the old man.

'She gave no name?'

'None. She said that you expected her.'

'But she could not have taken away a big book like that without your noticing it?' I pointed out suspiciously.

'She had on a big black cloak, signore,' was the crafty old fellow's response.

I closed my writing-table and locked it, for in that moment I had decided to go straight to Florence and charge Bernardo Landini with being a party to the theft. Having sold the book to me, he wished to repossess himself of it, and on my refusal, had, it seemed, put in motion a kind of conspiracy against me.

The old hunchback was undoubtedly the director of it all.

I thrust a few things into a kit-bag, placed some money in my pocket, and put on an overcoat; and telling Nello that I should not return for a couple of days perhaps, gave orders that no one was to be admitted to the house except my most intimate friend Hutchinson, the British Consul.

At the big, bare railway station, wherein the feeble gas-jets had just been lit, I saw, lounging beside the ticket-collector, the detective attached to that post, whose duty it was to notice all arrivals and departures; and, knowing him, I called him aside and briefly described the lady who had visited me.

'Yes, signore, I saw her. She left for Pisa an hour ago; she purchased a first-class ticket for London.'

'For London!' I gasped. 'Had she any baggage?'

'A crocodile-leather dressing-case and a small flat box covered with brown leather.'

'By what route was she travelling?'

The detective walked to the booking-office, and in response to his inquiries I learnt that she had taken a direct ticket by way of Turin, Modane, Paris, and Calais. The train which caught at Pisa the express to the French frontier had left an hour ago; therefore I had no chance of overtaking her.

Still, something prompted me to take the next

train to Pisa, for Italian railways are never punctual, and there was just a chance that she might have missed her connection. So half-an-hour later I sat in the dimly-lit, rickety old compartment of that branch-line train, pondering over the events of the past day, and determined to run down the thief at all hazards.

At Pisa I quickly learnt that the Leghorn train had arrived in time to catch the express; therefore the woman in black was now well on her way towards the frontier.

I purchased a railway-guide, and entering the waiting-room, sat down to study it calmly. After half-an-hour I decided upon a plan. The homeward Indian mail from Brindisi to London would pass through Turin at 9.15 on the following morning, and, if I caught it, would land me at Calais three hours in advance of the express by which she was travelling. But from Pisa to Turin is a far cry—half-way across Italy; and I at once consulted the stationmaster as to the possibility of arriving in time.

There was none, he declared. The express for the north, which left in two hours' time, could not arrive in Turin before 9.20, ten minutes after the departure of the Indian mail. Therefore it was impossible.

I paced the long, deserted platform full of chagrin and utterly bewildered.

Of a sudden, however, a thought occurred to me. I knew the manager of the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits at Turin station, a most courteous and hard-working Englishman named Nicholls. I would telegraph to him, urging him to detain the Indian mail for me ten minutes.

This I did, and just before midnight stepped into the Rome-Turin express on the first stage of my stern-chase across Europe.

Through the hot, stifling July night I stretched myself out along the cushions and slept but little during the slow, tedious journey through those eighty-odd roaring tunnels that separate Pisa from Genoa, for the line is compelled to run so close to the sea in places that the waves lap the very ballast. I was excited, wondering whether I should succeed in catching the mail and arresting the woman's progress.

In those past few days I had trodden a maze of mystery. My love for the antique had brought into my life one of the strangest episodes experienced by any man, yet in those breathless moments, as I tore across Europe, I thought only of regaining possession of my remarkable treasure, and of obtaining the forbidden knowledge contained therein.

Hour after hour dragged slowly by. At Genoa, long after the sun had risen, I got out for a cup of coffee in that ugly and rather dirty buffet which travellers in Italy know so well. Then re-entering, we started off up the deep valleys and across the broad wine-lands of Asti towards Turin.

As we approached the capital of Piedmont my anxiety increased. To delay the Indian mail for ten minutes was surely a sufficient courtesy, and I knew that after that lapse of time my friend Nicholls dared not assume further responsibility. The overland mail once a week between Brindisi and Charing Cross is ever on time, a contract that must be kept whatever the cost; hence, as I frequently glanced at my watch, I grew anxious as to my success in catching it.

If I did I should arrive at Calais harbour in advance of the mysterious woman, and could on board the steamer single her out and demand the restoration of my property.

We halted at Novi, and the time lost in taking water seemed an eternity. At Alexandria we were ten minutes late—ten minutes! Think what that meant to me.

At Asti there was some difficulty about an old *contadina's* box; and when the train started at last for Turin we were nearly fourteen minutes behind time. I threw myself back with a sigh, feeling that all hope had vanished. We could never make up time on that short run; and the English mail, after waiting for me, would leave ten minutes or so before my arrival. Could any situation be more tantalising?

At last, however, we ran slowly into the great arched terminus of Turin; and as we did so I hung half my body from the carriage window, and was delighted to see the train of long, brown sleeping-cars still standing in the station.

My heart gave a bound. On the platform my friend Nicholls was awaiting me, and assisted me hurriedly to descend.

'Just in time, Mr Kennedy,' he said. 'Another minute and I should have been compelled to let her go. Anything serious in London?'

'Yes,' I answered. 'Very serious. I'll write to you all about it. But I don't know how to thank you sufficiently.'

'Oh, never mind about that,' he laughed. 'I've got your berth for you. Come along;' and, hurrying me over to the next platform, he put me into one of the cars, wished me *bon voyage*, waved his hand, and we moved out towards Calais—the fastest express across Europe.

Upon the result of that hard race my whole future and happiness depended. I was not, of course, aware of it at the time. I was merely consumed by curiosity regarding the strange vellum record, and was eager to obtain the knowledge that its writer had so successfully concealed—barring it with certain death to those who sought the truth.

Could I but have looked into the future, could I have realised what it all meant to me, I should never have dared to embark upon that chase; but rather should I have been pleased that this unknown woman of the sable habiliments had taken into her hands that which must sooner or later encompass her death.

But we are creatures of impulse, all of us, and surely I am no exception. I found the circumstances full of romance and interest; and, beyond, I

saw in the woman herself as great a mystery as that written upon those envenomed pages.

The assertion that the forbidden secret would, if gained, place its possessor amongst the most powerful on earth appealed to me, a hard-working writer. Would it not, I ask, have appealed to you?

Then you surely will not blame me for my strenuous attempt to regain The Closed Book; you will agree with me that, apart from the intrinsic value of the manuscript on account of its rarity, the stake was sufficient to warrant my tearing it from the hand of the thief.

My keen anxiety through those long hours while we sped through the Alps and by way of Aix, Macon, and Dijon to Paris need not be told. The train by which the woman I was following had travelled was before us all the way; but her delay would, I discovered, be in Paris; for while she was compelled to cross the city by cab, and wait at the Gare du Nord five hours, we travelled around the Ceinture Railway, and left for Calais with only twenty minutes' wait at the French capital.

Most of my fellow-travellers were Anglo-Indians, officers and their wives home on leave, together with a few homeward-bound travellers from the Far East, every one eager to get aboard the Dover boat and to sight the white cliffs of Old England once again after perhaps many years of exile. If you have travelled by the overland mail, you know well the excitement that commences as one nears Calais; for once beneath the British flag of the Channel steamer, one is home again. Ah! that word home —how much it conveyed to me!—how much to you if you have travelled in far-off lands!

We swung through Boulogne around that terrible curve that generally throws over the plates and dishes of the *wagon restaurant*, and at last slackened down through Calais-Ville, and slowly proceeded to the harbour where the special boat awaited us, the train having done the long run from Brindisi four minutes under the scheduled time, even though Nicholls had kept it behind for me nearly a quarter of an hour.

It was now eleven o'clock in the morning, and until four o'clock in the afternoon I remained in that most dismal of all hotels, the 'Terminus' at Calais, awaiting the arrival of the ordinary express from Paris. It came at last, crowded with summer tourists from Switzerland and elsewhere, business men, and that quaint, mixed set of travellers that continually pass to and fro across the Channel.

In order to discover the woman, however, I took up a position near the gangway that gave access to the steamer, and scrutinised each passenger with all the eagerness of a born-detective. One after the other they passed in array, each carrying the hand-luggage, while the big, rattling cranes were at work taking aboard baggage and mails.

The stream grew thinner until the last passenger had passed on board, and yet she did not come. My haste had been in vain. She had probably broken her journey in Paris. And yet somehow I felt that she had some motive in carrying The Closed Book to London without delay.

French porters with their arm-badges and peaked caps rushed to and fro. There was shouting in two languages, not counting the third—or bad language. They were preparing to cast off, and I was undecided whether to remain in Calais until two o'clock next morning for the arrival of the night train or to go aboard and make further search.

Just as the gangway was about to be withdrawn I made a sudden resolve, and rushed headlong on board.

The reason of this quick decision was because, among the bustling groups of passengers, I had distinguished a face that was familiar to me.

My heart leapt as I pushed forward across the crowded deck towards the spot.

Strange how impulse sometimes directs us towards our doom!

(*To be continued.*)

WILDFOWLING.

MANY people class November as a dull and dreary month; but to the wildfowler it has many charms, as with its entry begins the wintry season so dear to all followers of wildfowl sport.

It is a most fascinating pursuit, and, perhaps next to deerstalking, is the nearest approach to that finest of all sport—big-game shooting—that can be had at home. Unlike ordinary fur-and-feather shooting, wildfowling requires the true hunting instinct, combined with much patience and endurance, and that as a rule at the coldest and stormiest time of year; and you feel you are pitting your craft against very wary bipeds.

The majority of true sportsmen are students of nature, and this is especially the case with the wildfowler, first as a means to an end, and also for its own pleasure; the constant contact with out-door life imbuing him with a love for nature that enables him to contemplate even an empty bag philosophically.

Take a November afternoon towards dusk, when you are crouching in some rough hollow by the side of a fresh-water pool near the bents by the shore, waiting for the duck to flight. The glow is fading out of the western sky, a pale crescent moon is just visible, and as the light goes the stars begin to peep out. It is a fine time to be alone with nature, listening to the noise of the sea 'heard by the land,' and other weird evening sounds. Pewits begin to flit by; occasionally the cry of the golden plover is heard, and

the harsh chirrup of the snipe as he flits past you and lands at the edge of the pool with his peculiar jerky motion, and can clearly be seen silhouetted against the water as he walks about with thin legs and long beak. Then the cry of a curlew is heard, and awakens the latent desire to kill. Imitating his call, and keeping a sharp lookout, you see him swoop past, and you just manage to knock him over as he swerves away at the movement of your gun. Picking him, or rather her, up, you call to mind the old adage, 'A curlew, be she white or be she black, carries tenpence on her back.' As you regain your lair a large heron flaps slowly by; then an owl startles you by almost landing on your head as he goes silently past hunting his prey. Gradually it has grown darker; the wind moans with an eerie sound through the bents and thistles, when, hark! the welcome whistle of wings falls upon the ear: the duck are on the move, passing inland to feed, and by keeping a sharp lookout you can dimly discern some dark forms as they rush past overhead out of shot. Presently you can hear the harsh quack of some that have landed in a neighbouring pool for a splash in the fresh-water before going on to feed in the fields. Again the noise of wings, and you see something like a black bonnet thrown up against the sky. Instinctively you raise your gun and press the trigger; and then, blinded by the sudden flash, you listen intently, and are rewarded by hearing the welcome thud, and on standing up you are able to see a fine mallard fluttering among the bents near by. Placing him beside the curlew, you have hardly resumed your former position when the rush of wings is again heard, followed this time by a double splash on the pool in front of you. For a time nothing is visible as you strain your eyes to their utmost but a ripple on the surface of the water caused by the swimming birds. At last, dimly, some dark object is seen emerging out of the shadow cast on the pool by the surrounding bank, then another following. Just as they merge into one you fire. As the report dies away there is a great splashing and flapping in the water, and with a little trouble a fine brace of duck are added to the bag.

It is now quite dark and difficult to see; and, although an odd bird may drop in, the flighting is over for that evening, so there is nothing for it but to gather up your victims and trudge home, puffing your pipe and classing November as a jolly month.

Later on, when the frost sets in, even better sport may be obtained at fresh-water pools by the coast; and when they begin to get frozen over, the birds are more keen than ever to have a bath. Then it is best to choose one of the deeper pools which is only partly covered with ice, as the duck are almost sure to select it when they begin to move at dusk, and when it gets too dark to shoot them on the wing as they circle round before landing. Once landed on the open water, they can be seen across the ice; and if the first two are allowed to remain undisturbed others will soon join them, when a couple of barrels discharged simultaneously will often be well rewarded.

Perhaps, however, the best time of all for a good bag to be made is when a thaw has set in after a long frost. The first night there is open water again on the pools, duck are sure to be about and eager to have a bath of fresh-water. It is often a good plan to let any birds you have killed lie on the water, their bodies acting as decoys in the dim light.

If a change is wanted from these evening shoots, daylight is an excellent time; but it requires a good deal more resolution to get up in the dark on a cold morning and issue forth, for you must be down by the edge of the shore before a streak of daylight appears in the eastern sky. But even then, unless flying against a strong head-wind, duck are apt to pass very high on their return journey to the sea. However, after the flighting is over and the light is better, with a little careful prowling and stalking, a stray duck, widgeon, or teal may be picked up at some of the odd pools, besides the chance of a curlew or plover.

If during a long, severe winter you are lucky enough to obtain permission from some good-hearted farmer through whose fields run any burns or ditches with water, these will well repay a visit at daylight, and any stray duck found there afford a sporting shot as they rise quacking, with long necks outstretched.

In really stormy, rough weather at the sea, by seeking out some rocky point, under cover of which there happens to be any smooth water, there will nearly always be sufficient bird-life to keep you on the alert. Shore birds seem to be restless, and perforce have to fly low, often affording good shots as they pass within reach of your cover. But as a general rule the best wildfowling time is evening and early morning. You must also study the tides and different feeding-grounds, and a host of minor details only to be learnt by long experience.

A good retriever of some kind is essential, and there is none better than a hardy Irish water-spaniel. He does not take up much room when you are hiding, and is strong enough for coast work in rough weather.

For ordinary shore-shooting, a ·10 bore well choked is perhaps the best gun; but for duck-shooting at dusk, when birds are near and a quick spread is wanted, nothing beats a good covert-gun, say ·28 inch and no choke. This, used with small shot, will be found most deadly. A gun with a long barrel seems to droop away at the muzzle in a faint light and shoots too close at a short range.

Wildfowling is not an expensive sport. Ofttimes the expenditure can be calculated in shillings in place of pounds; in fact, a pound will in many cases cover your expenses for the season, so it is a sport that can be enjoyed by a comparatively poor man, to whom a bag of a few hard-sought wildfowl will yield more pleasure than the slaughter of many head of game.

Not the smallest part of the enjoyment of the wildfowler is the time when he gets home after an extra cold night, and in dry clothes, with slippered feet, and supper over, muses by the fire over the 'might have beens.' Again he conjures up the shots hit and missed, and wonders had it not been wiser to have fired sooner or later, or had bigger shot in his cartridge. Visions of strings of duck flying out from a background of leaden sky and falling snow-flakes, to land with a splash on the dark, rippling waters, flit before him. When, hark! what is that? The rush of wings, or 'ye curlews calling thro' a clud, ye whistling plover,' and you wake with a start. A lump of coal has fallen from the fire. With a shake you pull yourself together, and before going to bed clean your trusty gun and make all ready for the next expedition.

Or should it be your lot in after-days to find yourself 'in troublous cities pent,' some old print on wildfowling catches the eye, and you are transported once again 'to the heath, brother, where the wind blows free.'

THE LEOPARD-COUCH.

By A. Sarsfield Ward.

MY name first became associated with that of Dr Maurice Bode upon the publication of a small treatise dealing with a certain phase of the complex religion of ancient Egypt. In the preparation of *The Worship of Apis at Memphis* he was good enough to collaborate with me; and although this little work was designed solely for the use of students, it nevertheless had a fairly large sale, undoubtedly owing to its containing accounts of many unique investigations conducted by Bode in Egypt.

Since its appearance in 1895 we have regularly worked in concert; and it is my intention to here set forth the broad facts connected with a very remarkable experiment which took place at my own rooms during the autumn of last year, and to give some account of the circumstances that led up to it. Occult students who were in London at the time will already be familiar with the matter, which formed the subject of a paper read by Maurice Bode before one of the leading research societies. As the affair seemed to open up an entirely new field, it has been suggested to Bode that a more popular account thereof might serve to promote inquiry into a subject which has but latterly begun to arouse anything approaching general interest. It is, therefore, at his request that the following is penned.

Early in August I received a note from a well-known dealer in antiques to the effect that an ancient couch of Egyptian workmanship had come into his possession. As I have myself a small collection of Egyptian curios—though insignificant beside that of Maurice Bode—and as such antiquities are always of interest to me, I called at the shop to examine the specimen.

I must confess that I was anticipating comparatively modern workmanship, probably evincing indications of the Roman influence; it was, therefore, a welcome surprise to find that the couch alluded to was of much earlier design. It was constructed to grotesquely resemble a leopard, the feet and claws being of copper. The body of the couch and a part of the legs were of acacia-wood, heavily gilded. The head and shoulders of the leopard were so contrived as to furnish a hollow, presumably for the reception of a large cushion, and along the framework of this singular piece of furniture ran a line of partially defaced hieroglyphics. The execution throughout was magnificent, and, though fantastic, betrayed considerable artistic taste. The wood had in many places decayed, and of the hieroglyphics I could make neither head nor tail. Nevertheless, I would have given much to possess the beautiful piece of work; but the figure mentioned by the dealer placed it beyond the reach of my somewhat slender purse.

'The price I'm asking leaves me very little profit, sir,' he assured me. 'It was one of the lots put up at Northbie's last Friday, and there were buyers from three big museums to bid against.'

'Who was the previous owner?' I inquired.

'Professor Bayton, who died at the beginning of the year. It was the last item he ever added to his collection.'

'How did they describe it at Northbie's?'

'"Antique Egyptian couch—later Theban."

'No further particulars?'

'No, sir,' said the dealer, with a smile.

I determined to draw the attention of Bode to this very peculiar piece of furniture, and, mentioning my intention, I left the shop. It so happened, however, that the doctor was out of town at the time, and nearly a week elapsed before I saw him. At the earliest opportunity I called at his place, and proceeded to describe what I had seen, intending to ask him to accompany me upon a second visit. There was no need for me to make the request: I saw from the first that he was interested; and when I endeavoured to explain the unusual formation of the leopard's head he sprang up excitedly.

Seizing a sheet of paper and a pencil, he executed a rapid sketch. 'Like that?' he said eagerly.

'Exactly!' I replied, in astonishment.

'We'll go now,' was his next remark; and clapping his hat on his head, he clutched me by the arm and hurried from the house.

On the way I endeavoured to elicit from him some explanation of his sudden enthusiasm; but he declined to gratify my curiosity, promising to explain more fully later. Upon our arrival at the dealer's a disappointment awaited us. The couch had been sold two days before to a wealthy amateur collector, and was only that morning removed from the shop.

I have rarely seen Bode so keenly annoyed. 'I'd have willingly given twice the price,' he declared. 'The thing is of no earthly use to M'Quown; to me it is of vital importance.'

We were both acquainted with the purchaser, and I suggested that we should call upon him and examine the antique. My friend, however, opposed this. 'M'Quown has wanted a certain uræus from my collection for a long time,' he said. 'I shall endeavour to arrange an exchange.'

As I knew that Maurice Bode numbered this uræus to which he alluded—the earliest example extant—among the three most valuable items of his museum, I wondered more and more why he was so eager to gain possession of the leopard-couch. I was about to press him for an explanation, when he began abruptly:

'You are no doubt wondering what peculiar attraction this object has for me? Well, then, let me explain. I need not point out to you that I regard Egyptology from a different standpoint to that of previous and most contemporary inquirers, principally in that I look upon the period between the reign of Mena (once termed the first historic Pharaoh) and the Christian era merely as the latter end of Egyptian history. You are familiar with the results of my investigations upon the site of Heliopolis, and you know that I have definitely established the existence of dynasties earlier than the Theban. The secret of that synonym for mystery, the Sphinx of Gîzeh, seemed almost within my grasp when an essential datum eluded me.'

'You refer, of course, to the nature of the creed professed by the leopard-worshippers?'

'Precisely! At that point my investigations failed utterly. We both know that a mystic cult, the emblem of whose doctrine was some extinct or mythical species of white leopard, actually existed up to the reign of Tehuti-mes III.; but subsequently, as you are aware, this ancient and mysterious priesthood, probably founded before the carving of the great sphinx, totally disappears. I take it that this leopard-couch which has fallen into the hands of M'Quown was used in their temple—probably about the time of Hatshepsu.'

Bode had no immediate opportunity to further pursue the matter, for on the following day he again left London in response to an urgent appeal from the Continent, where he was engaged in some matter connected with one of the principal museums. He was still absent at the end of August, and it was upon the last day of the month that I observed the following paragraph in a well-known scientific journal:

'The extensive collection of antiquities made by the late Mr Edward M'Quown, who died with lamentable suddenness on the 10th instant, will be sold by auction to-morrow by Messrs Northbie, at their house in Wellington Street. The sale will commence at 11 A.M., when a large attendance may be expected.'

I had known M'Quown slightly, and, as he was barely forty, was shocked to learn of his death. I saw, however, that I must act with promptitude, and without a moment's delay I sent off a wire to Bode:

'M'Quown dead. Auction to-morrow. Am I to secure the couch?'

The reply was brief but definite:

'At all costs.—BODE.'

Accordingly, at the hour of eleven on the following morning, I duly presented myself at the auction-rooms. I found the couch to be catalogued as Lot 13, and a mournful man who stood immediately beside me commented upon this circumstance.

'Between ourselves, I am inclined to think that the bidding for Lot 13 will be rather slow,' he confided. 'An unlucky number to an unlucky article.'

'I am afraid I don't quite follow,' said I.

'Well, does any one know where Professor Bayton got the thing? No, nobody does. Did he or did he not die three weeks after it came into his possession? He died. How long did M'Quown have the couch? *Four days!* Then *he* died. Now it's up as Lot 13; and if you're thinking of bidding, it's my personal opinion that you'll get it cheap.'

Whatever the reason, it was an undoubted fact that the bids for Lot 13 were few and cautious. It was ultimately knocked down to me at one-third of the price that poor M'Quown had paid for it. There were no other lots in which I was interested, so, having made arrangements for the conveying of the couch to my rooms, I wired Bode of my success, and spent the remainder of the day delving among Babylonian records in the British Museum. I returned home about half-past six, to find that the purchase had just arrived; and hastening through my dinner, I lit a cigarette and began a methodical examination of this latest acquisition.

I had hoped to find something that would serve to confirm Bode's theory; but beyond the fact that the work was of undoubted antiquity, I could establish nothing. The hieroglyphics might possibly contain a clue to the matter, but they were peculiarly complicated and difficult, and I felt too weary after my day's labours to attempt their immediate translation. Being seized with a desire to learn whether any degree of comfort could be enjoyed upon so strangely shaped a piece of furniture, I placed a large cushion in the hollow behind the leopard's head, and, lighting a fresh cigarette, stretched myself upon the couch.

The result was surprising. A more delicious sense of restfulness stole over me than I had ever before experienced. I had only to close my eyes to believe that I was suspended in space. The

aroma of the Turkish tobacco seemed to gain an added fragrance, and almost unconsciously I abandoned myself to the seductive languor that grew upon me. At what point I slept I am unable to state; but I recollect feeling the cigarette drop from my listless fingers. It must have been some little time after this that I began to wonder, or to dream that I wondered, why the odour was still in my nostrils. Without opening my eyes I made up my mind that the cigarette lay smouldering upon the floor just beneath the head of the couch. This reflection would seem to indicate that I was not really asleep; yet no other theory can cover the extraordinary facts of my subsequent experience.

Realising that this sweet, heavy perfume was dissimilar to anything I had ever known to arise from a cigarette, I reached down, still keeping my eyes drowsily closed, to find if it were really still burning. My hand failed to touch the floor!

As the mysterious nature of this circumstance came home to me, I sprang up into full wakefulness. Good heavens! what was this? I am not an exceptionally nervous man; but I can say with all truthfulness that my heart seemed to cease beating.

The familiar room was no longer there, nor did I recline upon a couch. I was upon a long, narrow balcony, having a low parapet, with pillars at frequent intervals supporting the roof. It was constructed entirely of marble and overhung a garden. Brilliant moonlight threw into bold relief arbours of strange design and vines trained over artistic trellis-work. Beds of many-hued flowers, tastefully blended and arranged in groups intersected by paths, extended to the bank of a river. In the distance, apparently rising out of the water, could be seen a huge white temple, significant and majestic even beneath the great vault of the gleaming heavens. The real origin of the heavy aroma now became evident. It was wafted from the flowers but six feet below me.

I will not attempt to give an analysis of my feelings, save to state that I seemed to be a bodiless entity, enjoying all my faculties but two—the sense of touch and of hearing. Try how I would, I could hear no sound, nor was I conscious of being in contact with anything palpable; in short, I was myself impalpable! I seemed to feel my heart throbbing, yet realised in some strange way that, being but an immaterial mind, I could have no heart.

At this moment I discerned a boat upon the water, and, becoming conscious of an ability to change my location by merely willing it, passed without perceptible effort from the marble balcony to the brink of the river.

A man and a woman were in the boat, which was rowed from the bow in the manner of a gondola by a gigantic Nubian. The woman was robed in white, and as she lay, with her head upon the man's shoulder, and the moonlight fell upon her upturned face, I saw her to be as beautiful as a nymph of classic lore. A strange resentment, such as Zeus might have experienced toward a mortal lover of Io or Danaë, possessed me; and when a shaft gleamed through the air and the man in the boat sprang up, to fall dead into the river, an incredible satisfaction took the place of my former resentment.

An eight-oared galley shot out from the dense shadows of a huge bed of rushes, and then ensued a scene such as should have moved the heart of a stone; yet I observed it to its close without being conscious of any emotion whatever.

The white-clad form of the girl rose up in the boat, and in another instant would have plunged into the river beside the dead man; but the huge Nubian seized her in one muscular arm and restrained her. A moment afterwards the galley came alongside, and she apparently lost consciousness as her slim body was roughly hauled on board. I saw her lying upon the deck as still and white as though death had claimed her too. I have no recollection of being actually on board the galley, but I remember vividly the silent journey across the calm bosom of the river, and can recollect that there seemed to be something familiar in it all. I even noticed the infinitely cooler air out there upon the water, and the scene of the arrival at the great temple shall be with me to my dying day.

At the foot of a flight of marble steps the galley was moored, and I saw a number of men clad in long black robes descending slowly. Two of them carried a kind of bier, and as they reached the edge of the water the death-like form was lifted from the galley's deck and placed upon it. Solemnly raising their beautiful burden, they mounted again to the top, and, passing between two tall towers, advanced along an avenue lined upon either side by the figures of sphinxes. I witnessed all this quite clearly without knowing by what means I was enabled to follow; and when the bearers reached the propylæum of the temple and passed within I still accompanied them.

Across an area surrounded by high walls they proceeded, and through a doorway that was either gold or gold-plated, into a vast hall, dimly illuminated, and seeming to be a very forest of pillars. At this juncture I experienced an unaccountable difficulty in following, and, though I made a great effort, soon lost myself amid the innumerable pillars. Like some wandering spirit, I drifted about in that wondrous hall of shadows for what seemed like several hours. I had now apparently lost the power to control my own movements, and how I came to find myself where I ultimately did I do not know.

Since, after all, the whole was nothing but a vivid dream, I will not endeavour to explain. Suffice that I was in a small, rectangular apartment, fitfully lighted by a fire in a tall tripod. A man in a long robe of dull-red was standing by a niche in the wall, and before him, ranged on narrow shelves, were rows of phials, apparently of blue glass. In the centre of the place stood an object that I had good cause to remember. It was the leopard-couch! Upon it was stretched the motionless form of the beautiful girl I had seen on the river. Her dark

eyes were open now, and fixed in a changeless stare upon a brass vessel suspended above the fire. Her head rested, not upon a cushion, but upon a great crystal sphere which occupied the hollow in the couch.

The man took from the niche in the wall a long metal rod, and, dipping it in the pendent vessel, withdrew it again with what looked like a globule of liquid flame adhering to the end. Advancing to the couch, he thrust the rod into the open jaws of the leopard, and almost immediately the crystal globe beneath appeared to be illuminated by an internal light. I became conscious of a sensation as though an irresistible power were carrying me to destruction; the scene grew dim, and a great despair possessed me. Then I felt myself to be borne away into darkness as by a mighty wind, and a voice was in my ears. Two conflicting wills seemed to be striving for the mastery of my derelict spirit. I struggled madly against some subtle force that sought to overpower me, and awoke—to find Dr Maurice Bode supporting my head whilst he held a glass to my lips.

'Thank Heaven!' he exclaimed. 'You were beginning to frighten me.'

I felt strangely dazed, and stared at him so blankly that he smiled. 'I came away as soon after receiving your first message as possible,' he explained; 'and learning at Northbie's that the couch had been sent on to you, I called here immediately, to find you sound asleep upon the identical article. Without disturbing you, I took the liberty to examine it; and I am pleased to say that I have made two highly interesting discoveries. A couple of minutes ago you became so deadly pale that I grew alarmed. Were you dreaming?'

I rose to my feet as unsteadily as though leaving a bed of long illness. 'Before I answer your question, what have you discovered?' I asked, sinking into a comfortable arm-chair.

'In the first place, I have partially translated the hieroglyphics, and, in the second place, I have removed the top of the leopard's head.'

'How could you possibly translate the hieroglyphics in so short a time?' was my incredulous inquiry.

'Well, you have slept for over four hours, and I have, moreover, been engaged upon the inscriptions of this particular period for nearly a year now.'

'You don't mean to state that this couch dates back to the time of Hatshepsu?'

'There can be very little doubt of it. The inscription contains as romantic a love-story as the heart of modern novelist could desire.'

'Wait a moment, Bode!' I cried. 'Does it correspond to the following?' And I related the incidents of my extraordinary dream as I have already set them forth.

He remained silent for a moment at the end of my narrative, his eyes dreamily closed. Then, rising to his feet, he bent over the head of the couch. 'Yes,' he said slowly, 'there is a narrow channel from the mouth of the leopard that presumably communicates with the hollow at the base.'

He paused, then added irrelevantly: 'The rock temple at Deir-el-Bahari.'

'Right, Bode!' I cried, in sudden excitement. 'It *was* the temple at Deir-el-Bahari! I understand now why the scene seemed vaguely familiar. But how do you account for the leopard-priesthood being established there?'

'A secret cult, consisting of priests ostensibly following other creeds. You have undoubtedly witnessed the punishment of Neothys, a beautiful priestess of the mystic goddess, who is never named in the inscriptions, but of whom the white leopard is emblematic. This Neothys had a lover, one Neremid, a captain of the warriors, and their trysting-place was in the very shadows of Hatshepsu's temple at Deir-el-Bahari. He used to await her coming in a boat upon the river. But one night she was followed. Neremid died by the hand of Thi, chief of the temple-guard, and Neothys was dealt with by the high-priest.'

'What was the meaning of the extraordinary experiment I witnessed in my dream?'

'The man in the red robe was undoubtedly Karpusa, whom I believe to have been the last high-priest of the cult. I have previously encountered this singular personality in the course of my investigations; and his knowledge of the "unknown" appears to have exceeded the credible. According to the inscription upon the couch, Karpusa wreaked vengeance upon Neothys by denying her immortality for all ages.'

'I fail to follow.'

Maurice Bode manipulated the head of the leopard in some way so that the top came off in his hand. Inserting a finger and thumb into the aperture, he drew forth a small ball of sparkling crystal. 'Examine that,' he said, handing it to me.

It was no larger than a full-sized walnut, but had all the brilliancy of a precious gem. I was gazing into its changeful depths when an idea occurred to me—an idea that caused me to return the thing with a shudder of revulsion.

'You do not, surely, suggest'—— I began.

'I suggest nothing,' said Bode; 'but by way of an experiment I propose acting thus.'

Raising the crystal above his head, he dashed it with all his force on to the marble hearth. I had just time to observe that it was shattered, when the electric light went out.

Dense fumes seemed to fill the room, and there was a buzzing in my ears. Then suddenly I caught my breath and listened; for it appeared to me that I had detected the sound of a low, clear voice—singing. Before I could determine whether it were imaginary or otherwise, the sound died away and the electric lamps became relighted.

There was a faint blue vapour in the air. Bode was standing on the other side of the room, and his tense attitude betrayed him.

'You heard it?' I inquired.

'I heard *something*,' he replied. 'The extinction of the electric light was highly instructive.' Seeing me about to speak again, 'I have no theory,' he said. 'The only one that can cover all the facts is too incredible to be entertained.'

'I wanted to ask you what you make of the sudden death of Professor Bayton and M'Quown.'

'Again I have no theory. We should, however, remember that the incidents you mention, though singular, do not justify us—with our present inadequate knowledge of the circumstances under which they occurred—in placing them outside the province of coincidence. But I may mention that when I endeavoured to arouse you this evening, I at first failed to do so. It was not until I treated you as a hypnotised subject, and employed the usual means of restoring consciousness after hypnosis, that you revived.'

THE PETRIFIED FOREST OF ARIZONA.

WHAT will undoubtedly be the most curious national park in existence is located in the western part of the United States, in the state of Arizona. It is popularly known as the petrified forest of Arizona, and presents so many remarkable geological features that the American Government is considering the question of reserving it from depredation by the enactment of suitable laws preserving it as Yellowstone and other national parks in the western portion of America are preserved.

In other parts of the world there may be found occasional petrifactions of remarkable character; but here are the remains of a great forest, much more ancient than the petrified forests of the Yellowstone National Park, of certain parts of Wyoming, and of the Calistoga deposits of California. The latter are of Tertiary age; the Arizona forest belongs far back in Mesozoic time, probably to the Triassic formation. The difference in their antiquity is therefore many millions of years.

With the exception of a single cotton-wood trunk, the trees are of an extinct coniferous species. They lie prone upon the ground as they drifted in on a prehistoric sea. Water-logged and heavy, they sank to the bottom, and were then covered with sand and changed into chalcedony. The sand hardened and cemented into stone, and finally rose above the waters. This stone forest lay hidden from view for countless ages. By slow disintegration the embedding rock all washed away, and the petrified trees, being much harder and more durable, were left lying scattered in profusion on the surface of the earth, where they had so long lain buried.

The forest is situated in a valley measuring scarcely half a mile at its widest part, and the sloping sides of which are in places about fifty feet high. Along the slopes no vegetation is to be seen, wood being very scarce. The soil is composed mostly of clay and sand, and the petrifactions, broken into millions of pieces, lie scattered over the slopes. Some of the large fossil trees are well preserved, though the action of heat and cold has broken most of them in sections from two to twenty feet long. The exposed parts vary from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet in length, and from two to four and a half feet in diameter, the centres often containing beautiful crystals. In this forest are ruins of several ancient Indian villages. These are small, in some cases merely a few houses; but what gives them a peculiar interest is that they were built of logs of beautiful fossil-wood. The prehistoric builders selected cylinders of a uniform size seemingly determined by the carrying strength of a man; and it is probable that never had more beautiful stones been used for the construction of habitations than the trunks of these trees, which flourished ages before man appeared on the earth.

This wood-agate also furnished material for stone hammers, arrow-heads, and knives, which are often found in ruins miles from the forest. There is no other petrified forest in the world in which the wood assumes so many varied and interesting forms and colours, and it is these that present the chief attraction to the general public. The state of mineralisation in which most of this wood exists almost places it among the gems and precious stones. Not only are chalcedony, opals, and agates found, but many trees approach the condition of jasper and onyx.

One of the most celebrated objects in this entire region is the natural bridge, consisting of a great petrified trunk lying across a cañon and forming a natural foot-bridge on which men may easily cross. This occurs on the north-east side of the forest, and the bed in which it lies is the coarse sandstone which holds all the petrified wood. The natural bridge therefore possesses the added interest of being in place, which can be said of very few of the other petrified logs of this region.

It is observed in the south-western exposure, and at other points, that all the petrified logs and blocks lying in the sandstone or only washed out of it are surrounded by a coating of the sandstone firmly cemented to the exterior. The absence of this coating from most of those in the principal forests is due to their long exposure to climatic influences, which ultimately disintegrate and detach the sandrock adhering to them and strip them clean to the body of the trunks themselves. That this process requires ages of time is proved by the fact that the natural bridge is still coated over a large part of the surface with the remains of the cemented sand-

rock in which it was once completely embedded. This is true chiefly of the lower portion; farther up the trunk it has nearly all disappeared. The trunk is in an excellent state of preservation, and is complete to the base, where it is abruptly enlarged and shows the manner in which the roots were attached. This portion still lies partially buried in the sandstone, which is the same in character as that which adheres to the lower twenty feet. The cañon or gulch has a due north direction and is very precipitous, beginning only two hundred yards above the bridge and rapidly broadening in its descent. At the point where the bridge crosses it is about thirty feet wide; but the trunk lies diagonally across, and measures forty-four feet between the points at which it rests on the sides of the cañon. The angle is nearly forty-five degrees, and the tree lies with its roots to the south-east and its top to the north-west. The cañon is here about twenty feet deep, and from its bottom and slopes several small trees are growing, some of which rise considerably above the bridge. The trees are mostly cedar, but there is one cotton-wood. The root is quite near the brink of the cañon, but rests on a solid ledge for a distance of four feet, so that there is no probability that in this dry region it will be endangered by further erosion.

The total length exposed is one hundred and eleven feet, so that more than sixty feet of the upper part lie out on the left bank of the cañon. At about the middle of the cañon, and above where the coating of sandstone still adheres, it measures ten feet in circumference, giving a diameter of over three feet. At the base it is now four feet in diameter; but the thickness of the incrustation is not known. At the extreme summit the diameter is reduced to eighteen inches. An examination of the relations of the natural bridge to the gulch which it spans shows clearly that the trunk was primarily entombed in the sandstone bed covering this entire region, and that with the progress of erosion, which ultimately carried away the entire plain to the north, as well as in other directions, leaving this small *mesa*, it was at last exposed and lay for a great period near the rim of the escarpment.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ELECTRICAL PROGRESS.

IN his presidential address to the Institution of Electrical Engineers, Mr R. Kaye Gray gave a very interesting résumé of electrical progress generally. He considered that existing legislation had hampered electrical enterprise, and made some suggestions for the removal of defects in the present laws. But in spite of such impediments substantial progress had been made in the utilisation of the electric current both for light and power. Not including traction-motors, there were in use up to March last lamps and motors equivalent to over fourteen million eight-candle-power lamps which drew their current from the public mains. The Metropolis accounted for five million, and about three hundred towns shared in the electrical supply. A new feature was the use of large turbo-generators of the Parson's type, and gas-engines of great power were also coming into use. One which would be exhibited at the coming St Louis Exhibition would be of three thousand horse-power, with two cylinders each of fifty-one inches diameter, which would run at eighty-five revolutions per minute. Referring to secondary batteries, he said that the Edison iron-nickel cell appeared to be on the verge of adoption upon a commercial scale. There seemed to be little doubt that the batteries fulfilled the expectations formed of them, and that their introduction would give an immense impetus to the electric automobile industry, and even to accumulator traction in general.

SLEEPING SICKNESS.

In our November issue we alluded to the discovery that the sleeping sickness of tropical climes had been traced to an organism transmitted by the bite of the tsetse fly, giving the credit of the discovery to Dr Castellani, as general report had asserted. Professor E. Ray Lankester, in a letter to the *Times*, makes an important correction. It seems that Dr Castellani reported that he had discovered a bacterium (*streptococcus*) which he definitely announced to be the cause of the disease. He also found in the blood and spinal fluids of infected persons a parasite (*trypanosoma*) which he regarded as an accidental concomitant of the disease, and as having no causal relationship to it. The importance of the *trypanosoma* was first apprehended by Colonel Bruce, who organised a thorough and successful search for it in all cases of sleeping sickness, and made direct experiments by inoculation. Dr Castellani had nothing to do with these later investigations, although credit is due to him for the discovery of the parasite in certain cases. It may be mentioned that Colonel Bruce was the discoverer of the blood-parasite in the nagana or tsetse-fly disease which has wrought such havoc among animals in South Africa.

THE VAPOUR BATH.

The hot air or Turkish bath, as it is commonly called, although a comparatively new thing in this country—the first was established in London only about forty years ago—was well known to the Greeks and Romans. Remains of such baths, often

of a sumptuous description and fitted with elaborate furnaces and conduits for the passage of hot air, have been found at Pompeii and elsewhere. The Turkish bath in this country is well patronised, and the best known of them have a right to call themselves old established. A vapour bath cleanses the pores of the skin in the same manner as violent exercise—that is, by profuse perspiration; and there is a feeling of lightness and exhilaration after such a bath which is in some measure evidence of its healthfulness. Various means have been suggested to secure the benefits of a Turkish bath in the ordinary dwelling-house by means of portable apparatus, and what is called the Century Folding Cabinet seems to fulfil the requirements in a very satisfactory manner. The appliance takes up less room than an ordinary screen, it is made of galvanised steel covered with rubber-cloth, and it is heated inside or from the outside with a special form of spirit-lamp. The bath can be charged with various medicaments, which are held to be beneficial in different forms of disease. As a matter of general interest we may mention that in a book dated 1653 we have found a curious old woodcut of an appliance on the same principle, which is described as a method of 'bathing by distillation.'

HIGH-SPEED TOOLS.

In October last a paper was read at the Manchester Technical School upon 'Important Tests with High-Speed Tools,' in which the results of experiments extending over a period of nine months, under a committee of experts, were described. The tools were tried in lathes and drills on soft and hard cast-iron and steel at various speeds, and some of the results, especially those associated with the 'A.W.' high-speed tool-steel (made by the well-known firm of Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth, and Company) were quite remarkable. With this steel, armour-plate bolts four inches to six inches in diameter are cut at a speed of one hundred and thirty-five feet per minute, and the tool can be kept at this work for seven hours at a time without being touched or ground in any way. It is also stated that a twist-drill made of this same 'A.W.' steel, having a diameter of three-quarters of an inch, and running at the rate of five hundred and thirty-five revolutions per minute, will drill a hole through four inches of cast-iron in eighteen seconds, and that after drilling a number of such holes the drill showed no perceptible sign of wear. The introduction of high-speed tool-steel lathes and drills is likely to bring about a revolution in workshop practice of the most far-reaching and beneficial character.

THE FUTURE OF WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

If any man had reason to ask to be saved from his friends, the discoverer of wireless telegraphy is he. As a writer in *Cassier's Magazine* points out, it is now three years since we were promised in no qualified terms transatlantic wireless telegraphy, and these promises have again and again been renewed. Although it has been proved that signals can be sent over enormous distances by means of electrical waves, the establishment of a regular telegraphic service across more than two thousand miles of ocean is a very different matter, and it is reasonable to suppose that the hopes which have been held out of the early fulfilment of the promise have been due to the push of the company promoter rather than to Mr Marconi. But we have no wish at all to detract from that gentleman's splendid achievement, which seems to be more valuable as time progresses. For communication between ships at sea which are passing at far too great a distance to be within sight of one another, the system has already proved to be of immense service. In case of war, the power which it affords to a commander of speaking to each ship in his fleet, although it may not be within ordinary signalling distance, is one pregnant with unseen possibilities. It is probably as a means of communication at sea and between ships and shore that the Marconi system will ultimately find its chief employment. At any rate, there is no present prospect of its superseding the ordinary electric telegraph or the ocean cable.

THE MISCHIEVOUS SPARROW.

The good people who introduced the rabbit into Australia and the British sparrow into the American continent have a great deal to answer for. The little bird has proved to be almost as destructive in the one country as bunny has in the other. The sparrow has not been so much of a scourge because of his own depredations as because he has driven away such numbers of insectivorous birds which formed a natural protection to vegetation. But the fate of the aggressive sparrow is now sealed. What man failed to do is being done by a natural process, and the extermination of the alien is being vigorously prosecuted. A species of mosquito is spreading a kind of fatal malaria among the large flocks of sparrows which are found both in the United States and Canada; and with the thinning of these flocks the insectivorous birds are returning. At the same time several species of hawks and owls are increasing, and are waging fierce war upon the sparrows. Among these the little screech-owl in America and the Acadian owl in Canada take a foremost place. Year after year British farmers have complained of the destruction wrought by sparrows, and they will be interested in knowing that across the Atlantic it is being weeded out by natural processes.

FLANNELETTE.

All newspaper readers who care to peruse the gruesome column headed 'Inquests' must have noticed how often of late years the coroners have spoken in no measured terms of the dangers of employing flannelette, because of its great inflammability, for the clothing of young children; and a

coroner when he speaks thus can prove his point by a most melancholy illustration. But flannelette is much cheaper than the woollen material which it imitates, and so the holocaust goes on without let or hindrance. But this need be the case no longer, for Dr W. H. Perkin, junior, of Owen's College, Manchester, has found out an effective means of making flannelette uninflammable, a quality which it will retain after repeated washings. We have hung a piece of the untreated material by the side of that produced by the new process, which is known in the trade as 'Non Flam;' and while we had no difficulty in causing the one to flame up instantly on the application of a match, the new material refused even to smoulder. The difference in the price of the two fabrics is so small as to be inappreciable, and we have thus every hope that 'Non Flam' will lead to the preservation of infant life and the prevention of much innocent suffering.

THE DECIMAL SYSTEM.

The decimal or metric system of weights and measures first introduced in France a century ago, and since made compulsory in all business transactions, was found so convenient and simple that it was adopted by the greater part of Europe. But Great Britain unfortunately did not follow suit, but retained her old cumbrous methods, which have extraordinary variations in different parts of the country. For a long time past the metric system has been voluntarily adopted by our scientific men, and even popular works on scientific subjects are falling into line. But traders still stick to pounds, ounces, yards, and feet; and the result is that a confusion arises with regard to catalogues of goods circulating in foreign countries where the metric system is in vogue which is almost as detrimental to our interests as one-sided free trade is said to be. A Bill is to be introduced early next session in the House of Lords for the compulsory adoption of the metric weights and measures throughout the United Kingdom, and so many high authorities are in favour of it that it is hoped it will be passed by both Houses. The first reading will be moved by Lord Belhaven and seconded by Lord Kelvin.

RUBBER AT LAGOS.

There is such a constant demand for india-rubber, owing chiefly to its use in electrical insulation and for the manufacture of tires, that anything concerning it is of interest to many. At a recent meeting of the African Trade Section of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, the subject of rubber production in our little colony of Lagos, on the West Coast of Africa, came under discussion. A letter from an authority in the colony stated that the preparation of rubber there had been much neglected, and he thought that the time had come for the Government to interfere and to adopt measures for the improvement of the industry. The rubber is of good quality; but its method of preparation greatly reduces its value. The natives should be taught better methods, as they have been in French colonies. In French Guinea a similar kind of rubber to that prepared in Lagos was at one time produced; but the natives were taught a better way, with the result that the price of the article was increased by one-half. The exportation of rubber, except in the improved form, was prohibited by the French Government. Small quantities of the improved rubber have been prepared at Lagos which brought three shillings and twopence per pound against the native 'Lagos lump,' which sold at one shilling and tenpence. The Chamber of Commerce has decided to offer prizes for rubber production, and the Governor of Lagos, Sir William Macgregor, has been advised of the fact.

A NEW TEA.

When tea was first brought to Britain and sold for sixty shillings per pound, just about the year of the Great Fire of London, no one dreamed that it would one day form the principal beverage of a large number of the people. There is nothing more refreshing than a cup of good tea; but unfortunately many persons are not able to indulge in it owing to the manner in which it assails their digestive organs. The mischief is attributed to the tannin which resides in the seductive leaf, and a method which will rob it of this harmful constituent, without depriving the tea of its exhilarating properties, is to be valued. The addition of the substance known as 'plasmon' is said, on the high authority of the *Lancet*, to reduce the tannin in tea by 50 per cent., as shown by their analysis; and they add that 'it is probable that even the tannin remaining in solution is physiologically inert and without action upon the digestive processes.' Plasmon gives tea a slightly opalescent appearance, which is no detriment to a beverage usually taken with the addition of milk. Plasmon is, indeed, itself derived from milk, and its admixture with the tea by no means takes away from 'the cup which cheers' its stimulating properties.

FINGER-PRINTS.

Sensation-lovers have always liked the detective type of story, and Sherlock Holmes and his adventures must have had millions of readers. But occasionally in the annals of the police court we come upon a story of detective sagacity which equals anything that the novelist has invented and has the additional advantage of being true. Such a case occurred only the other day. It was a jewel-burglary at some auction-rooms in the west end of London, where the valuables were gathered previous to a contemplated sale. The thieves got off with all the valuable booty. Then the police came upon the scene, and a detective, upon making a close examination of the premises, found the impression of a dirty finger upon a window-pane. The mark was photographed and compared with certain prints of a similar kind which are stored at the police headquarters. They are the natural signatures of various

convicted felons, and one of them agreed in every detail with the mark left by the burglar at the auction-rooms. The discovery led to certain arrests, and there is every reason to suppose that the crime will be brought home to the real culprits. It is a curious fact that no two fingers have ever been found to agree in their surface lines.

PLATINUM.

The metal platinum, which a few years ago was not very extensively used, and could be purchased for about sixteen shillings an ounce, is now nearly the price of pure gold. The reason for this change is the increased demand and the limited supply. Platinum is now largely employed by photographers for the production of permanent pictures; but the chief users are the electricians. Each little glass bulb that forms the familiar glow-lamp has two tiny wires attached to it, which form the necessary connections between the carbon filaments within and the 'leads' without; and platinum was used for this purpose because it was the only metal known that would expand by heat at the same rate as glass, while at the same time it adhered to the glass as if cemented to it and made an air-proof joint. A French company has now, it is said, discovered a method of using for these lamps a metallic connection other than platinum, and a means of cementing the wires in place, which is effectual and lasting.

TELEGRAPHING EXTRAORDINARY.

Startling as are the developments we are promised *when* wireless telegraphy shall have been perfected, they are as nothing compared with the achievements of cable telegraphy to-day. The laying of the Pacific cable, and consequent inauguration of the 'all-red' route, has put the Eastern Telegraph Company on its mettle; and we have recently had the agreeable sensation of cable 'racing' in connection with the Australian campaign of the Marylebone Cricket Club. The quickest times by the Pacific, or all-British, route have been seventeen and fifteen minutes respectively, which is not bad for thirteen thousand miles of cable and land-line. But the Eastern Company have beaten this by accomplishing the feat in twelve minutes, which, however, is not a record, as they transmitted the result of the first America cup-race last year from England to Adelaide in the incredible time of *two minutes*, and the result of the second race in four minutes. This was probably accomplished by means of relays or 'current refreshers' at the intermediate stations; because there are usually five or six retransmissions between England and Australia, and sometimes even more when the lines are interrupted and alternative routes have to be used. In the ordinary way, the Eastern Company would send its messages from Sydney or Adelaide to Perth or Port Darwin, thence to the Cocos Islands, and thence to Durban, Capetown, and St Helena, the final cable transmission being to Porthcurnow in Cornwall, where all the Eastern cables converge. But it has two other strings to its bow: one by way of Mauritius and Aden, and the other by way of Port Darwin, the British Indies, and Straits Settlements; so that there is little fear of our ever being entirely cut off from our Australian colonies. The Pacific, or 'all-red,' route runs from Australia through the Australasian Islands to Vancouver, thence across the North American continent, and thence to Great Britain over one or other of the Anglo-American cables, its longest stretch of cable being about three thousand miles. Of course the working speed of a cable and the speed at which messages usually come through are quite different things, the governing factor being the number of messages waiting transmission. It may safely be assumed, therefore, that the extraordinary results attained on the occasions referred to were only rendered possible by a clearing of the lines just as the lines are cleared for the passage of a Royal train. But they are hardly the less remarkable on that account.

THE GLOAMING HOUR.

I LOVE to sit in the gloaming,
Just before the lamp is lit,
And thro' the open lattice
Watch the dusky night-bats flit;
Out amid the length'ning shadows,
The lilies ghost-like gleam,
And the world of summer roses
Lies wrapt in one sweet dream.

O, the gloaming hath a glamour,
A mystic spell for me!
It holds in it dead voices,
As a shell doth hold the sea!
And dear dead faces once again
Shine softly thro' the gloom,
And the dewy dusk is flooded
With faint old-world perfume.

The gloaming hour, the gloaming hour
Brings back again to me
The loved and lost that long ago
Crossed o'er the tideless sea;
And all my weariness and pain
Like shadows flee away,
As I sit alone with Memory
At the closing of the day.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SIXTH SERIES.

'LUCK.'

By Louis Becke.

CHAPTER I.

A 'HARD' man was Captain William Rodway, of Sydney, New South Wales, and he prided himself upon the fact. From the time he was twenty years of age he had devoted himself to making and saving money, and now at sixty he was worth a quarter of a million.

He began life as cabin-boy on a north-country collier-tug; was starved, kicked, and all but worked to death; and when he came to command a ship of his own his north-country training stood him in good stead: starving, kicking, and working his crew to death came as naturally to him as breathing. He spared no one, nor did he spare himself.

From the very first everything went well with him. He saved enough money by pinching and grinding his crew—and himself—to enable him to buy the vessel to which he had been appointed. Then he bought others, established what was known as Rodway's Line, gave up going to sea himself, rented an office in a mean street, where he slept and cooked his meals, and worked harder than ever at making money, oblivious of the sneers of those who railed at his parsimony. He was content.

One Monday morning at nine o'clock he took his seat as usual in his office, and began to open his pile of letters, his square-set, hard face, with its cold gray eyes, looking harder than ever, for he had been annoyed by the old charwoman who cleaned his squalid place asking him for more wages.

He was half-way through his correspondence when a knock sounded.

'Come in,' he said gruffly.

The door opened, and a handsome, well-built young man of about thirty years of age entered.

'Good-morning, Captain Rodway.'

''Morning, Lester. What do you want? Why are you not at sea?' and he bent his keen eyes upon his visitor.

'I 'm waiting for the water-boat; but otherwise I 'm ready to sail.'

'Well, what is it, then?'

'I want to know if it is a fact that you will not employ married men as captains?'

'It is.'

'Will you make no exception in my favour?'

'No.'

'I have been five years in your employ as mate and master of the *Harvest Home*, and I am about to marry.'

'Do as you please; but the day you marry you leave my service.'

The young man's face flushed. 'Then you can give me my money, and I 'll leave it to-day.'

'Very well. Sit down,' replied the old man, reaching for his wages-book.

'There are sixty pounds due to you,' he said. 'Go on board and wait for me. I 'll be there at twelve o'clock with the new man, and we 'll go through the stores and spare gear together. If everything is right I 'll pay your sixty pounds; if not I 'll deduct for whatever is short. Good-morning.'

At two o'clock in the afternoon Captain Tom Lester landed at Circular Quay with his effects, and sixty sovereigns in his pocket.

Leaving his baggage at an hotel, he took a cab, drove to a quiet little street in the suburb of Darling Point, and stopped at a quaint, old-fashioned cottage surrounded by a garden.

The door was opened by a tall, handsome girl of about twenty-two.

'Tom!'

'Lucy!' he replied, mimicking her surprised tone. Then he became grave, and leading her to a seat, sat beside her, and took her hand.

'Lucy, I have bad news. Rodway dismissed me this morning, and I have left the ship.'

The girl's eyes filled. 'Never mind, Tom. You will get another.'

'Ah! perhaps I might have to wait a long time. I have another plan. Where is Mrs Warren? I must tell her that our marriage must be put off.'

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'Why should it, Tom? I don't want it to be put off. And neither does she.'

'But I have no home for you.'

'We can live here until we have one of our own. Mother will be only too happy.'

'Sure?'

'Absolutely, or I would not say it.'

'Will you marry me this day week?'

'Yes, dear—to-day if you wish. We have waited two years.'

'You're a brave little woman, Lucy,' and he kissed her. 'Now, here is my plan. I've saved one thousand pounds. I shall buy the *Dolphin* steam-tug—I can get her on easy terms of payment—fill her with coal and stores, and go to Kent's Group in Bass Strait, and try and refloat the *Braybrook Castle*. I saw the agents and the insurance people this morning, immediately after I left old Rodway. If I float her, it will mean a lot of money for me. If I fail, I shall at least make enough to pay me well by breaking her up. The insurance people know me, and said very nice things to me.'

'Will you take me, Tom?'

'Don't tempt me, Lucy. It will be a rough life, living on an almost barren rocky island, inhabited only by black snakes, albatrosses, gulls, and seals.'

'Tom, you *must*. Come, let us tell mother.'

Three days later they were married, and at six o'clock in the evening the newly made bride was standing beside her husband on the bridge of the *Dolphin*, which was steaming full speed towards Sydney Heads, loaded down almost to the waterways with coals and stores for four months.

CHAPTER II.

TWO months had passed, and the sturdy *Dolphin* was lying snugly at anchor in a small, well-sheltered cove on one of the Kent's Group of islands. Less than a hundred yards away was one of the rudest attempts at a house ever seen—that is, externally—for it was built with wreckage from many ships, and was roofed with tarpaulins and coarse 'albatross' grass. Seated on a stool outside the building was Mrs Lester, engaged in feeding a number of noisy fowls with broken-up biscuit, but looking every now and then towards the *Braybrook Castle*, which lay on the rocks a mile away, with only her lower-masts standing. It was nearing the time when her husband and his men would be returning from their usual day's arduous toil. She rose, shook the biscuit-crumbs from her apron, and, walking down to the *Dolphin*, anchored just in front of the house, called:

'Manuel!'

A black, woolly head appeared above the companion-way, and Manuel, the cook of the wrecking-party, came on deck, jumped into the dingy alongside, and sculled ashore.

'Manuel, you know that all the men are having supper in the house to-night?' she said as the man—a good-natured Galveston negro—stepped on shore.

'Yes, ma'am.'

'Well, I've done all *my* share of the cooking: I've made two batches of bread and the biggest seapie you ever saw in your life, but I want two buckets of water from the spring.'

'All right, ma'am. I'll tote 'em up fo' yo' right away.'

'Please do. And I'll go with you. Captain Lester and the others won't be here for half-an-hour yet, and I want to show you some curious-looking stuff I saw on the beach this morning. It looks like dirty soap mixed with black shells, like fowls' beaks.'

The negro's face displayed a sudden interest. 'Mixed with shells, yo' say, ma'am? Did yo' touch it?'

'No; it looks too unpleasant.'

The negro picked up the buckets, and, followed by Mrs Lester, set out along a path which led to a rocky pool of some dimensions filled with rain-water.

'Leave the buckets till we come back, Manuel. We have not far to go.'

She led the way to the beach, and then, turning to the left, walked along the hard, white sand till they came to a bar of low rocks covered with sea-moss and lichen. Lying against the seaward face of the rock was a pile of driftweed, kelp, crayfish-shells, &c., and half-buried in débris was the object that had aroused her curiosity.

'There it is, Manuel,' she said, pointing to an irregularly shaped mass of a mottled gray, yellow, and brown substance, looking like soap mixed with cinders and ashes.

The negro whipped out his sheath-knife, plunged it into the mass, then withdrew it, pressed the flat of the blade to his nostrils, and then uttered a yell of delight, clapped his hands, took off his cap and tossed it in the air, and rolled his eyes in such an extraordinary manner that Mrs Lester thought he had become suddenly insane.

'Yo' am rich woman now, ma'am,' he said in his thick, fruity voice. 'Dat am ambergris. I know it well 'nuff. I was cook on a whaleship fo' five years, and have handled little bits of ambergris two or three times, but no one in de world, I believe, ever see such a lump like dis.'

'Is it worth anything, then?'

'Worth anything, ma'am? It am worth twenty-two shillin's de ounce!'

He knelt down and began clearing away the weed till the whole mass was exposed, placed his arms around it, and partly lifted it.

'Dere is more 'n a hundredweight,' he chuckled as he looked up at Mrs Lester, who was now also feeling excited. 'Look at dis now.'

He cut out a slice of the curious-looking oleaginous stuff, struck a match, and applied the light.

A pale-yellow flame was the result, and with it there came a strong but pleasant smell.

Mrs Lester had never heard of ambergris to her recollection; but Manuel now enlightened her as to its uses, the principal being as a developer of the strength of all other perfumes.

Such a treasure could not be left where it was, exposed to the risk of being carried away by the tide; so the negro at once went to work with his knife, cutting it into three pieces, each of which he carried to the house and put into an empty barrel. Then he returned and carefully searched for and picked up the minutest scraps that had broken off whilst he was cutting the 'find' through.

Just at sunset Lester and his gang of burly helpers returned tired and hungry, but highly elated, for they had succeeded in getting out an unusual amount of valuable cargo.

'We've had great luck to-day, Lucy,' cried Lester as he strode over the coarse grass in his high sea-boots; 'and, all going well, we shall make the first attempt to pull the ship off the day after to-morrow.'

'And I have had luck too,' said his wife, her fair, sweet face, now bronzed by the sun, glowing as she spoke. 'But come inside first, and then I'll tell you.'

The interior of the dwelling consisted of two rooms only—a small bedroom and a large living-room, which was also used as a kitchen. It was quite comfortably furnished with handsome chairs, lounges, chests of drawers, and other articles taken from the cabin of the stranded ship. The centre of the room was occupied by a large deal table made by one of the men, and a huge fire of drift-timber blazed merrily at one end. Manuel was laying the table, his black face beaming with suppressed excitement, and the rough, sea-booted wreckers entered one by one and sat down. Mrs Lester bade them smoke if they wanted to.

'Well, boys,' said their leader to the wrecking-party—of whom there were thirty—'we all deserve a drink before supper. Help yourselves to whatever you like,' and he pointed to a small side-table covered with bottles of spirits and glasses. Then Lucy, after they had all satisfied themselves, walked over to the cask containing her 'find,' and, standing beside it, asked if they would all come and look at the contents and see if they knew what it was. Lester, thinking she had succeeded in catching a young seal, looked on with an amused smile.

One by one the men came and looked inside the cask, felt the greasy mass with their horny fingers, and each shook his head until the tenth man, who, the moment he saw it, gave a shout:

'Why, I 'm blest if it ain't ambow-grease!'

Lester started: 'Ambergris! Nonsense;' and then he too uttered a cry of astonishment as a second man—an old whaler—darted in front of him, and, pinching off a piece of the 'find,' smelled it.

'Hamble-grist it is, sir,' he cried, 'and the cask is nigh on choke-full of it.'

'Turn it out on the floor,' said Lester, who knew the enormous value of ambergris, 'and let us get a good look at it.—Light all the lamps, Lucy.'

The lamps were lit, and then Manuel repeated his experiment by burning a piece amid breathless excitement. No further doubt could exist; and then Manuel, taking a spring balance (weighing up to fifty pounds) from the wall, hung it to a rafter, whilst the men put the lot into three separate bags and suspended them to the hook in turn.

'Forty-five pounds,' cried the mate of the *Dolphin* as the first bag was hooked on. 'Come, on with the next one.'

'Thirty-nine pounds.'

'*And* thirty-four pounds make a hundred and eighteen,' said Lester, bending down and eagerly examining the dial.

'How much is it worth, skipper?' asked the tug's engineer.

'Not less than one pound an ounce.'

'No, sah,' cried Manuel, with an *ex cathedra* air; 'twenty-two shillin's, sah. Dat's what de captain of de *Fanny Long* Hobart Town whaleship got fo' a piece eleven poun' weight in Sydney last June. And I hear de boys sayin' dat he would hab got one poun' five shillin's, only dat dere was a power of squids' beaks in it, and dere's not many in dis lot, so it's gwine to bring more.'

He explained that the pieces of black shell which looked like broken mussel-shells were in reality the beaks of the squid, upon which the sperm-whale feeds. Then, for the benefit of those of the party, he and the other two ex-whalemen described the cause of the formation of this peculiar substance in the body of the sperm-whale.

Lester took pencil and paper and made a rapid calculation.

'Boys, we'll say that this greasy-looking stuff is worth only a pound an ounce—though I don't doubt that Manuel is right. Well, at one pound an ounce it comes to eighteen hundred and eighty-eight pounds.'

'Hurrah for Mrs Lester!' cried Lindley, the mate; 'she has brought us luck from the first, and now she has luck herself.'

The men cheered her again and again, for there was not one of them that had not a rough affection for their captain's violet-eyed wife. They had admired her for her pluck even in making the voyage to this desolate spot, and her constant cheerfulness, and her kindness and attention in nursing three of them who had been seriously ill, cemented their feelings of devotion to her. There was a happy supper-party in 'Wreck House,' as Lucy had named her strangely built abode, that night, and it was not until the small hours of the morning that the men went off to sleep on the tug, and left Lucy and her husband to themselves.

'I'm too excited to sleep now, Tom,' she said.

'Come, I must show you the place where I found it. It is not very cold. And oh, Tom! I 'm beginning to love this lonely island, and the wild life, and the tame seals, and the fleet goats, and the fowls, and black Manuel, and—and—oh! everything. And look, Tom dear, over there at the lighthouse at Deal Island. I really believe the light was never so bright as it is to-night. Oh, all the world is bright to me!'

(To be continued.)

HOW ELECTRIC TRAMS WORK.

IN 1830 Faraday performed before the Royal Society a very simple experiment, intended to demonstrate and to illustrate what, if subsequent developments of it could have been clearly foreseen, would have been one of the most startling discoveries of modern times. The lecturer exhibited a short length of wooden tube around which he had coiled six or seven hundred feet of wire. This was fixed perpendicularly on the front of a board so that a small bar-magnet could be let down into the centre of the wire-coil and drawn up again. The free ends of the wire were carried along the table a short distance, and there twisted into a smaller coil, over which, by a silken thread, was suspended horizontally an ordinary compass-needle. All that the apparatus was intended to show was that when the bar-magnet was let down or drawn up inside the larger coil the needle suspended over the smaller one gave a jerk round. Faraday pointed out that it was not the mere presence of the magnet in the one coil that affected the needle suspended over the other, for when the magnet was at rest in the centre of the coil the needle hung motionless. It was the *moving* of the small bar up or down that made the needle move; and the lecturer's theory was that that motion created—'induced'—in the surrounding wire a current of electricity sufficiently strong to deflect the needle. It was the slightest possible current; but it was something over and above the original power of the magnet. It was a perceptible increase of electricity caused by movement. It was, in fact, the force of his own muscles exercised in raising and dropping the bar actually converted into electricity.

Now, in that simple apparatus we see the germ of the modern dynamo, which is merely a development of it. Instead of the lecturer's muscles moving a little bar-magnet up and down inside a coil of wire, we have a steam-engine or gas-engine or a water-wheel whirling at immense speed coils of wire round a core of soft iron. As the result of this tremendously rapid motion we have the generation of electricity exactly as Faraday showed he could produce a current by the movement of his bar-magnet. The strength of the current may be anything we please, according to the capacity of the dynamo and the power applied to it. The dynamo, it should be understood, does not originate power; it merely transforms the engine-power into electricity, and in this transformation there is some loss. The engine, if directly applied, could do more work than the dynamo; but the advantage of having engine-power converted into electricity is that it can be conducted to any distance and set to any sort of work. It will turn a lathe miles away, or work a lift, or drive a corn-mill, or, if you can contrive to connect your conductors with a tram-car provided with certain mechanism attached to the axles of its wheels, it will set that mechanism in motion and make the wheels go round. That mechanism is known as a 'motor,' and when applied to the running of a tram-car is slung underneath the car. It corresponds to the dynamo at the other end of the conductor, and works in perfect sympathy with it; only, instead of converting engine-power into electricity, it does exactly the reverse: it reconverts electricity into engine-power, and drives the wheels of the car just as the engine itself would do if it were on board the vehicle and were geared on to its axles.

That discovery of the induction of an electric current by the movement of a magnet in proximity to copper wires—or, what of course amounts to the same thing, the movement of wires in the 'field' of a fixed magnet—Faraday made known to the Royal Society well within the lifetime of many now living. It is now being turned to practical use all over the world. To say nothing of the driving of all sorts of stationary machines—mills, circular saws, sewing-machines, drills, and cranes, and a hundred other things—in all quarters of the globe electric trams and railway trains are running up hill and down dale, on the level surface of the ground and deep down in the bowels of the earth.

The first electric tramway in the United Kingdom was opened in October 1883 between Portrush and Bushmills, in the north of Ireland, where a waterfall was made the source of motive-power. That was the earliest in the kingdom. The latest electric tramway at the moment of writing is that opened by the Prince and Princess of Wales in May 1903; and this may fairly be taken as a type of all the finest tramways now in existence. In various parts of the world such lines have grown beyond all counting, and in matters of detail they vary very greatly. Some run on lines carried overhead; others have burrowed underground. Some run on the level road with conducting wires above them; others have these conductors down below. On some electric lines the motive-power is concentrated in an engine in front, on others there is a motor before and behind, while on others again every

separate carriage is a 'motor-car' with its own mechanism. But whatever differences of detail there may be, they are all alike in their main features. They all have some independent source of power—steam, gas, oil, water; and the whole propelling mechanism of all the lines and the trains and tram-cars upon them is simply an arrangement for conveying that power to every vehicle, wherever it may chance to be, standing or moving, over the whole line or system of lines.

By way of illustrating this we cannot do better than to take the new system of electric tramways of which the line recently opened by the Prince of Wales was the first completed section. This was part of the great network of London lines, practically the whole of which will belong to the London County Council by the year 1910. Roughly speaking, this network may be said to comprise fifty miles of double line on the north side of the Thames and seventy miles on the south, making altogether a total of one hundred and twenty miles of tramways spread over one hundred and twenty-one square miles, with a population of somewhere about five millions. When it is stated that from two generating stations—one on the north and the other on the south—will be supplied motive-power and light for every tram-car on this vast system, and that it has all been made possible by the discovery that Faraday revealed to the world when he showed that little apparatus to the Royal Society in 1830, it will be seen how momentous a discovery it was. The installation of electric power over the first section of about eight and a half miles threw out of employment eight hundred horses; when the great generating station is complete it will have a nominal engine-power of forty thousand horses! But however great that power might be, it clearly would be of no use for locomotive purposes over one hundred and twenty-one square miles if there were no means of distributing it. It is just because electricity affords the means of this distribution that it has effected and is effecting such a revolution in our locomotion.

Electric trams, as we have seen, are just like ordinary vehicles, with this special feature, that they have underneath them a 'motor'—a driving-machine—which, if it can be set going, will drive round the axles of the wheels and set them running along the rails. But nothing will set this motor going but a current of electricity poured into it, and all the intricacy and difficulty in the construction of an electric tram-line consist in making arrangements for the supply of this necessary current. In a few cases all this difficulty of line-construction has been dispensed with by the simple device of carrying on each car a supply of electricity condensed into 'accumulators,' by means of which the vehicle is rendered quite independent, entirely self-contained, and self-impelling. There is immense advantage in this; but the accumulators are exceedingly heavy, they last a comparatively short time, and they are expensive to renew; while the power they can develop is smaller than can be obtained from the conducting system. At present practically all tramways and railways find it necessary to establish communication between their vehicles and their generating dynamos.

There are two methods of doing this, and over their respective merits and demerits there has been a great deal of controversy. A conductor along the whole length of the tram-line is a necessity upon either system. But the question is whether the conductor shall be a stout wire carried overhead on posts more or less ornamental, or shall be in some rather more substantial form and laid along a conduit in the roadway underneath.

The overhead trolley system has many advantages. It is comparatively cheap to establish. It can be done without much disturbance of the roadway. If anything goes wrong it is easy to discover what is the matter and to put it right. But then the poles and wires are very unsightly, especially at crossings and junctions, and where there are telephone and telegraph wires above them it is necessary to have guard-wires as well as conductors. This network overhead is not only unsightly, but is often inconvenient and sometimes a little dangerous.

The conduit system buries all the conductors out of sight. There is no unsightliness, inconvenience, or fear of the 'line' wires breaking and falling into the roadway; but then it is extremely troublesome to lay down. It occasions a great disturbance of the roadway, which for both lines has to be excavated to a depth of two and a half feet, and it sometimes involves alteration and diversion of pipes and drains; occasionally it requires serious changes of road levels and the reconstruction of bridges. The conduit also needs to be well drained by sumps connected with the sewers at short distances all the way along. Of course all this makes it very expensive at the outset. A single line recently constructed in suburban London on the 'trolley' system—the overhead system, that is—was said to have cost six thousand five hundred and sixty-two pounds a mile. The section of the new conduit-line opened by the Prince of Wales is estimated to cost approximately thirteen thousand six hundred pounds per mile of single track. On the Greenwich and Peckham lines, not yet constructed, an estimate has been made for both systems. The trolley line comes out at seven thousand four hundred and ninety-six pounds per single mile, while the conduit, which has been decided on, will probably cost fourteen thousand and forty-one pounds per mile. In London at all events—and except a short length at Bournemouth there is no other town in the kingdom that has tried the conduit—the cost of it is just about double that of the rival system. It seems probable, therefore, that the overhead conductors will be generally adopted where population is not very dense. It has been estimated that for every mile of tramway in Huddersfield there are about five

thousand people; in Birmingham, twelve thousand three hundred; in Bristol, fifteen thousand six hundred; in Glasgow, twenty thousand; and in London, nearly thirty-two thousand. Clearly, what may be expedient for London may not be so for many other towns. As to durability and cost of maintenance, the latest opinion expressed by the Highways Committee of the London County Council is that, owing to the great weight and stability of the conductors and the method of fixing them, the difference will be in favour of the conduit.

The conductors are two T-shaped rails of soft metal, weighing twenty-two pounds to the yard, and are carried on insulators fifteen feet apart in the concrete trough underneath the line. They are not continuous, but are divided by insulators into sections of not more than half a mile in length, each section consisting of a positive and negative length.

The central source of life and movement for this great system now developing has not yet been completed. At the moment of writing, the lines are being worked by a current supplied by a private electric company; but the new generating station, which will probably be the largest in the kingdom when finished, is rapidly being conjured up on the bank of the Thames at Greenwich. It will have eight generators, each of five thousand horse-power, the necessary steam being produced by water-tube boilers. These boilers and the furnaces beneath them will be the real source of the power that will by-and-by be running all the trams over the southern part of the county of London. The electric current as it will leave the generating station will be one of 'high tension,' which is pretty much the same as it would be to say that water is conveyed through a main under high-pressure. The conductors running out of the power-house will be cables laid underground and very highly charged. The current will be one of six thousand six hundred volts, as electricians say. This is a tremendous 'potentiality,' and has to be reduced before it can be used to drive the trams. The cables do not run directly to the conducting-rods of the tram-lines, but to various sub-stations at convenient points about the system, and at these sub-stations, by means of 'rotary transformers,' the tension will be reduced to about five hundred and fifty volts. It must not be supposed that from these sub-stations the reduced electric power starts off on a sort of roving commission all over the tram-system. From one or another of these stations current is directly applied to each insulated section of the conducting-rods down in the conduit, and from these sections the motors pick up the current as they go along by means of 'ploughs' trailed along at the tail-ends of the cars and reaching down through a slit to the metal rods below. That is how the electric trams work.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

By William Le Queux.

CHAPTER XI.—THE OLD LADY FROM PARIS.

THE man with whom I shook hands heartily was about thirty-five, tall, spruce, clean-shaven, and merry-faced, wearing a black overcoat and peaked cap that gave him the appearance of a naval officer. Cross-Channel passengers know Henry Hammond well, for he is one of the most popular officials in His Majesty's Customs, always courteous, always lenient to the poor foreign immigrant, but always stern wherever the traveller seeks to conceal contraband goods or that thing forbidden, the pet dog; conscientious in his duty in examining the baggage of incoming passengers, and always a gentleman—different, indeed, from the prying *douaniers* of our neighbours.

With his assistant it was his duty, turn by turn, to cross from Dover by the midday service, and on the return of the steamer from Calais—the vessel on which we were now aboard—to examine all the light baggage and affix a kind of perforated stamp as certificate of examination.

As a constant traveller I had had many a pleasant chat with him during trips across. In the wildest winter tempest in Dover Straits he remained unruffled, merely turning up the collar of his overcoat and remarking that the weather was not so bad as it might be. But nearly all of you have had your baggage examined on the boat on your return from the Continent; therefore, no doubt you know Mr Hammond, and have answered his question whether you have 'anything to declare.'

'Why, Mr Kennedy,' he cried as he took my hand, 'this is a surprise! I saw in the paper the other day an announcement that you were returning to live in England, but did not expect you across just yet. Look at them,' he added, casting his glance around. 'Big crowd this afternoon: Cook's and Gaze's weekly returns from Switzerland.'

'Yes,' I laughed. 'You'll be busy all the way over, I suppose.'

'No; I'll be done in three-quarters of an hour or so; then we'll have a chat. My assistant is already getting on with hand-baggage forward.'

By this time we had cast off, and were creeping slowly down the harbour.

'Well, Hammond,' I said confidentially, 'I'm in a dilemma;' and taking him aside into one of the unoccupied deck-cabins, I briefly explained the cir-

cumstances of The Closed Book, and described its outward appearance and binding.

'By Jove!' he exclaimed, deeply interested; 'it almost beats your own romances, Mr Kennedy. I've just been reading your last. Neither my wife nor I could put it down till we'd finished.'

'You see, the woman ought to be on board this boat; but I've not yet seen her. I'm just going in search of her. But if you should come across any one answering the description I've given, you might tell me at once.'

'Of course. You want to get this extraordinary book back again?'

'Certainly. It is a valuable piece of property, apart from the secret it contains and the mystery surrounding it;' and as I uttered those words the slow roll of the vessel showed that we were already out in the somewhat choppy sea, and warned my friend that it was time to commence his duty.

So we parted, and I started a tour around the boat, commencing tactfully at the stern, and passing in review each of the passengers. The work was by no means easy, for women when they lounge in deck-chairs assume thick wrappings and thick veils to protect their faces when the Channel is rough and the wind strong. One always feels the breeze cold after hours in a stuffy sleeping-car, and therefore women are prone to suffer the horrors of the ladies' cabin rather than risk catching cold.

For nearly an hour I made frantic search hither and thither throughout the whole ship, in all three classes. I gazed at the piles of heavy baggage, wondering whether my treasure were concealed there, registered through to London perhaps, in which case it might go forward without my mysterious visitor. The only place forbidden to me was, of course, the ladies' cabin, presided over by a stern stewardess; and if the woman of whom I was in pursuit was on board, she had undoubtedly concealed herself there.

She certainly had not embarked by the gangway I had watched; but there was a second gangway to the fore-part of the ship by which baggage was carried, and she might have slipped across there unnoticed, as people sometimes do.

Already Shakespeare's Cliff was showing through the evening haze, as the vessel steadily laboured in the rough sea. The passengers were mostly lying in deck-chairs *hors de combat*, and no one ventured to promenade upon the unsteady deck. I had taken up a sheltered position near the door of the ladies' cabin, determined to remain there until every passenger should have left, although I was compelled to admit that my hope was a forlorn one, and that I should have to return again to Calais by the night boat and resume my vigil on the other side.

The woman must have broken her journey in Paris, and would undoubtedly come later; but on what day or by what service she would cross I was, of course, in ignorance. And as I sat shivering upon a stool in the rough wind, with the salt spray dashing ever and anon into my face, I felt that the probabilities of regaining my treasure were very few.

I had been the victim of an ingenious conspiracy. More could not be said.

Of a sudden, however, Hammond—his coat-collar up, and walking unsteadily because of the heavy rolling of the boat—approached me saying:

'Well, I've just finished, Mr Kennedy. Every passenger to-day seems to have a double amount of hand-baggage; but we've been through it all. I've seen nothing of the young lady you describe; but I've seen something else—I've found your book.'

'Found it!' I cried excitedly. 'Who has it? Tell me.'

'Well, a few minutes ago, in the second-class, I was examining the contents of a dilapidated leather bag belonging to a little, wizen-faced old woman, very shabbily dressed, when I found down at the bottom a flat brown-paper parcel wrapped carefully, tied with string, and sealed with big blotches of black wax. I'm always suspicious of sealed packets, for they may contain anything from cigars to anarchists' bombs; therefore I ordered her to break the seals and open it. At first she refused; but on my explaining the penalty incurred, she reluctantly obeyed, and there, to my great satisfaction, I saw your old manuscript. I looked inside, and although I know little about such things, I recognised it to be the stolen volume.'

'Did you make any remark?'

'None,' was Mr Hammond's reply. 'I wished to consult you first. I did not put the usual label on the bag, so that when she passes ashore it will be stopped and again opened. What do you intend doing?'

I was puzzled. It was satisfactory to know where The Closed Book actually was, but, on the other hand, it would be difficult to regain possession of it. As my friend Hammond pointed out, I could give notice to the harbour detective on arriving at Dover, and he would detain the woman. But I should be compelled to charge her with theft. This I could not do. I could, of course, declare the book to be stolen property; but matters were the more complicated because of the theft having been committed in Italy.

For some time we discussed the situation; then I accompanied him through the second-class, where, on a chair in the gangway leading past the engines, sat a queer, dried-up-looking little woman of about sixty-five, wearing a rusty black bonnet and cloak—a woman I had noticed during my tour of inspection, but whom I had never suspected of being in actual possession of my treasure.

The book had evidently been delivered to her in Paris, and she was taking it to London—to whom?

That question I put to myself decided me, and when I was out of hearing I told Hammond

that I intended to follow her before claiming it, and thus ascertain, if possible, the motive of the strange international plot which was apparently in progress.

The short, wizened old lady was English: her face thin and yellow, with a pair of dark eyes that had probably once been beautiful, and hair still dark though showing threads of gray. She wore black cloth gloves worn-out at the finger-tips, and was ponderous below the waist on account of thick skirts put on to protect herself from the cold sea-breeze.

Hammond declared that her speech was that of a well-born person, and that her frayed glove concealed a diamond ring—a circumstance which he viewed with considerable suspicion. Yet he entirely agreed with me that I should gain more by following her to her destination and watching carefully than by arresting her on landing. There was a deep, inexplicable mystery about the book and its contents; and in order to solve it I ought to be acquainted with those whom it interested.

'I can't understand the manner in which you were poisoned by touching the leaves,' Hammond said reflectively. 'That beats me altogether. Perhaps somebody else will have a taste of it before long.'

'I shall watch,' I replied determinedly.

'In any case it is a most interesting circumstance,' he declared. 'But it's a good job your Italian doctor was able to save you. Evidently you had a very narrow shave.'

'Very,' I said. 'I shall never forget the agonies I suffered. But,' I added, 'I mean at all hazards to decipher all that the book contains. That something very extraordinary is written there I'm absolutely convinced.'

'Well, it would really seem so,' he agreed. 'Only, don't run any risks and touch the thing with your bare hands again.'

'Not likely,' I laughed. And then I fell to wondering what had become of that dark-eyed, beautiful woman who had been the actual thief.

Why was the treasure wrapped and sealed so carefully? Could it be that those who had so cleverly conspired to obtain it from me were aware of the venom with which certain parts of it were contaminated? It really seemed as though they were.

We passed and repassed the short-statured old lady, talking together and appearing to take no notice of her. Evidently she was not aware of my identity; therefore I stood much greater chance in my efforts to watch her.

The examination of her bag that Hammond had made had not disturbed her in the least; but presently he returned to her, and feigning to have forgotten to affix the necessary Customs stamp, did so.

At last we slowed up beside the Admiralty Pier at Dover, and next instant all was bustle. Passengers hitherto prostrated by the voyage sprang up and pressed towards the gangway, each eager to get ashore and secure a place in the draughty and out-of-date compartments of the Joint-Railways.

With an old woman's dislike of crowds, the person we were watching slowly gathered together her belongings, folded her shabby old travelling-rug neatly, pulled her veil beneath her chin, shook out her skirts, and then, carrying her precious bag, made her way to the gangway after the first rush had passed.

Hammond's quick eye detected her to be an experienced traveller, who had crossed many times before. She sat quite unruffled and unconcerned amid all the excitement of landing.

On the pier she inquired for the train for Charing Cross, and entered a second-class compartment, where she purchased a cup of tea and a slab of that greasy bread-and-butter which seems to be all the Joint-Railways allow the jaded traveller on landing, while I took a place in the next compartment to hers, and then retired some distance away in order to consult further with Hammond.

To his astuteness and thoroughness as a searcher I owed the knowledge of where my treasure was concealed; therefore I thanked him most warmly, and just as the signal was given for departure, stepped into the carriage and waved him farewell.

The run to London was without incident, but on arriving at Charing Cross I kept keen observation upon her. She clung tenaciously to the bag containing the book, refusing to let a porter handle it, and entered a four-wheeled cab. I followed to the corner of Holborn and Southampton Row, where she alighted and walked quickly across Red Lion Square until she reached a big, dingy house in Harpur Street, a short, quiet turning off Theobald's Road—a house that in the old days when Bloomsbury was a fashionable quarter had no doubt been the residence of some City merchant or man of standing. The old extinguisher used by the link-men still hung beside the big hall-door, the steps leading up to it were worn hollow by the tread of generations, and under the flickering gaslight the place, with its unlighted windows, looked dark, forbidding, and deserted.

The old lady was apparently expected, for the instant she passed the lower windows the door was flung open by some unseen person, showing the big hall to be in total darkness; and she, having ascended the steps with surprising alacrity, slipped in, the door falling-to quickly and quite noiselessly behind her.

THE PROVINCIAL HUMOUR OF AMERICA.

IF Americans delight in exercising their wit at the expense of foreigners, they are none the less ready to amuse themselves by satirising one another's peculiarities. Especially do they derive entertainment by poking fun at the alleged characteristics of rival cities. As the Englishman and the German stand for distinct types in the American press, so do the Bostonian and the Philadelphian.

The claim of Boston to be the literary and intellectual centre of the United States furnishes the scribes of all the rest of the country with opportunities of sarcasm. The Bostonian is represented as prone even from earliest days to the use of learned language on all occasions. Here is the Boston child:

> Little Miss Muffet
> Sat on a tuffet
> Eating baked beans and brown bread.
> There came a great spider
> And sat down beside her;
> 'What a fine argiope!' she said.

It is a Boston clergyman who is reported to have declared that Lot's wife was transformed into a monolith of chloride of sodium. Not long ago, in a discussion whether 'expectorate' or 'spit' should be used in the health-notices in the New York street-cars, it was mentioned that Mr Theodore Roosevelt, when Police Commissioner, had preferred the simpler word. Thereupon a Chicago paper promptly expressed its regret, as this revelation would assuredly lose for him the Boston vote. 'What does "incarcerated" mean, Weary?' asks one tramp of another, in the *New York Journal*. 'Dat's gettin' "jugged" in Boston,' is the reply.

The following cuttings from the outside press further illustrate this conception of the scholarly atmosphere of Boston:

'Here,' cried an irate passenger, 'you've took us past Tremont Street!' 'Pardon me,' replied the Boston street-car conductor, 'you mean "taken," not "took." Now then, sir, move with more expedition, please.'

The prisoner, a faded, battered specimen of mankind, on whose haggard face, deeply lined with the marks of dissipation, there still lingered faint reminders of better days long past, stood dejectedly before the judge. 'Where are you from?' 'From Boston.' 'Indeed!' said the judge; 'indeed yours is a sad fall. And yet you don't seem to thoroughly realise how low you have sunk.' The man started as if struck. 'Your honour does me an injustice,' he said bitterly. 'The disgrace of arrest for drunkenness, the mortification of being thrown into a noisome dungeon, the publicity and humiliation of trial in a crowded and dingy court-room, I can bear; but to be sentenced by a police magistrate who splits his infinitives—that is indeed the last blow.'

Such literary sensitiveness is, of course, quite in keeping with the traditions of a city where, it is rumoured, even the beaus take a course of Browning. But it is not in language and literature alone that the pre-eminence of Boston is unquestioned. 'I am agent, sir,' says the traveller, 'for the *Great American Universal Encyclopædia of History, Biography, Art, Science, and Literature*, complete in two hundred volumes'—— 'Don't need it,' replies the business man; 'I married a Boston girl.'

But Boston is sometimes able to retaliate upon her more aggressive juniors. A Bostonian, so it is related, was riding with a Chicago lady on the elevated railway in the latter city. 'It is an enormous city, is it not?' she remarked, with a proud sigh. 'Enormous?' repeated the Bostonian. 'The enormity of it is not to be estimated.' Another remark hits effectively at the ambitions of the *nouveau riche*: 'The European economist,' comments a Boston paper, 'who expects to teach Chicago to like horse-meat has a difficult task. Chicago wants the most expensive, or nothing.' More pungent still is the application of a story told of the daughter of a professor at Cornell University who was about to move westward. The night before they left, the little girl added these words to her usual prayer: 'Good-bye, God; we're going to Chicago.'

Philadelphia has somehow acquired the reputation—quite unwarranted, as far as a visitor may judge—of being the slowest city in America. Consequently the Philadelphian has to endure many gibes at the lack of up-to-dateness of his native place. For instance, when the twentieth century began, it was suggested in a Chicago paper that if we should forget at any time what the nineteenth century was like, and wish to renew our recollections, all we need do is to go to Philadelphia. One would like to know what Benjamin Franklin, certainly a man of vigour and enterprise, would have thought of such jests as the following at the city whose fame was so closely associated with his own: 'Yes, poor fellow, he was once very prosperous, but he failed in business.' 'How so?' 'Tried to establish a "quick lunch" restaurant in Philadelphia.' Again: 'I understand that it was pretty slow at Mrs De Styles's party?' 'Slow! Why, it was as slow as playing chess on a freight train going through Philadelphia on a Sunday.' A well-known magnate of Wall Street, New York, is reported to have been asked by a citizen of Philadelphia why he did not run over to that city oftener. 'Afraid to,' was the reply. 'Why?' asked the Philadelphian. 'You people are always poking fun at our city for being so quiet and peaceable.' 'That's just it,' replied the bustling New Yorker. 'I was there once. First thing I knew I heard a policeman say, "Hi, there! I'll run you in if you don't stop that noise." I looked around to see what

was the matter, and saw the policeman making for me, brandishing his club. "Don't you do that again," he said threateningly. "What?" I asked. "Don't you know," he said angrily, "that you were jangling your watch-chain, and waking all the people on the block out of their afternoon naps?"'

That a Philadelphian, whether slow or not in general habit, can be quick enough upon occasion appears from the following extract from the Philadelphian *Press*. The point of the rejoinder will readily appeal to any one who has lived in New York during the recent subway excavations: 'Well,' said the New Yorker tauntingly, 'you don't see any grass growing in our streets.' 'That's so,' replied the Philadelphian; 'clever scheme of yours.' 'What's that?' 'To keep tearing your streets up so that the grass can't grow.'

THE MOST DARING BURGLARY ON RECORD.

THE GREAT CORNHILL AFFAIR.

By W. B. Robertson.

CONSTERNATION is the only word that can be applied to the state of mind that London was thrown into by the announcement that the premises of John Walker, 68 Cornhill, chronometer-maker and jeweller, had been entered between Saturday and Monday, 4th and 6th February 1865, the door of his iron safe wrenched open, and valuables amounting to six thousand pounds stolen—consternation because there had been a succession of somewhat similar robberies, and none of the perpetrators had been captured. There was the Johnson burglary at 54 Threadneedle Street—not far away, and also a jeweller's—where the swag was worth four thousand pounds; there was the burglary at a bullion-dealer's in Lombard Street, and a safe ransacked of five thousand pounds; on the night of the previous Christmas there was the Euston Road burglary, where a safe belonging to one John Webb, a solicitor, weighing eight hundredweight, and containing property and documents worth twenty thousand pounds, had been carried off bodily; there was the Strand burglary, another jeweller's, adjoining the Lowther Arcade, where goods to the value of one thousand pounds were taken; and there were warehouse robberies of tea and silk and brandy. Even Windsor Castle had been robbed less than a month before. Consternation? It was almost panic that seized the owners of portable property in the City when they heard of the Walker sensation. They lost faith in the police, and lost faith in their strong-rooms; they left their premises with foreboding fears at night, and entered them with nervous apprehension in the morning. It was the day of the burglar's triumph. 'For what do we pay police rates?' asked some. 'And what is the use of safes?' asked others, answering themselves with 'except to save the burglar trouble, by letting him know where valuables are.'

Daring, ruthless precision and workman-like skill are the strong features of the Walker job. Had it stood by itself it would have created a sensation. It creates a sensation to-day in the mind of the reader once he has grasped the arrangement of the premises and the extraordinary precautions taken to ensure security.

First, then, as to the premises. Up the side of Mr Walker's shop runs a passage leading to a paved court—Sun Court. From this court is an entrance to the three upper floors of the building. These are reached by a common stair. At the time of the burglary the first floor was let as offices to Sir Charles Crosley, the second floor was also let, and the top floor was used as a photographic studio. The door leading to the staircase was open all day; but it was locked at night as securely as the locksmith's art then knew. Behind it was the back entrance to the jeweller's shop, with an iron-cased door. Nobody slept on the premises, the police thinking that Mr Walker's valuable stock was thus all the safer, as being free from liability to what is called a 'put-up job.' The place was supposed to be impenetrable unless assistance were rendered from within. Next door to the jeweller's was a tailor's shop. The tailor occupied the whole of the basement under his own shop and under Mr Walker's as a cutting-room, with access by a stair from the shop.

Mr Walker's premises comprised a front shop and a back shop, separated by a doorway. When these were shut up, two apertures in the shutters at the front on Cornhill commanded a view of the front shop, and similar apertures in the shutters up the court commanded a view of the back shop. The safe, in a corner of the back shop, was only partially visible from the apertures in the shutters; but full view of the safe was reflected by mirrors in the line of the peep-holes in the shutters, the door of the safe being painted white to make the reflection all the sharper. There was a workman's bench against the back window; and behind this bench, to break the draught, was a fixed screen, breast-high. At nights and on Sundays, when the premises were shut, three gas-jets were left burning in the front and three in the back shop.

Mr Walker's people were always the last to leave the premises. After putting away the most valuable stock, the foreman used to send the boy upstairs to try the doors of the different offices to see that all

the other tenants had left. He would then lock the outer door leading from the court to the staircase, lock and bar his own iron-cased door, and, after putting up and bolting and locking the shutters, leave by the front door. The place was described as being encased in iron.

On Saturday evening, 4th February 1865, Mr J. T. Walker, who managed the Cornhill business for his father, left the premises at half-past five. About a quarter past six the foreman began to clear away, sending the boy upstairs as usual. These operations, locking up, and looking into the shutter apertures back and front took three-quarters of an hour, and then he left, taking all the keys with him, about half-past seven. But at ten minutes past six three men stole up the common stair in Sun Court, opened with a key the door of the offices on the second floor, entered, and locked themselves in, so that the boy might be able to report 'All gone.'

At half-past eight on Monday morning the foreman returned and entered the front shop from Cornhill. He found everything in order and all right. So he steps briskly to the back to take his coat off before proceeding to remove the shutters; but what is this that startles him while yet on the threshold of the back shop? A hole in the floor! He lifts his eyes from the hole to the safe. It looks all right. He goes up to it, and it opens to his touch. It is empty! He unbars and unlocks the side door, which is just as he left it thirty-seven hours ago. The outer door leading into Sun Court, however, he finds secured by only the latch, the lock having been taken off. He raises the alarm. The police are quickly on the scene; so is Mr Walker, who finds himself, notwithstanding all his precautions—his apertures in the shutters, his burning gas, his thief-proof safe with its door painted white, and his mirrors—robbed of gold watches, chronometers, diamond rings, pins, studs, bracelets, earrings, and cash-box with gold, &c., to the value of six thousand pounds.

Investigation of the premises soon revealed the course followed by the burglars. They had entered the building from Sun Court, as stated, and ascended the stairs to the second floor, helping themselves to the key of the office from the bracket of the gas-meter, where it was always put when the rooms were closed, and where it could always be seen by any one descending from the photographer's studio above. Evidently the burglars had a minute knowledge of the arrangements in the building.

The removal of the lock from the inside of the street door in Sun Court showed that the robbers had made their exit there. Upstairs the door of the second-floor offices was open, with the key in the lock on the inside. In Sir Charles Crosley's offices a candlestick was found that ought to have been in the offices above. Sir Charles's safe had also been opened, and a small sum of money taken. Through this floor a hole had been cut in a workman-like manner, and across it still lay a pair of tongs from which hung a rope-ladder used for access to the tailor's shop, where there were indications of an attempt to cut through the wall into the jeweller's; but it was supposed that this was frustrated by iron sheeting that lined the wall. Even if this supposition be correct, it seemed to have no appreciable effect upon the cracksmen. They walked down the stairs into the basement, which extended beneath both shops, mounted one of the cutting-tables, and made a hole through the ceiling into Mr Walker's back shop just behind the screen that enclosed the workman's bench against the window, and therefore concealed by the screen from any one looking through the apertures in the shutters. This hole made, the operator had only to plant a chair on the cutting-table, mount it, and half of his body was in the shop above. Besides the rope-ladder, the only other property Mr Walker's visitors left was a gimlet, a finely tempered steel wedge, and a formidable life-preserver. The life-preserver showed to what lengths these clever ruffians were prepared to go had they been disturbed. They were not disturbed until, perhaps, next day, when they found that a reward of one thousand pounds was offered for their capture, and that London was vibrating with excitement over their achievement. This was decidedly discomforting. They did not want fame; they wanted only to make a quiet living and put money away for a rainy day.

For days crowds thronged around the scene. The bankers and merchants and shopkeepers in the neighbourhood, who all had to leave most valuable property every night under conditions no safer than Mr Walker, joined in indignant chorus against the police. They requisitioned the alderman of the ward to convene a meeting of the inhabitants to take into consideration the insecure state of their property with a view to adopting measures for its protection. This meeting the alderman promptly convened. It was followed two days later by a meeting of the whole Court of Aldermen specially summoned by the Lord Mayor to inquire into the circumstances connected with the 'Cornhill Burglary,' as it was called, and this was followed soon after by a second meeting of aldermen. At these meetings and in the newspaper press the City police and detectives were held up to scorn, though it must be said the police, in the person of their chief, Colonel Fraser, made a very good defence. Whether the police did or did not merit the opprobrium thus cast upon them does not concern the course of this narrative. Suffice it that the public indignation put them upon their mettle, and the one thousand pounds offered as reward yielded a luxuriant crop of informers.

The first arrest was made on Wednesday, 15th February, just eleven days after the discovery of the burglary. It was at night when a shabbily dressed man slouched into a working watchmaker's in Wilderness Row, St Luke's, and almost on his heels a detective followed. Immediately after the detective came Mr Walker's son and a policeman. They were acting upon 'information received.' The shabbily dressed individual was searched. On his finger he

wore a massive diamond ring. He was also decorated with a gold chain. In his pocket was a gold watch worth fifty-five pounds, with Mr Walker's name and address on it, and eleven pounds fourteen shillings and eightpence in money. He also had a gold watch-case without a movement; the movement belonging to the case, however, was on the watchmaker's bench. It had had its number altered from 3040 to 3704, and 'John Walker, 68 Cornhill,' had been erased and 'W. Hilton, Wilmington Square, London,' substituted. Besides these articles, the shabbily dressed man had an addressed letter in his pocket. He was a weaver named Roberts, and lived in the Mile-End Road district. The police, of course, visited his room. They found silk there, and women at work, and fifty silver and gold watches. The police were so far on the right track that they arrested the Hurleys, man and wife, in Cambridge Heath Road. Hurley gave the rest of his comrades away.

Friday, 24th February, was a red-letter day for the police. Two inspectors, a sergeant, and a body of men—that was the force, and 142 Whitechapel Road was the house. The ground-floor was being fitted up as an eel-pie shop; the upper floors had just been newly and expensively furnished. Two men and two women were in the shop when the police entered, and one of the men passed something to one of the women, who immediately ran upstairs and locked herself in a bedroom. An inspector rushed off and seized her; but he had caught a Tartar. She struck him in the face and then took hold of him by the whiskers, and so overpowered him that he had to be rescued by his comrades. Meanwhile there was a fine scrimmage going on downstairs, in which the new fittings for the eel-pie shop played a part. It was brief but it was peppery, and the prisoners were duly secured. They were Thomas Brewerton and wife and W. H. Jeffery and wife. The booty recovered here comprised seventy-five gold chains and other articles of jewellery. From the woman Brewerton's fingers three gold rings were taken at the station, and a pair of gold earrings from her ears. All this property was Walker's.

The police were not done yet. Their next trip was to Ely Place, at the back of Bow Road. Here, with his wife, lived Thomas Caseley, a clever young man of twenty-seven, known as Counsellor Kelly at a Judge and Jury Club he frequented. The men in uniform surrounded the house, while their leaders burst the outside door that had been locked against them. There was no particular struggle here—the odds were too great; there might have been, though, for on Caseley's bed lay a life-preserver and a false moustache and whiskers ready to put on. A locked box in his room, on being broken open, was found to contain fifty-two gold watches, gold alberts, &c.—Walker's, of course. The police also found two hundred and forty pounds in gold and two receipts for money paid into the Westminster Bank: one for two hundred and fifty pounds and one for one hundred and fifty pounds. There was also a quantity of silk. They arrested Caseley and his wife; and on the way to the station Caseley asked the inspector, 'What robberies are you going to "boff" to me?'—that is, charge me with; adding, 'I had nothing to do with the Strand robbery, nor with Johnson's. I will tell you all about Walker's. I am all right for that. If you will square it for me I'll tell you all about it. Bill and Velvet [Jeffery and Brewerton] were two of them.' Yet Caseley pleaded not guilty at the Old Bailey when charged, with his wife, the two Jefferys, the two Brewertons, and Roberts, with having feloniously broken and entered the shop of John Walker, and stolen four hundred watches, one hundred and fifty chains, and sundry brooches, rings, and other articles, together of the value of six thousand pounds, with seventy pounds in money. The arrest of F. W. Wilkinson, nicknamed Carroty Fred, whom a policeman recognised to be the man he had seen four times in Cornhill in the early morning of the Sunday preceding the robbery, completed the tale of those implicated in the Walker job.

On the day following these arrests—Saturday, 25th February—a strange thing happened. At seven in the morning an inspector of the Thames police in charge of a galley below Blackfriars Bridge noticed something glittering on a horizontal beam used as a brace for some of the piles of the then existing temporary bridge. Closer examination revealed the cause of the glitter to be two handsome gold watches. The arrests of the previous day, it was supposed, had alarmed some confederate, who had thrown his share of the plunder away in this manner. But why were the watches not smashed? They had been thrown in at high-water, when the beam on which they reposed was covered, and had sunk gently down upon it. They were discovered when the water was below the beam. The watches were Walker's, and it was natural to suppose that there were more in the river-bed; so on the following day, Sunday, a diver was set to work, and by Monday five gold watches had been recovered. The river was now guarded night and day to prevent an unauthorised hunt for watches. By 1st March eight gold watches had been yielded up by Father Thames, and by 3rd March eleven. Only one was found after that, making twelve in all. Of these seven were crystal-case watches and had not even their glasses broken; the other five, being hunting-case and ordinary open-face watches, had their glasses broken and were damaged by the water. No wonder: they had been thrown from a height exceeding sixty feet! Altogether sixty-five watches were recovered, and the total value of the Walker property retrieved was seventeen hundred pounds.

The police had now eleven men and women under arrest, and when they appeared at the Mansion House the dock was not large enough to hold them. They were not all implicated in the Walker job, but they were all members of the same gang. Scotty, *alias* Brown, *alias* Price, *alias* Elliott, whose

real name was John Miller, and who had suffered transportation for ten years for a burglary in Scotland, was called the Captain. He had an instinct for discovering places that could be successfully robbed. He 'spotted' the jobs and devised the line of attack. Though he had been arrested on 27th January in connection with the Wood Street silk robbery, and the Walker burglary did not take place till 4th February, yet it was Scotty's job. He had planned it, had worked upon it for weeks, and as usual his plans culminated in success. His enforced absence from the execution of his plans was a great disappointment; but he seemed to derive some relief from telling the court that it wasn't his fault that he was absent. Scotty's ablest lieutenant was Caseley. Though a sign-writer to trade, Caseley was a born mechanic. While Caseley was undergoing his sentence for the Walker robbery the then Lord Chief-Justice said to him, 'It is a pity you did not turn your talents to better account;' to which the convict replied, with great quickness and warmth, 'It is a pity the police did not let me.' He had already had four years for a previous crime, and his remark no doubt referred to the persecution convicts under supervision so often complain of suffering at the hands of the police.

It is not necessary to go into the details of the trial of those arraigned for the Walker burglary at the Central Criminal Court. It began on 12th April and was concluded the following day. Those indicted were David Roberts, forty-one, silk-weaver; W. H. Jeffery, twenty-seven, carpenter; Thomas Brewerton, twenty-seven, confectioner; Thomas Caseley, twenty-three, sign-writer; Martha Jeffery, twenty-eight, married; Ann Caseley, twenty-six, married; Louisa Brewerton, twenty-six, married. Montagu Williams defended Mrs Caseley. All the women, however, were discharged. They had no actual hand in the robbery, and were held, in so far as they were implicated, to have acted under the coercion of their husbands. Brewerton, Jeffery, and Caseley were found guilty of burglary, and Roberts of feloniously receiving. Jeffery was sentenced to twenty years, Caseley and Brewerton to fourteen years each, and Roberts to seven years. At the same time, in connection with the silk robbery and the Johnson robbery, evidence was heard immediately after the Walker case, when Scotty got twenty years, and Wilkinson (Carroty Fred) and Hurley ten years each. Thus was effectively broken up Scotty's gang. Only three men, it will be observed, were sentenced for burglary in the Walker case; yet it subsequently became known that five men took an active part in that affair. The other two were probably Carroty Fred and Hurley, who haunted Cornhill the Sunday before, watching the movements of the police.

Let it now be remembered that Mr Walker's shop was fully exposed to the view of the police or any one passing, and that it was the duty of the police to look into the apertures in his shutters every eleven minutes. How on earth could a safe be opened under such conditions and the police not discover what was going on? The policeman on the beat, it appeared, was even suspicious that all was not right, and was more vigilant than usual at the very moment the robbers were at work. Just a year and nine days after he had opened Mr Walker's safe, Caseley had the pleasure of seeing that safe as he had left it, and he was asked to explain how he opened it, and this is the thrilling tale he told: 'I went to Walker's with four others on Saturday night. Two, with myself, went inside by the side door at 6.10. We went up to the second floor, where we remained till 8.20, when we were signalled that the foreman had gone. Then we went down to the next floor (Sir Charles Crosley's office), where we opened the safe, and then remained quiet for hours doing nothing. At 12.20 we began work, and soon got into the tailor's beneath, where we remained all Sunday morning. At five minutes to three on Sunday afternoon we got into Walker's—myself and another, with tools. We had to go out again directly, for we were signalled that the police were coming. Then was signalled all clear. I tested the safe with a little wedge to see whether it was any use trying it seriously. It "held" the wedge. If it could resist, the wedge would fly off. I had to kneel down so as not to be seen by the police, who were round every nine minutes. They did their duty that day; no blame attaches to them. Every time they came round I had a signal, and had to kneel down to avoid being seen, and so we had often to stop our work. At last we found the safe give, which we were rather surprised at, as we expected and were prepared for a more difficult safe to deal with. We then knew we could get the safe open, and not long after we had it open. It did not take above thirty-five minutes, and out of that time several minutes should be deducted for the time we lost when the police came round. At a quarter to four we were up in Sir Charles Crosley's office washing our hands. We had only to use two instruments, though we had others with us. We were away at twenty to five. While we were at work below, one was sitting upstairs in Sir Charles Crosley's arm-chair giving signals by a string, and was in correspondence with the two men outside. One of these men was to see whether Walker or any of his people came; the other gave notice when the police were coming by walking past the shop. The man with me was half-way through the hole in the floor handing me the tools. We knew the whole family of the Walkers, and had been looking after them seven weeks night and morning. I had several times before been in Sir Charles Crosley's office after he had locked up, and had opened his safe. Once I found twenty-eight pounds in it, but didn't take it, as I did not wish to rob him. We did so on the night of the burglary lest he should laugh at us; and for the same reason we took the tailor's clothes. We concocted the burglary because all through January the police did not look through the shutter-

holes; but this time the policeman did do his duty, otherwise we should have opened the safe in a quarter of an hour. We have experimented on these safes before. Two of us took two of them to experimentalise upon, and we succeeded upon one after seven hours, and then by "unlawful" means—that is, with tools which could not be used without detection, as they made a noise. They were bars which had to be knocked in. That was returning back to old means: quite "old style." The other safe was opened in six hours with the best sort of "lawful" burglars' tools, including an iron bar five feet long, jointed in several pieces so as to be carried in a small case. That was the only thing which could open one of the best of these safes. The safe could not be opened with a wedge, which was only used for testing. The wedge remained in this [Walker's] safe, and we then saw it could be opened when the wedge "held." Then a bar was put in to release the wedge, and then another wedge a little larger to release the bar, and then another, and a larger bar to release the wedge. These bars, however, would not open the safe. They were only used to get what we call the "alderman" in—that is, a "head bar" which would open any safe. The smaller bars are called "citizens." These names are used to avoid the real words; it would not do to be heard in the streets talking of crowbars. In Walker's case the wedges only went in two or three times, the bars eight or nine times, and the "alderman" was not required at all.'

It was when he heard this extraordinary story that the Lord Chief-Justice said to Caseley, 'It is a pity you did not turn your talents to better account.'

For seven weeks preceding 4th February these clever scoundrels had been watching Mr Walker and his family night and morning. For six of these weeks Scotty was at large, and had no doubt visited Sir Charles Crosley's offices with Caseley. The whole plan is marked by his genius—the deliberation, the concealing in the premises before they were locked up, the elaborate signalling system. Scotty was arrested on the Friday of the previous week; but for that, there is reason to think that the burglary would have been committed a week earlier. Why else was Carroty Fred haunting Cornhill early on the previous Sunday, and so exposing himself to the scrutiny of the police? He lived on the other side of the water, miles from the others, and they had been unable to intimate to him that the job had been postponed.

Mr Walker's premises were never again burgled. He would have no more apertures in shutters—indeed, he would have no more shutters. If a little exposure is good, he argued, complete exposure is better; and thus he originated the system, now becoming general in the case of shops stocked with valuables, of leaving the windows naked.

ON FOODS AND FEEDING.

By J. Cater, M.D.

INCE life and health depend upon diet and digestion, both the food we take and the use we make of it become matters of the utmost importance. It is incumbent upon every one to select the most serviceable material, and to make intelligent use of it when provided.

By the word food we understand such things as, when introduced into the body, supply material for the renewal of its structures and energy for the maintenance of its various vital processes. Feeding has, therefore, two main purposes—namely, the maintenance of body-heat and the repair of daily waste.

We take our food in three different forms: solid, liquid, and gaseous. The latter consists mainly of the gas oxygen, and is of equal importance with the other two. Oxygen exists in combination with other elements in both liquid and solid food, but not in sufficient quantity for our daily requirement; therefore a large amount has to be obtained from the air we breathe. When thus secured it is taken up by the blood as it passes through the lungs, and carried to every part of the body. By the aid of oxygen chemical changes take place which are known as oxidation, and material is burnt up to yield heat for the temperature of the body. Hence the value of an adequate supply of fresh air can scarcely be exaggerated. To secure this supply efficient ventilation in our dwellings and regular out-of-door exercise become quite as important as the food we pass on to our stomachs; and if we fail to secure a sufficiency of this gas the value of all other food-stuff is considerably reduced, and the temperature of our body is liable to fall below the normal of health.

Our liquid food is represented by the water we drink, whether plain or with flavouring substances in solution. A considerable amount of water enters into the composition of solid foods; yet, over and above what may be taken in this way, several pints are required daily to restore the daily waste. Something like 87 per cent. of the substantial material of the human body consists of water. A large proportion of this is being continuously dispersed during the twenty-four hours of the day. The dissipation takes place partly by the breath (for with expired air there is always moisture), partly by sweat from the skin, and partly by the kidneys and other organs of excretion. To repair this constant loss, a new supply must be provided

to the extent, as we have remarked, of several pints a day. The fluids of our diet serve to soften the more solid substances, and so facilitate digestion; they help to maintain the proper proportion of the fluid-part of the blood, and thus hold nutriment in solution; and, lastly, they aid in carrying off waste products, which, if allowed to accumulate, would act as poisons in the system.

The solid forms of food are known as animal and vegetable substances; and as the same kind of nutritive elements enter into the composition of both, they are interchangeable. There is, however, an important difference not to be lost sight of: animal food has these nutritive elements in a condensed form, so that less animal than vegetable food is required to produce a given result.

Animal food may be obtained from the creature while it is yet alive, as is the case with milk, eggs, and other products; it is also obtained from the animal's flesh after death. It is a nitrogenous food; for, besides the elements carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, it contains a definite proportion of nitrogen. These elements combined in unvarying quantities form the constituents of albumen, which is the most important single article of our diet. It is present in all compound animal structures and in all animal food-substances. It is the most compact form of food that we have, and, while yielding a larger proportion of nutriment, furnishes a smaller quantity of waste than any other solid food. A meat diet, containing as it does a large proportion of albuminous substances, is both flesh-forming and heat-producing; and these are the two main purposes of our dietary. Animal fat is destitute of nitrogen; nevertheless, it serves a useful end in producing and maintaining the body-temperature. It is taken more freely in the colder climates, and more liberally in winter than in summer. A small portion of fatty substance exists in the interstices of lean meat; but the amount is not sufficient for our daily requirement; therefore we supplement this by partaking of the fattier portions of flesh food and by the use of such manufactured articles as butter.

Now, it has been observed that the same kind of constituents are found in vegetable as in animal food. Analysis gives us exactly the same elements; but in the one we have fat, while in the other we have sugar and starch. The sugar and starch of vegetable food are the equivalent of fat in animal substances, and both serve a similar purpose. If, therefore, we are asked whether either form of solid food is to be preferred, we should make something like the following reply: animal food is more easily digested, whether raw or cooked; vegetable material requires much preparation before it can be sufficiently dissolved and perfectly transformed into nutriment. Mutton is more quickly digested than bread, and an egg more readily than a potato. Moreover, a greater bulk of vegetable stuff must be consumed to produce a definite amount of nutriment; consequently there is a proportionate increase in the refuse, which throws extra work upon the organs of excretion. On comparing the two kinds of solid food, we find that a vegetable diet involves extra volume and better cooking. It also requires a longer period and greater power of digestion; and when it is digested it excites the vital processes more slowly and in a lesser degree.

When referring to the fluid form of food no mention was made of milk. This article contains within itself all the elements of nutrition, and contains them, moreover, in the most digestible form. An adult person may live entirely upon fresh cow's milk; and many who are so dieted in our hospitals return to their homes in a better condition than when they left them. The amount of real nourishment in milk is far greater than is generally supposed. It has been demonstrated that 'ten grains of new cow's milk, when consumed in the body, produces sufficient heat to be equal to a lifting power of twelve hundred and sixty-six pounds one foot high.' These facts alone should bring home to our minds the great importance of influencing our legislators to secure for the public a regular supply of fresh cow's milk.

Recently a form of milk has been put upon the market which experience has proved to be a perfect food, and which is as easily and completely digested as any substance known. Happily it is not one of those mysterious preparations which so often fascinate the public; it is simply the result of milk evaporation. By a gentle heat all the water contained in the milk is driven off as vapour, and the residue is the fine white powder named 'plasmon,' which for all practical purposes is the solid and nutritive constituents of the milk. Plasmon can be used with any other article of diet, since it is tasteless in itself; or it can be prepared in a dozen different ways, simply flavoured and sweetened according to taste. It would be extremely difficult to drink a quart of milk several times a day; but by consuming a comparatively small bulk of plasmon the nutrition of the several quarts would be secured without the large amount of water. The late Professor Virchow lived entirely upon this diet for some fourteen days, and he never felt hungry, and was always well.

Ordinarily we utilise both vegetable and animal material at our daily meals. This is not a necessity, but a matter of prudence; for a mixed diet is more pleasing to the palate, and therefore more likely to meet with acceptance on the part of the digestive apparatus. Taking always the same kind of material for a meal would become monotonous, and deprive us of that which we call appetite; but when there is sufficient variety the natural desire is sharpened, and food is taken with a much keener relish.

In order to utilise our food we place it in suitable portions within the alimentary canal. This is a long tube passing from the mouth to the extremity. Its course extends over some twenty-eight feet; and at about twelve inches from the mouth there is an enlargement called the stomach. Along the walls of this tube and its enlargement there are numerous

small glands which secrete fluids. During its passage through this tube the food undergoes considerable change, which renders it capable of being absorbed and becoming a part of ourselves. So long as the food remains in this tube, at any part of its course, so long is it outside the body. This assertion may appear strange, so let us try to realise the fact. A water-pipe has been laid from the main in the roadway right through a new house without a single tap or outlet of any sort, until after it has passed some distance beyond the back part of the building. Of what practical use would that water-supply be to the tenants of the house? The water is not in the house—it is merely carried through; but with taps provided in several parts of the house the full benefits of the water-supply would be available for the occupants. If our food merely passes through the alimentary canal, and is not digested and assimilated, for all practical purposes it remains outside the body, and fails in its purpose. How, then, is this important function of digestion and assimilation accomplished?

The first stage takes place in the mouth, and is twofold in character. It consists of grinding and tearing the food-stuff into small fragments, and then saturating the particles with the juices secreted in the mouth, called saliva. These juices have the power of converting insoluble starchy material into soluble sugars, and of rendering the whole bolus of food alkaline, which specially prepares it for the work of the stomach. On reaching the stomach the gastric juices are poured out upon the meal, and an acid reaction occurs exactly the opposite of that which took place in the mouth. The muscular fibres in the stomach-wall contract and relax, so as to cause an oscillatory movement, tossing the food about by an action similar to that of churning. At the third stage the churned food which has left the stomach comes into contact with bile and pancreatic juice, which, like the saliva, is alkaline. Great chemical changes occur at this point, and any starchy material which may have escaped unchanged from the mouth is now arrested and acted upon by the fluids here. Lastly, the transit of food-material along the intestine secures still further and greater changes. The intestinal juices render the nutritive matter capable of passing in liquid form through the walls of the tube by a kind of diffusion. Each one of these stages is of equal importance to ensure perfect digestion; and the functions at each must be properly performed. If the teeth are bad, instead of food being properly masticated, it is in all probability 'bolted.' If the delicate membrane which lines the stomach is thickened by excess of alcohol or is covered by thick mucus of inflammatory troubles, the gastric secretions are unable to accomplish their task. If the liver and pancreas are inactive, or the intestine is blocked by partially digested food, the other processes cannot be properly carried out. Then, small wonder if appetite is lost and all relish for food is gone.

Now, by what mechanism are these prepared food-materials taken up into our bodies? The process is generally spoken of as one of assimilation. There are two routes by which the nutritive elements pass into the blood. One is by fine tubes called lacteals, which take up all fatty substances and carry them through the lymphatic vessels into the venous blood. These lacteals are distributed along a considerable portion of the bowel, forming small projections on the inner side of the tube. The other path is by fine hair-like tubes called capillaries. These are tiny vessels which connect together the smaller arteries with the smallest veins. They form meshes, as it were, about the walls of the stomach and intestine, and into them the now fluid nourishment diffuses; and they carry the nutriment into a large vein which passes through the liver, and thence onwards into the general blood-stream. Thus are all forms of food-material, after elaborate digestion, rendered into diffusible fluids and passed on into the blood.

The final step is the business of distribution; and this, of course, is carried out by means of the circulation. The blood is the general carrier of the body, and conveys nutrition to every part of the system. It parts with the nutritive elements by a similar process of diffusion, scattering everywhere supplies for repair of the waste. Nor is this quite all, for an exchange takes place, so that while the blood parts with the nutriment, it also takes up all waste products, and carries them along to be excreted from the body by the breath, the skin, and the kidneys. Undigested or partially digested food, not being diffusible, is left in the alimentary canal, to be excreted at its extremity.

In conclusion, then, we may say that digestion is a series of complicated and lengthy processes, and not one single act of the stomach, as is so often supposed; and, moreover, that when the food is completely digested other processes almost as complicated are set in motion before the benefits of a meal can reach our structures. Failure at any part of the mechanism, or interference with any of its functions, involves disturbance of health and finally disease.

THE KINGSHIP OF THE HILLS.

Born in the purple, the red grouse cry;
Born in the purple, the whaups reply;
Born in the purple, the clouds are kings
Sailing away on their snow-white wings.
The eagle high on the ruby peak
Has the scorn o' the vale in his curling beak;
And every burn that goes dancing down
Has a purple robe and a silver crown!

The lightnings flash like a jewel-land;
The thunder rolls like a king's command;
With a palace-roof of the windy stars,
Where God looks over His golden bars.
Here, in the pride of all high-born things,
The red-deer go with the gait of kings;
And only a step from their cottage-doors
The rough hill-shepherds are emperors!

W. H. Ogilvie.

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SIXTH SERIES.

TALKS WITH GIRLS.

By KATHARINE BURRILL.

DIANA AND ATALANTA.

Give a man a horse he can ride,
Give a man a boat he can sail,
And his rank and wealth, his strength and health,
On sea nor shore shall fail.

HALF the people you meet will tell you the above verse applies to girls quite as much as to boys. If a man's 'health and strength' never fail him while going in for games and sports, equally a girl's will not fail her. But they do—and that is just the difficulty. Physically a girl is not so well fitted for an immense amount of hard exercise as a man is—though of course you do meet weather-beaten-looking women who glory in being 'as hard as nails;' still, most young girls would be wise to take their exercise and play their games in moderation. If moderation is the watchword, a girl's cricket, hockey, and golf will do her all the good in the world; but if she plays till she is only fit to lollop into an arm-chair and sit in a crumpled heap, then she would have been much better to have merely gone for a brisk walk. We all love Diana; but no one cares for broken-down Dianas, and unfortunately they are by no means rare. To *work* yourself into ill-health is bad, but sometimes unavoidable; to *play* yourself into various 'itises' is merely futile and tiresome. If you find any particular game thoroughly exhausts and tires you, give it up and play something milder. Why girls do not walk more always surprises me. It is so much more interesting to move about and see things than stick in one field or on one square of mown lawn. Any doctor will tell you that walking is the finest exercise in the world. Girls who are lucky enough to live in Edinburgh have the most beautiful walks at their very doors. Yet I am constantly surprised to meet people to whom the slopes of the Pentlands are an unexplored region, and who have never climbed Arthur's Seat. Why, some people do not even know Corstorphine Hill nor the Braid Burn. An Edinburgh girl once, quite unabashed, said to me, 'You go up Nicolson Street; yes, but where *is* Nicolson Street?' Streets are most interesting to walk in, if you keep your eyes open; even the smokiest and dreariest of cities has its 'bits' of colour, its fine architecture, old and new. I cannot remember whether it was Frank Buckland or a clergyman friend of his who said he was kept up for the entire day by the sight of a Flying Buttress! All the world is full of flying buttresses to cheer us up; but you will not see them if you do not look out for them. One person goes for a walk and sees a hundred objects of interest; another goes the same walk, sees nothing, and says her boots hurt. Read what Hazlitt and R. L. Stevenson say about walking Tours. 'All I ask, the heaven above and the road below me.' We, alas! would not be able to see with the eyes of either of these walkers; but we can all cultivate the seeing eye, the hearing ear, and the thinking head.

During the last year we heard a great deal about walking; but it was walking-races or walking for a wager. What possible pleasure there can be in knowing you finish your mile in two minutes less than John Smith or Peter Jones is beyond me. Most of the men overdid themselves thoroughly; the Brighton Road must have been a distressing sight when the Stock Exchange did their great walk. Last summer I met the remnant of a walking-race: it was wet, it was very muddy—so were they; each man had a large ticket pinned on him as at a Cattle Show; only the Fat Stock generally look pleased and comfortable, while my walkers looked supremely miserable. I hope the prizes were substantial; the walkers would need cheering up after all the mud.

If girls knew what a real pleasure it is to meet a woman who carries herself well and steps well, neatly and sensibly shod (there is something, you know, between a flapping sandal and a Louis Quinze heel), with no tags of muddy lace nor ends of braid, they would take more trouble about their foot-gear and how they walk. Over and over again a beautiful

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hat and a well-made gown are ruined by sloppy shoes or trodden-down heels. Few girls walk really well. Very often a fine upstanding young woman who does hold herself well spoils the effect by a manly stride and a swinging arm. A girl need not mince nor strut because she does not wear Seven League Boots. Swedish Exercises (I wish every one would go in for them) will teach the worst walker to walk really well and with the least fatigue to herself. The women of what we may call the Balmoral Boot and Pork-Pie Hat Period—you will see them in Leech's pictures or on the outside of a very old-fashioned Croquet-set box—are much condemned by the modern nymphs because they did not take sufficient exercise; I am constantly informed that they spent the entire day doing Berlin Wool work and gossiping. Well! I've heard the wielder of a golf-club take her own fair share in a gossip 'Klatch;' and whatever their faults, the women of fifty years ago walked well and held themselves well, and sat erect instead of lolling and lounging. Who are the best walkers to-day? Not our young friends in the flat caps without the 'rid Toories,' but the elderly, indeed we may say the old, ladies. I suppose if you once learned to be graceful in a crinoline (what will become of the Hockey-Players if Fashion ever brings it back again?) you would be graceful for all time. Madame La Baronne must, I think, have lived in the Wire Cage Period, and I am sure she never swung on horizontal bars, joined a Golf Club, nor played cricket, and yet it is 'a good joy' to see her cross the room—and a better joy to go for a walk with her. Her footstep is as light and soft as her voice is low and sweet. Is she young? Is she old? You neither think nor care—hers is the beauty of face and heart and mind that never grows old, that is for ever young and for ever charming. Madame La Baronne! I make you my deepest *révérence*. Would there were more great ladies like you.

I suppose the 'shin-pads' have taken the place of Diana's buskins; if the latter are more romantic, you could hardly play hockey in them, and, as every one knows, during the winter months hockey reigns supreme. Personally, there is too much of 'the rigour of the game' about it for me, and I would only play were I allowed to come on the field in the complicated but protective costume worn by Tweedledum and Tweedledee when they 'agreed to have a Battle.' As, according to the rules, I would not even be allowed to wear a hat-pin nor a hard hat, the Tweedledeean head-dress—a coal-scuttle—would be ruthlessly condemned. Some of the rules struck me as being very applicable to everyday life. 'Don't forget to "worry" your opponent;' if you worry and harry an enemy he will soon be worn out; this rule I intend to remember. 'Keep your eye on the Ball'—excellent! Make up your mind what your 'Ball' in life is, and then never take your eyes off it if you want to succeed. After all, we can all choose our 'Ball' and stick to it. It 's the other people's fascinating balls that distract our attention. We are so sure life would have been so different had our ball been a different colour, a little more golden, a little less gray. Nonsense! Give it a good hard smash with your hockey-stick. See! it has turned over, and the under side is deep, bright gold after all.

'Obey your Captain.' We all captain something or other (or will), and we all have some one else over us. Obey when in subjection, and insist on obedience when in authority; if you cannot obey yourself you will never get any one to obey *you*. Hockey may by some people be looked upon as a rather rough and Tom Boy game for girls; but, 'in good sooth, a young maid is all the better for learning some robuster virtues than maidenliness and not to move the antimacassars.' These robuster virtues are not acquired sitting with your toes on the fender. I wrote to a keen hockey-player who distinguishes herself when playing for her county, 'Please tell me what benefits you derive mentally and physically from playing hockey?' Her reply, 'Mentally and physically I am much the better for hockey, and could not get through the winter without it,' is a good testimonial in favour of this favourite winter game. Nearly all young girls play cricket, and a good many older girls. But it is rather an unfortunate fact that a great many of them are what we might call Farmyard runners. The scuttling hen, the galumphing calf, and the lumbering cow are all copied more or less accurately and ungracefully by many girls. The ideal runner is like Beatrice: she copies the lapwing, and 'runs close by the ground.'

Women have invaded the field of sport as well as the cricket-field; whether they were well advised in doing so is open to question. If they are going to shoot, they must learn to shoot really well, not be merely a nuisance and a danger to themselves and other people. We have all suffered directly or indirectly from Mr Winkle; the letting loose of a flock of Miss Winkles would add a new terror to life. Girls who wish to become first-rate shots (many people think shooting a quite unnecessary accomplishment) could not do better than have lessons at the school for shooting, an account of which, with excellent illustrations, appeared lately in either *The Ladies' Field* or *Country Life*. If girls have the requisite amount of patience, fishing is a pleasing and soothing pastime. Dear old Izaak Walton wrote:

> Other joys
> Are but toys,
> And to be lamented.

Those who do not agree with him, and think there are plenty of joys that are something more than lamentable toys, can read Leigh Hunt's essay on Angling; his views are very different from those of *The Compleat Angler*. Of course Leigh Hunt had very big ideas: wanted to ride a Hippogriff or Sinbad's Roc, and actually wished Shakespeare and Spenser to make new books for him, and Sir Walter to write forty more new Waverley Novels. If his

heaven upon earth 'could not do without cows' because of the landscape, I am sure he would exclude fishing from that Terrestrial Paradise where 'the weather will be extremely fine but not without such varieties as shall hinder it from being tiresome.'

Becky Sharp thought everything good that came from India; we think everything good that comes from Scotland, from 'Shortbread' to 'Wee Macgreegor'—the best of all good things is golf. Poor Becky found the chili a distinct disappointment; people who take to golf will not be disappointed, they will learn to love the game more and more. When played on fine Links—'Are these the Links of Forth? she cried'—in good weather, or what is known in the North as 'a graun' day'—there is no game like it. It is an excellent game for girls (if they do not cultivate a golf-links stride which suggests stepping over bunkers), and has one immense advantage, that you can go on playing it till you are quite old. It is equally the game of the veteran or the small boy. People who do not play, or whose idea of a golf-course is the pleasing ploughed field laid out in stubble and bricks near a new suburb, naturally fail to see the delights of

Rinnin' aboot wi' a bag o' sticks
Efter a wee bit ba';

but your golfer, man or woman, is always an enthusiast. I do not believe that even the author of *The Unspeakable Scot* could have a word to say against the Royal and Ancient Game.

Girls who go in for all these various games have not much time left for what are known as the Domestic Virtues: poor despised things they are considered nowadays. Still, it is a great pity if a girl becomes entirely one-sided; the grasp of the hockey-stick or a tennis-racquet ought not to prevent your knowing how to thread a needle. You can play golf and cricket and occasionally open a book. You might even bake the cake to be eaten on the return from a good long walk. The 'snowy-souled' Atalanta, mighty huntress as she was, paid dearly and sadly for her 'armed and iron maidenhood.' It does not altogether do to sink everything in becoming an all-round good sportswoman.

Oh! can ye sew cushions?
And can ye sew sheets?
And can ye sing balaloo when the bairnie greets?

In my book on hockey that I studied so carefully I noticed the players were advised to 'wear plain, strong gloves to save the hands.' That *saving* was, I suppose, from hard knocks and injury more than to save their appearance. But a pretty hand is a very pleasing thing, and a soft hand is a very comforting thing. Your 'hard-as-nails' girl, of course, looks with contempt on a white hand; but are red knuckly, chilblainy hands so *very* attractive? You do not want a flabby, useless, 'butterfingers' hand; but a beautiful hand is a very beautiful thing. Think of the hands Vandyke painted in his pictures. In all Genoa there is no more perfect thing than the portrait of the Marchesa Brignole Sale, with her exquisitely shaped hand painted against the background of her dark gown. You may forget the Campo Santo—horrible, chilly, ghostly place: imagine being lost in those long galleries!—you will forget the docks and harbour, which are not a bit finer than the Broomielaw; but no one who has once seen her will ever forget the Marchesa, with her little hand. Do you remember 'the stocky boy' in *Amos Barton*, how he admired his mother's pretty hand? People of the duller sort, who invariably tell you that 'the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton,' also always tell you 'the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.' Of course no one does rock a cradle nowadays, that being one of the nice, comfortable things that are pronounced bad for a child's head, spine, and 'Little Mary.' What a world it is that destroys all one's theories! Surely Oatmeal might have been left to us; but we are now told it is a kind of slow poison. Well! we all know what happened to the Caledonian when he forsook his mutton and claret for port; worse may befall him if he listens to The Southern, gives up his porridge, and takes to 'Loaf Bread.' However, if we still stick to our porridge we may perhaps still continue to rock cradles. If any girl either wants to rule the world, or send Wynken, Blynken, and Nod to sleep in their wooden shoe with a gentle swing, let her try to have a nice hand to do it with—not an idle hand, nor a useless, nor a hard, but a gentle, tender hand that, however soft, can still do hard work and hard play, and is never weary in well-doing.

Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is earnest, brave, and true,
Moment by moment the whole day through.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER XII.—THE SIGN OF THE BEAR-CUB.

THE exterior of the house was by no means inviting.

The old lady had entered there in secret, without a doubt; otherwise she would have driven up to the door instead of alighting at the corner of Southampton Row.

I passed by on the opposite side, and, as there was a street-lamp quite near, was enabled to examine it fairly well, even though darkness had now set in.

All the blinds were down, and the inside shutters of the basement were closely barred. There was no light in any part, nor any sign of life within. In fact, the state of the windows and door-steps would lead to a conclusion that the old place was tenantless, for the exterior possessed a distinct air of

neglect. Other houses in the row were of stereotyped exactness, but all more or less smarter, with steps hearthstoned and lights showing in the windows here and there. The one into which the old woman had so quickly disappeared was, however, grim, silent, forbidding.

As I strolled to the corner of Theobald's Road I wondered what next I should do. I wanted to secure possession of the book, but without litigation, and if possible in secret. Yet it was a very difficult matter, as Hammond had pointed out.

Rain commenced to fall, and after my long journey from the Mediterranean I felt cold and dead-beat. Therefore, my eyes catching sight of a glaring public-house nearly opposite, I crossed and obtained some brandy and the loan of the *London Directory*.

After some little search I therein found the name of the occupier of the dingy old place, as follows: '106, Gardiner, Margaret.'

London's mysteries are many and inscrutable. Surely here was a strange and inexplicable one. Why, indeed, should a mere old book of no value save to a collector be stolen from me in the far-off South, and spirited away at express speed across the Continent to that dark, grimy, unlit place? There was some deep, direct motive in it all, of course; but what it was I could not conceive—except that the suspicion was strong upon me that, written within The Closed Book was some remarkable and highly profitable secret, as indeed the writer himself alleged.

Again I strolled up Harpur Street past the silent house, keenly examining its every detail.

I noticed, to my surprise, that during my brief absence the venetian blind of one of the first-floor windows had been drawn up half-way, and that on a table quite close to it stood a small stuffed animal—a tiny bear-cub I made it out to be. There was a feeble light within, as though the big room was lit only by a single candle.

At the end of the street I crossed and returned past the house, walking on the opposite side of the way and re-examining the windows.

Yes, it was evidently a candle burning there, and as I passed I saw a long shadow thrown directly across the window, then suddenly disappear.

Could it be that the animal had been placed there as signal to some one who would pass outside?

Somehow I became convinced that this was so. The blind had been raised just sufficiently to show the small bear-cub mounted on its hind-legs and holding a card-tray. I recollected having seen one very similar on the table of the Savage Club—a present from one of the members.

My natural cautiousness prompted me to wait and watch for the coming of the person for whom the silent signal was intended—if signal it were; therefore, I lit a cigarette and halted at the dark corner of East Street, the short turning at the end of the thoroughfare wherein the silent house was situated.

As I was dressed only in a thin suit of blue serge, which one generally wears in summer in Italy when not in white ducks, the steadily falling rain soon soaked me through. My straw hat hung clammily on my head, and the water dripped down my neck, rendering me most uncomfortable. There was every prospect of a soaking night—different, indeed, from that clear, rainless sky that I had just left. Ah! how dismal London seemed to me at that hour, jaded, wet, and worn-out as I was! Still, with that dogged determination which some of my enemies have said is my chief characteristic, I remained there watching for the coming of the unknown, who must be privy to the plot.

Time after time as I stood back in the shelter of a doorway, compelled ever and anon to go forth into the rain and keep my vigil, I wondered whether the conclusion I had formed was actually the right one.

The feeble light flickered in the dark room, but showed not the interior because of the smoky lace-curtains, dingy and yellow. Yet there stood the stuffed bear-cub clearly silhouetted, the only object visible upon that dark, forbidding façade.

More than once I heard footsteps coming from Theobald's Road, and rushed from my hiding-place to encounter the passer-by. But each time I was disappointed. The postman came on his last delivery, but only stopped at the big offices of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, almost opposite the house I was watching, then swung round the corner to Lamb's Conduit Street.

A policeman passed with heavy tread, flashing his bull's-eye carelessly down the areas and glancing at me inquiringly; then in the roadway through the slush came a man and a woman, Italians, dragging a street-organ wearily homeward to Saffron Hill. I watched them and wondered from what part of Italy they came.

As they went by I heard the man, a strong, black-browed fellow of twenty-seven or so, exclaim, '*Accidenti!*' and knew that he was a Tuscan. The woman (old, brown-faced, and wrinkled) only sighed and dragged harder.

They went forward, turned the corner into Theobald's Road, and a few moments later the strident strains of 'Soldiers of the Queen' rang out amid the bustle of the thoroughfare and the roar of traffic. They had evidently stopped before the public-house where I had borrowed the *Directory*, in the hope of earning a last copper or two before relinquishing their day's work.

Attracted by the music, I strolled back towards the spot where they had halted, and as I did so encountered two persons. One was a tall, gray-haired, rather sad-looking old gentleman, dressed somewhat shabbily, wearing an old ulster, but without umbrella; the other was an extremely pretty, fair-haired girl of perhaps twenty-two, pale-faced, and evidently agitated, for she clung to his arm and was whisper-

ing something to him as she walked. She was apparently imploring him to hear her; but he went on stolidly, heedless of her words. Her dress was plain, and, it seemed to me, betrayed the pinch of poverty. Like her companion, she had no umbrella, and her plain sailor-hat and black jacket were sodden with the rain.

Her face, however, struck me as one of the most perfect I had ever seen in all my life. That woman whom I had met in the Prior's study in Florence was certainly handsome; but hers was of an entirely different type of beauty, a face about which there certainly could be no two opinions, but a face full of tragic force and energy.

This woman, however, bore a sweet expression, rendered the more interesting by that earnest, imploring look as I passed her by unnoticed. Her companion was, it struck me, a broken-down gentleman, while she herself possessed an air of refinement in face and figure, in spite of her shabby attire, that caused me to set her down as no ordinary girl.

Her extreme beauty made me turn after them.

The old man, with his thin, hard face, yet gentle eyes, was still obdurate. She held back, but without a word he closed her arm to his and pulled her forward. He seemed to walk mechanically, while she appeared bent on arresting his farther progress.

Suddenly, as I strolled on behind them, they came in full view of the window and its mysterious signal.

'Ah!' I overheard the old fellow cry in a tone of satisfaction. 'See! As I hoped. At last—at last!'

'It means death—death!' the girl added in a tone more hoarse and despairing than ever I have before heard in a woman.

Who could she be who spoke of death with such certain assurance as that?

The mysterious signal up there meant death! Ah, how full London is of romance and tragedy exhibited on every side if one only walks with one's eyes open!

I had been close enough to overhear these words that confirmed my suspicion, and I must confess they held me dumfounded. I had expected to meet some slinking thief or some hulking receiver of stolen property, who would come to look for the bear-cub in the window. Certainly I had, on first encountering the pair, never for a moment believed that the signal was placed there for them.

The man raised his head again, as though to make certain that his eyes had not deceived him, and as he did so I caught a glance of the girl's white countenance in the wind-blown light of the street-lamp.

Never, to my last day, shall I forget the terrible expression of blank despair in those wonderful eyes. All light and life had died out of her fair face. She looked as though her young heart had, at the sight of that fateful sign, been frozen by some nameless terror.

I had seen plays in which a woman's despair was depicted, but never had I witnessed real despair until that moment. Hideous is the only word that describes it.

At the end of the short thoroughfare they turned and walked back past the house, feigning, however, not to notice the lighted window. The instant I had overheard these strange ejaculations I crossed the road and hurried on round the corner out of sight, in order that they should not detect me following them; but, watching their return, I turned again and went after them into Theobald's Road.

On through the rain they trudged in the direction of Oxford Street, wet to the skin, for the downpour still continued without cessation, and the pavements shone beneath the gaslights. Neither tram-cars nor cabs attracted them, for it seemed more than likely that their extreme poverty did not allow them the luxury of a conveyance.

The girl's hand was held to her breast as she walked, as though to stay the fierce beating of her heart, but her companion strode on steadily with fixed purpose and deep-knit brows.

I had been loath to relinquish my vigil before that silent house, fearing that the little old woman who had entered there might emerge again and carry my precious Arnoldus with her. Yet, on the other hand, this strange pair who had come there in secret and read the signal, deeply interested me, and my curiosity impelled me to follow them.

The loud, ear-piercing runs of a street-piano suddenly recalled to my mind the pair of Italians I had noticed ten minutes before; and as we passed them playing before another public-house near Southampton Row, I halted for a moment, stepped aside, and spoke to the beetle-browed young Tuscan in his own tongue.

'Listen. I want you to assist me,' I exclaimed quickly. 'There's no time to lose, and you'll get half-a-sovereign if you do as I direct. Go back alone to Harpur Street—that short turning you came up ten minutes ago—and watch a house with a stuffed bear in the upper window—No. 106. If any one comes out, follow her—especially a little old woman. Wait there till I rejoin you. Will you do it?'

'Certainly, signore,' was the young fellow's prompt reply. 'No. 106, you say? Very well, trust me. My mother, here, can hire somebody to help her home with the *organino*.'

'Very well. What's your name?'

'Farini Enrico,' he replied, placing the surname first in Italian style; 'born at Ponte Moriano, Provincia di Lucca. The signore knows Tuscany—does he?'

'Yes,' I answered. 'Wait for me near that house; but don't let any one see you are watching. I'll return as soon as possible. Lose no time.' And I hurried away after the old man in the long ulster and his white-faced companion.

They had gained upon me considerably; but I

soon overtook them, satisfied that in any case my watch upon the house would not be relinquished. I had lived sufficiently long in Tuscany to be able to read the Tuscan character, and I saw by the young man's manner that he was not the usual *contadino* who comes to London to grind an organ, but from his speech of quite a superior class. He wore his felt hat slightly askew, and beneath a rather forbidding exterior I detected that he possessed a keen sense of humour. His black, shining eyes laughed merrily when he mentioned his own village—a village I knew quite well, a few miles beyond the quiet, aristocratic old town of Lucca, and I saw that the very fact that I had spoken to him in his own tongue had at once secured him my servant. Italians are such children when you know them thoroughly!

I had little time for reflection, however, for the traffic of Oxford Street, although the night was wet, was considerable; and, while having some difficulty in keeping the pair in sight, I was also compelled to exercise a good deal of precaution in order to avoid recognition as the man who had encountered them in Harpur Street.

On they went at the same pace, heedless of the drenching rain, turning into Regent Street, then into Maddox Street, and across Grosvenor Square into Grosvenor Street, the centre of the West End. Suddenly, however, to my amazement, they ascended the steps of one of the best houses in the latter street; and the man, taking a latch-key from his pocket, opened the door with an air of proprietorship, and a moment later both disappeared from view, the door closing behind them.

Such a house, a veritable mansion in one of the most expensive thoroughfares in London, was the very last place I would have suspected to be their abode.

I repassed, and saw that it had been recently repainted, and presented a smart and handsome exterior. Flowers bloomed in the window-boxes, and a striped awning was spread over the portico. I noted that the number was 62A, and the next house I recognised as Viscount Lanercost's. The manner in which the shabby-genteel pair had slipped into the house showed secrecy, and yet the confident way in which the old man opened the door betrayed that he was no stranger to the place.

Again I had recourse to the pages of that book of revelation, the *London Directory*—which I obtained in a bar at the end of Park Lane, frequented mostly by gentlemen's servants—and there I found that the occupier was the Earl of Glenelg, the wealthy Scotch peer and ex-Under-Secretary, whose name had long been familiar to me, as no doubt it was to my readers, through the columns of the newspapers.

Could it be possible that the man in the shabby ulster for whom that mysterious signal had been placed in the window was actually his lordship himself?

If so, who was his white-faced companion—the beautiful woman who was terrorised?

Every moment the mystery grew more profound, more inexplicable, more bewildering.

MATCH-MAKING.

By T. C. Hepworth.

ESS than one hundred years ago the lucifer match was unknown. One can hardly imagine such a state of things; for the match is an article of such hourly need that it is impossible to realise a time when it was not obtainable. There were, of course, other methods of 'striking a light,' and have been ever since the world began; for the use of fire was one of the earliest things with which man became acquainted. We are told by the ancient poets that fire was originally stolen from heaven by one Prometheus; but, whatever the origin assigned to it, there is no doubt that it was at one time held in something like awe and reverence.

The primitive method of obtaining fire by means of the heat generated by rubbing two pieces of wood together seems to have been the common property of savage nations throughout the world, just as the flint-and-steel was used later in more civilised communities. There are many now alive who can remember the time when the tinder-box, with its associated flint-and-steel, was still in common household use; and these implements can be found in many an old curiosity shop. The box was of metal, and measured about four inches across; and the tinder was made of cambric by preference, and ladies would set aside their old handkerchiefs for this use. After igniting in a flame, the cambric was shut up in the box, so that, the air being excluded, the fabric would not burn to ash but was simply carbonised. This was the tinder, and a few sparks from the flint-and-steel would soon cause it to smoulder; the feeble fire was then encouraged by the breath, a splinter of wood tipped with sulphur was brought into requisition, and flame was produced. It was a roundabout way of getting fire, but it was the best that was known up to about the year 1834, if we except the burning-glass method, which depended upon the help of the sun.

An interesting modification of the tinder-box was the employment of a flint-lock pistol action, the pan being occupied by a piece of tinder instead of gunpowder. This appliance was much valued for outdoor use, and was familiar enough to stage-coach

travellers. It may not be generally known that a contrivance called the steel-mill, in which a soft iron disc was rapidly turned in contact with a file or other piece of hardened steel, was commonly employed by miners as a source of light before the introduction of the safety-lamp.

Although phosphorus was discovered by Brandt as long ago as the year 1669, it was not employed as a light-producer until about a century and a half later. It was at first a chemical rarity, costing about three guineas an ounce; but in 1830 a means was discovered of producing it at a cheap rate from bones, and its employment for match-making became possible. There were, however, many other means of getting fire before the advent of the phosphorus match. The electrophorus, consisting of a disc of resin in a metal tray, would give an electric spark when excited by friction; but it had a trick of refusing to work except in dry weather. And there was the fire-syringe, sometimes called the pneumatic syringe, by which a piece of tinder could be ignited by the heat induced by sudden compression of air by a piston. A neater light-producer was the lamp invented by Döbereiner, in which a stream of hydrogen was ignited by impinging upon finely divided platinum, which at once became white-hot. This employment of platinum has been lately revived in the introduction of a self-lighting gas-burner and of independent gas-lighters, which merely require to be held for a moment in a stream of issuing gas to ignite the same.

A chemical match came into use as early as the year 1807. It consisted of a splint of wood tipped with a mixture of potassic chlorate and sugar, which would burst into flame when dipped into a bottle holding asbestos saturated with sulphuric acid. Another kind of match which depended upon the same chemical agents was the 'promethean,' which took the form of a paper spill charged at the end with a little of the same mixture, together with a tiny bulb of glass containing the acid. This bulb had to be broken by a blow so as to inflame the chlorate and sugar compound.

The first really efficient lucifer match must be put to the credit of Mr John Walker of Stockton-on-Tees, who in the year 1827 placed them on the market under the name of 'congreves,' in compliment to Sir William Congreve, the inventor of the war-rocket. These matches were sold for a shilling a box, which contained, besides a few dozen of the matches, a little piece of folded sand-paper, through which each splint of wood had to be drawn before it could be made to inflame. An original tin box, stamped with the Royal Arms and bearing the word 'Congreves,' is preserved as a curiosity in one of the London museums.

As in the case of all other industries, this one was initiated by hand-labour alone. The splints of wood were no doubt originally dipped in the igniting composition one by one; but subsequently they were tied up in bundles and dipped *en bloc*, the workman giving each bundle a twist with his hands so that the end of each splint would be free to move to a certain extent, and absorb a little more of the compound than it would if kept quite still. The next advance was to fix the splints in a frame so that each was separated from its neighbour; and this frame, containing about fifteen hundred matches, would be brought down on a marble slab upon which the composition was spread. The tipped matches, still in their frame, would then be dried in air for a few hours, and afterwards placed in a heated chamber to complete their desiccation. Manual labour, as will presently be seen, is now almost wholly dispensed with in the manufacture of matches. The employment of yellow phosphorus for the charging of matches made the industry a very unhealthy one, and the workpeople, if not in the best of health, ran the risk of contracting a terrible disease known as necrosis of the jawbone, the vulgar name for which was 'phossy jaw.' With improvements in manufacture this evil has now been eliminated.

The first step towards this desirable consummation was the employment of amorphous phosphorus, which can be handled with impunity. The so-called safety-match, which strikes only on the box in which it is supplied, is headed with a chemical composition of which potassic chlorate forms the chief ingredient, while amorphous phosphorus is used in preparing the rubbing-surface on the box. It is not until the two compositions are brought together in the act of striking the match that flame is produced. Strange to say, however, one of these safety-matches can be ignited by the frictional heat produced by drawing the match rapidly across a sheet of smooth glass. The latest triumph of the industry is the production of a match which is free from yellow phosphorus, but which will strike upon any fairly rough surface.

Few persons besides those engaged in the actual work have the slightest idea of the marvellous ingenuity which has been displayed in devising machinery for the making of matches. The writer has recently had an opportunity of visiting the works of Messrs Bryant & May—the largest of their kind in the world—where no expense has been spared to furnish the factories with the most efficient apparatus obtainable.

There are two general methods of manufacture pursued here, one being semi-automatic and the other completely so. The first method is adopted in making the common match with the square wooden shank or splint. These splints, which at the outset are double the length of the finished match, come from Canada ready for use, for it is cheaper to import them in this way than it would be to bring the wood over and cut it here. These splints are first of all submitted to a small machine, of which there are several here, which binds them up temporarily in bundles, so that they can be further dealt with seven or eight thousand at one time. The splints are fed into the machine together with a long roll of webbing, and this webbing, as it

automatically coils itself up, encloses in its walls the splints with a space between each about equal to its own thickness. The result of this operation is a compact round cake of splints measuring about eighteen inches across. So many of these machines are employed here that every minute sees two or three of these round discs turned out ready for the next stage of the manufacture. Each disc is placed for a moment under pressure so that its two faces are made perfectly flat and parallel. No single splint must peep out the smallest fraction of an inch beyond its fellows. Next it is passed over a hot metal plate preparatory to receiving its first coating—one of paraffin-wax. The old-fashioned way was to tip the matches with sulphur, which was designed to act as an inflammatory intermediary between the igniting composition and the wood. The suppression of such an evil-smelling substance is one of the notable improvements in the manufacture. After the other side of the disc of matches has been similarly treated, it and its fellows are transferred to the next department, where they receive their coating of igniting composition. This is of the consistence of thick paint, and has the appearance of a pigment, for it is of a brilliant colour. It is ladled out on to metal slabs, and after being spread in a layer of equal thickness by a kind of huge palette-knife, the splints, still bound up in a disc by the webbing, are deftly placed upon the slab for a moment, each single splint thereby receiving its share of composition. After the glue which binds the particles of this composition together has had time to set, the other side of the disc is coated in the same manner. The matches are then partially dried, and might be regarded as very dangerous things to handle if the composition did not retain sufficient moisture to reduce the chance of accidental ignition to a minimum. It will be evident that in this part of the work scientific supervision is imperative both in the regulation of the heating chambers as well as in keeping a constant watch upon the hygroscopic state of the air. There are, indeed, certain atmospheric conditions under which it is deemed advisable to suspend work in some departments altogether.

The disc, now gaily coloured on each face, is next submitted to a machine which unwinds the webbing and releases the imprisoned splints, every one of which, be it observed, is tipped at each end with igniting composition. Dozens of girls sitting at benches are supplied with the splints, and their duty is to box them up. This is an operation worth watching. The matches are neither counted nor weighed; each girl, from constant practice, can grasp in her hand the exact number of splints required to fill *two* boxes. This she does without pause or hesitation, and she then puts them in a kind of notch in the front of the bench, a knife comes down and cuts the lot exactly in half, and before one can quite realise what has happened, these matches are boxed up and done with so far as manufacture is concerned.

But the most marvellous part of the factory is that considerable portion of it where the automatic machinery is at work. It would seem to be quite beyond the powers of human ingenuity to design a machine which receives a block of wood at one end, and delivers matches boxed up and ready for use at the other end. But this marvel has been actually accomplished. It would be futile to attempt to describe in detail this machine without elaborate diagrams, and so we must content ourselves with a very general description of it.

The wood which is fed into the machine consists of blocks of soft pine, free from knots or other blemishes. These blocks first come under the action of a series of dies which split them into the necessary splints, and the ends of these are at once forced into perforations in a metal plate. The metal plates are hinged together, and form a long, endless band which slowly travels along. As the procession of thousands of splints makes its way through the complex machine, the little rods are made to pass over, in the first place, a heated surface. Next, without stopping on their way, they take up their necessary complements of paraffin, and finally their projecting ends are brought into contact with a roller charged with igniting composition. After this their journey is continued in a heated atmosphere until they are dry, or all but dry, when they drop from the plates into boxes ready to receive them. This machine, so imperfectly described, will produce in a single day one thousand gross of boxes of matches, which will represent the means of 'striking a light' nearly nine million times.

Another large department of the factory is devoted to the making of what are generally known as 'wax vestas.' Cotton threads are passed through successive baths of stearine and gum, and finally through a metal plate which gives the 'wax' its round form and polish. The material is then cut into short lengths, which are disposed in frames and charged with igniting composition, the operations involved differing only in detail from those already described.

The machinery for making and the warehouses for storing match-boxes of every conceivable pattern cover many acres of ground. We saw here a machine which, fed with a long band of cardboard, delivers boxes in a finished condition at the rate of eight hundred per minute. Other wonderful appliances are here for printing labels in two colours by one operation, while others add to their varied duties that of giving one side of each box a coating of sand to form the rubbing-surface.

The work is clean throughout, and, now that the use of yellow phosphorus has been abandoned, match-making has ceased to be one of the trades dangerous to the health of those engaged in it. A large majority of the workers are girls from fourteen to twenty years of age; and that the employment is popular with them may be judged by the large number of applicants for work to be seen at the gates of the big factory.

As far back as the year 1856 it was estimated that the daily consumption of matches in Great Britain alone was about two hundred and forty million, which would give eight matches to every man, woman, and child in the kingdom. The number has, of course, greatly increased since, in spite of the common use of by-pass gas-burners and the electric light. The dictum of a former Chancellor of the Exchequer who proposed to put a tax on them still holds good: he placed matches as 'among the most splendid boons which science has given to man.'

'L U C K.'

CHAPTER III.

TWO days later, and after nearly fifteen weeks of arduous and unremitting labour, there came, one calm night, a glorious spring-tide, and the *Dolphin*, under a full head of steam, and with her stout, broad frame quivering and throbbing and panting, tugged away at the giant bulk of the stranded ship; and the ship's own donkey-engine and winch wheezed and groaned as it slowly brought in inch by inch a heavy coir-hawser made fast to a rock half-a-cable length ahead of the tug. And then the *Braybrook Castle* began to move, and the wrecking-gang cheered and cheered until they were hoarse; and the second engineer of the tug, and two stokers stripped to their waists, with the perspiration streaming down their roasting bodies, answered with a yell—and then, lying well over on her starboard bilge, the great ship slid off stern first into deep water, and Tom Lester's heart leapt within him with joy and pride.

Lucy, as excited as any one else, was on the bridge with him, her face aglow, and her hand on the lever of the engine-room telegraph.

'Half-speed, Lucy.'

As the bell clanged loudly and the heart of the sturdy tug beat less frantically, the wrecking-gang on board the ship under Lindley slipped their end of the coir-hawser from the winch-barrel, and worked like madmen to get the ship on an even keel by cutting adrift the lashings of several hundred barrels of cement (part of the cargo) which were piled up on the starboard side of the main-deck, and letting them plunge overboard. As the ship righted herself inch by inch, and finally stood up on an even keel, Lester made an agreed-upon signal, blowing his whistle thrice for Lindley to stand by his anchors, which were all ready to let go.

His device of getting up the barrels of cement from the lower hold, and stowing them against the iron deck-stanchions (having previously cut away the bulwark plates) so as to give the vessel a big cant to starboard, had answered perfectly; for, high as the tide was that night, the *Dolphin*, though so powerful, could not have moved a ship of fifteen hundred tons with her keel still partly sustaining her weight on the rocks on which she had struck. By canting her as he had done, she had actually floated, and no more than floated, an hour before the tide was at its full.

Half-an-hour later the *Braybrook Castle* had been towed round to a little bay just abreast of 'Wreck House,' and the tug's engines stopped.

'All ready, Lindley?' shouted Lester.

'All ready, sir.'

'Then let go.'

A tap from Lindley's hammer, the great anchor plunged down, and the flaked-out cable roared as it flew through the hawse-pipe, drowning the loud 'Hurrah' of the men on board.

'What is it, Lindley,' cried Lester; 'ten fathoms?'

'Twelve, sir.'

'Give her another twenty-five. It 's good holding-ground and there is plenty of room for her to swing, Lindley.'

'Yes, sir.'

'We have had a bit of good luck, eh?'

'Yes, sir. That is because Mrs Lester is on the tug. She brings us good luck.'

Lester laughed and turned to his wife. 'Do you hear that, Lucy?'

She was gazing intently over to the westward, but turned to him the moment he spoke.

'Tom, I can see a blue light over there. Ah, see, there is a rocket! What is it?'

Lester took his night-glasses and looked.

'There is a ship ashore somewhere between here and the Deal Island light,' he said, and then he rang, 'Go astern,' to the engine-room.

'Lindley,' he called as soon as the tug backed alongside the *Braybrook Castle*, 'there is a ship ashore about four miles away from us to the westward. My wife noticed her signals a few minutes ago.'

'More salvage, sir,' bawled Lindley. 'Mrs Lester is bringing us more luck. 'What 's to be, sir?'

'I want ten or a dozen men, and I 'll go and see what I can do. You are all right, aren't you?'

'Right as rain, sir.'

Fifteen instead of a dozen men slid down a line on to the deck of the tug, and Lucy, at a nod from her husband, turned on full speed ahead, and Lester whistled down a speaking-tube.

'Hallo!' was the response.

'Give it to her, Patterson, for all she 's worth. There is a ship ashore about four miles away. She is burning blue lights and sending up rockets.'

Five minutes later the *Dolphin* was tearing through the water at her top speed—eleven knots—and Patterson came up on the bridge.

'Wha saw the seegnals first?' he inquired.

'I did, Mr Patterson,' said Lucy.

'Ay, I thocht as much, Mistress Lester. Even that lazy, sheeftless Irish fireman loon ae mine, Rafferty, said ye 'd bring us mair guid luck.' Then he dived below again to the engines so dear to his Scotsman's heart.

The night was dark, but calm and windless, and the panting tug tore her way through a sea as smooth as glass towards where the ghastly glare of the last blue light had been seen. Twenty minutes later Lester caught sight of the distressed ship. She was lying on her beam-ends, and almost at the same moment came a loud hail.

'Steamer ahoy!'

'Clang!' went the telegraph, and the *Dolphin's* engines stopped, and then went astern, just in time to save her from crashing into a boat crowded with men; a second boat was close astern of the first. They came alongside, and the occupants swarmed over the tug's low bulwarks, and an old gray-bearded man made his way up to Lester.

'My cowardly crew have forced me to abandon my ship. We were caught in a squall yesterday, and thrown on our beam-ends.' Then he fell down in a fit.

'Veer those boats astern,' cried Lester to his own men. 'I'm going to hook on to that ship.'

Bailey, one of his best men, gave a yell.

'More luck, boys. Mrs Lester!'

As the poor captain was carried off the bridge into the little cabin the *Dolphin* went ahead, and in a quarter of an hour Bailey and his men had cut away the masts and the tug had the ship in tow.

At daylight next morning Lester brought her in to the little bay where the *Braybrook Castle* lay, and Bailey anchored her safely.

When Lester boarded her he found she was the *Harvest Maid*, sister ship to the *Harvest Queen*, *Harvester*, and his own last command, the *Harvest Home*, all ships of one thousand five hundred tons, and belonging to Captain James Rodway.

'Why didn't you cut away your masts?' he said to the unfortunate captain later on.

'Ah! you don't know my owner,' the old man replied; 'and besides that, I could have righted the ship if my crew had stuck to me. But after being eighteen hours on our beam-ends they took fright and lowered the boats. I'm a ruined man.'

'Not at all. You have done your duty, and I'll give you command of another ship to-day—the *Braybrook Castle*. You have nothing further to do with the *Harvest Queen*. She was an abandoned ship. She's mine now. Salvage, you know.'

The old man nodded his head. 'Yes, I know that. And you'll make a pot out of her.'

'What is she worth?'

'Ship and cargo are worth thirty thousand pounds. We loaded a general cargo in London.'

'That will be a bit of a knock for Rodway.'

'Do you know him?' asked Captain Blake in surprise.

'Rather. I was master of the *Harvest Home*. Now come ashore. My wife is getting us something to eat.'

CHAPTER IV.

AT the end of another four weeks the *Braybrook Castle*, with three-fourths of the cargo she had brought from London, sailed for Sydney under the command of Captain Blake of the *Harvest Queen;* and the *Harvest Queen*, under jury-masts and with her valuable cargo undamaged, was ready to sail, escorted by the *Dolphin*, on the following day, with Lindley as master.

The last night at 'Wreck House' was even a merrier and happier one than that on which the wrecking-party celebrated Lucy's 'find.' But yet Lucy herself felt a little sad at saying farewell to this wild spot, where, amid the roar of the ever-beating surf and the clamour of the gulls and terns, she had spent the four happiest months of her life. The rough food, the fresh sea-air, and the active life had, Lester declared, only served to increase her beauty, and she herself had never felt so strong and in such robust health before. Almost every day in fine weather she had taken a walk to some part of the interior of the island or along the many white beaches, filling a large basket with sea-birds' eggs, or collecting the many beautiful species of cowries and other sea-shells with which the beaches were strewn. Years before, another wrecking-party had left some goats on the island, and these had thriven and increased amazingly. Her husband's men had shot a great number for food, and captured three or four which supplied them with milk, and these latter, with their playful kids, and a number of fowls which had been brought from Sydney in the *Dolphin*, together with a pair of pet baby-seals, made up what she called her 'farmyard.' On one part of the island there was a dense thicket of low trees, the resort not only of hundreds of wild goats but of countless thousands of terns and other sea-birds, who had made it their breeding-ground. It was situated at the head of a tiny landlocked bay, the beach of which was covered with the weather-worn spars and timbers of some great ship which had gone ashore there perhaps thirty or forty years before. The whole of the foreshores of the island, however, were alike in that respect, for it had proved fatal to many a good ship, even from the time when that gallant navigator, Matthew Flinders, had first discovered the group.

On the morning of the last day of the stay of the wrecking-party on the island Lucy set out for this place, remembering that on her last visit she had left a basket of cowries there. Bidding her beware of black snakes, for the place was noted for these

deadly reptiles, Lester went off on board the *Harvest Queen*.

An hour afterwards, as Lester was engaged with Lindley in the ship's cabin, a man on deck called down the skylight to him:

'Here is Mrs Lester coming back, sir. She's running, and is calling for you.'

With a dreadful fear that she had been bitten by a snake, Lester rushed on deck, jumped into a boat, and was ashore in a few minutes. Lucy, too exhausted to come down to the boat and meet him, had sat down in front of the now nearly empty house.

'I'm all right, Tom,' she panted as he ran up to her, 'but I've had a terrible fright;' and she could not repress a shudder. 'I have just seen three skeletons in the thicket scrub, and round about them are strewn all sorts of things, and there are two or three small casks, one of which is filled with money, for the end has burst, and the money has partly run out on the sand.'

Lester sprang to his feet, and called out to the two men who had pulled him ashore to come to him.

'Mrs Lester's luck again,' he cried.

'Mrs Lester's luck again,' bawled one of the men to the rest of the wrecking-party on board the *Harvest Queen*, and in an instant the cry was taken up, and then came a loud cheer, as, disregarding discipline, all hands tumbled into a boat alongside, frantically eager to learn what had occurred.

Lester waited for them, and then Lucy gave a more detailed account of how she made her discovery.

'I found my basket where I had left it, and had just sat down to take off my shoes, which were filled with sand, when a goat with two of the sweetest little kids you ever saw in your life came suddenly out from behind a rock. The kids were not more than a day or two old, and I determined to catch at least one of them to take home. The moment the mother saw me she ran off with her babies, and I followed. They dived into the thicket, and led me *such* a dance, for they ran much faster than I thought they could.

'I had never been so far into the scrub before, and felt a little bit frightened, it was so dark and quiet; but I was too excited to give up. So on I sped until the nanny and kids ran into what seemed a tunnel in the thick scrub. It is really a road made by the goats, and is only about three feet high, the branches and creepers making a regular archway overhead. I stooped down and followed, and in a few minutes came to a little space which was open to the sky, for the sunlight was so bright that, coming out of the dark tunnel-place, I was quite dazzled for a few moments, and had to put my hands over my eyes.

'When I looked about I saw that the ground was strewed with all sorts of things—rotten boards and boxes, and ships' blocks, and empty bottles, and demijohns with all the cane covering gone. Then I saw the three casks, and noticed one had burst open, or rotted away, and that it was filled with what looked like very large and dirty pennies. I went up to it and took some up, and saw they were crown pieces! Of course I was at once wildly excited, and thought no more of the dear little kiddies, when I heard one of them cry out—quite near—and saw it lying down exhausted about ten yards away. I was running over to get it when I saw those three dreadful skeletons. They are lying quite close to each other, near some brass cannons and a lot of rusty ironwork. I was so terrified that I forgot all about the little kid; and—and, well, that is all; and here am I with my skirt in rags, and my face scratched, and my hair loose, and "all of a bobbery," as Manuel says.'

'Boys,' said Lester, 'I'm pretty sure I know how those poor fellows' bones come to be there. An East Indiaman—the *Mountjoy*—was lost somewhere on Kent's Group about sixty years ago; and I have read that she had a lot of specie on board. Now, as soon as Mrs Lester has rested a bit we'll start.'

'I'll carry you, ma'am,' said Bailey, a herculean creature of six feet six inches; and, stepping into 'Wreck House,' he brought out a chair, seated Lucy on it, and, amidst applause and laughter, lifted it up on his mighty shoulders as if she were no more weight than the chair itself.

She guided them to the spot, and within an hour not only the three small casks—all of which were filled with English silver money—but the contents of two others which were found lying partly buried in the sandy soil, were brought to the house. And then began the exciting task of counting the coins, which took some time; and when Lester announced the result a rousing cheer broke from the men.

'Six thousand two hundred and seven pounds four shillings, boys; all with the blessed picture of good old George the Third on them.—Lucy, my dear, let us drink your health.'

Lucy drew him aside for a minute or two ere she complied with his request, and with sparkling eyes she talked earnestly to him.

'Of course I will, dear,' he said.

'Now, boys,' he cried as Lucy brought out two bottles of brandy and some cups and glasses, 'let us drink my wife's health. She has brought us good luck. And she and I are dividing a thousand pounds between you, with an extra fifty for Manuel.'

The rough wreckers again raised cheer after cheer as they drank to 'Mrs Lester's luck.' They were all being paid high wages, and were worth them; for they had toiled manfully, and the most pleasant relations had always existed between them and Lester.

Immediately after breakfast on the following morning the anchors of the *Harvest Queen* were weighed to the raising chanty of 'Hurrah, my boys, we're Homeward Bound!' and then the *Dolphin*,

with Lester on the bridge and Lucy beside him at the telegraph, went ahead, and tautened out the tow-line, and Lindley made all sail on his stumpy jury-masts.

Seventeen days later the gallant little tug pulled the *Harvest Queen* into Sydney harbour. 'Mrs Lester's Luck' had been with them the whole voyage; for from the time they had left Kent's Group till they passed between Sydney Heads nothing but fine weather and favourable winds had been experienced.

As the *Dolphin*, with the hulking *Harvest Queen* behind her, came up the smooth waters of the harbour to an anchorage off Garden Island, big Bailey, who was standing beside Lester and Lucy on the bridge, uttered a yell of delight.

'Mrs Lester's luck again, by all that's holy! There is the *Braybrook Castle* over there at anchor in Neutral Bay.'

It was indeed the *Braybrook Castle*, which had arrived only one day previously; and when Lester went on shore a few hours later he found that he was a richer man by over seventeen thousand pounds than when he had left Sydney less than six months before.

And 'Mrs Lester's Luck' brought happiness to many other people besides herself and her husband in the city of the Southern Sea; and when, a year later, in England, she stood on a stage under the bows of a gallant ship of two thousand tons built to Lester's orders, and broke a bottle of Australian wine against her steel plates, she named her *The Lucy's Luck*.

THE END.

THE FRENCH OFFICER.

By One who Knows Him.

THE typical French officer is as little like insular conceptions as well can be. Is he not pictured as a light-hearted, inconsequent, dashing being, an inevitable something of the D'Artagnan about him, a something perhaps of Lovelace and Charles O'Malley, professional duties sitting lightly upon his shoulders and domestic cares being unknown? Truer to life were a directly opposite portrait: that of a hard-worked, anxious father of a family, one to whom the most rigid economy is necessary, upon whom is laid the perpetual obligation of self-sacrifice, alike in small things and great. I should say that no class of French society more pre-eminently shines in the virtues of forethought and disinterestedness than the military ranks. The first-mentioned quality—namely, thrift—if not inherent, is implanted by his position. Indebtedness is impossible to a French officer. From pecuniary embarrassments and involvements with money-lenders he is guarded by a code almost Draconian in its severity. Even before the reorganisation of the army in 1872 an officer could not contract debts. A first infringement of this law entails a reprimand. Should the debts remain unpaid, the offender is suspended by the Minister of War for three years. At the end of that period he is summoned before a commission of inquiry of five members, one of whom holds the same rank as himself. This commission, after the strictest investigation, has power to decide whether or no reinstatement is permissible. It will, of course, sometimes happen that the verdict means disgrace and a ruined career. But the uncompromising, unassailable solvency of the French army is without doubt a tremendous element of its moral strength.

The D'Artagnan phase of military life is usually short-lived. After a few years more or less gaily and perhaps boisterously spent in Algeria, Tonquin, or Senegal, an officer returns to France and takes a wife. No class is more wedded to domestic life or more tenacious of the dignity implied in the designation *père de famille* than members of the French army. In no class are these privileges often more dearly purchased. Take the case, for instance, of a captain without any private means whatever, and whose bride brings him a small dowry, the two incomes put together perhaps bringing in something under two hundred and fifty pounds a year. Seeing the dearness of living in France, the necessity of keeping up appearances, and the liability to frequent removal from place to place, it is no wonder that the piano goes from year to year untuned, the dentist's services are not called into requisition as often as might be, and madame's toilette is changed on returning from a round of calls. A maid-of-all-work accompanies her mistress to market every morning, bringing back a basketful of marketings, tradesmen's calls for orders and tradesmen's books being unknown.

I well remember a month spent at Clermont-Ferrand. I had gone thither to be near a friend, the accomplished young wife of an artillery captain. They had one baby, and often I accompanied my friend and her little maid-servant to market, the *bonne* carrying fruit and vegetables, madame pushing the perambulator and a leg of mutton or joint of beef tied to the back! False pride is fortunately a plant of rare growth on French soil, and things are made the best of.

No career for idlers and loafers is that of the army in France. During my stay the heat was tropical in Auvergne; but, all the same, regiments were drafted off for artillery practice on the plain below the Puy-de-Dôme in the hottest part of the day. Only those men who have been hardened by

an African sun can stand such an ordeal with impunity. The French soldier laughs, sings, and makes merry; but a hard lot is his! One day my hostess and myself were driven with other ladies to witness the firing, resting under the shadow of a rock. When it was all over, my friend's husband galloped up, hot, tired, and dusty, but gay, neat, and composed. He conducted us to the temporary quarters erected for himself and his brother-officers; and, whilst we sipped sirop-and-water, he restored his spent forces by two large glasses of vermuth, taken neat. This powerful restorative had the desired effect. He declared himself none the worse for his many hours' exposure to the blazing sun. A sojourn in Senegal had rendered him sunproof, he added.

If a rising young officer works as hard as any operative, the same may be said of those in high command. The more exalted a soldier's position the more arduous and unremitting become his duties. I know superior officers of high rank who never dream of taking a holiday. One kind of change, often a very undesirable one, is entailed upon them by their profession. French officers are hardly more of a fixture in times of peace than of war. Agreeably settled in some pleasant town and mild climate one year, a captain or commandant may be shifted to a frigid zone the next, the transport of wife and children and goods and chattels being the least inconvenience. One brilliant officer I knew well thus fell a victim to patriotic duty as completely as any hero killed on the battlefield. Removed from a station of south-west France to the arctic region of Upper Savoy, there amid perpetual snows to supervise military works, he contracted sciatica. He might, of course, have begged for an exchange on the plea of impaired health; but no. *Il faut vaincre ou mourir* (conquer or die) is the motto of such men. Winter after winter he kept his post, struggling against disease; finally, obliged to retire upon half-pay, he lived out a painful year or two, dying in the prime of life. Such instances are numerous, true heroism therein shining more conspicuously than in the chronicles of so-called glorious campaigns.

The genial side of the French officer is another characteristic. No matter his circumstances, he contrives to be hospitable. With what grace and cordiality will he do the honours of a station however remote! How charmingly will drawbacks be got over! I well remember an incident illustrating the latter remark. Many years ago I was travelling with four friends in Algeria. When we arrived at Teniet-el-Haad, a captain to whom we had a letter of introduction carried us off to a hastily improvised dinner, his young wife gracefully doing the honours, and several fellow-officers and their ladies being invited to meet us. We were seated at table, and the Kabyle servant had just entered with the soup, when, by an unlucky jerk, he tipped it over, every one jumping up to avoid the steaming-hot cascade. '*Il faut passer de notre potage alors*' ('We must do without our soup then') was all our host said, smiling as he spoke; and with equal coolness and good-nature Hamet took his discomfiture.

But if I once begin to particularise military hospitality in France I shall never leave off. Light-hearted, easy-going under trying circumstances, wedded to duty even when the path of duty leads not to glory but to broken-down health and a frustrated career, the French officer is a type that does honour to France and its noble army.

HUMOURS OF THE BATTLEFIELD.

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF WAR.

By Captain Lewis Golding.

LIFE, we are told, is serious, and should be taken seriously. Every sensible person knows that life from birth to death is a very grave matter; but were we always to go through life without ever seeing the comic or humorous side of things it would no longer be a blessing, but a curse, and this world in very truth a 'vale of tears.' Often the most pathetic and serious incidents have something humorous in their details which help us to bear the pain that they cause. What, for instance, in all this life is more serious and less productive of mirth than men's lustful desire to slay and mutilate each other, to lay waste and destroy smiling lands, to render innocent women and children homeless and defenceless? Yet, happily, war has its lighter side, as I shall endeavour to show by describing a few episodes which occurred during the late South African campaign, and which caused no little amusement to those who witnessed or heard of them. But, before proceeding, the writer begs permission to say that although innumerable amusing episodes occur to him, he intends to confine himself to a description of those which, to the best of his belief, have hitherto escaped cold type, and have the virtue of being quite authentic. Now, to commence.

On the day of the reverse of Sir George White's army at Modder Spruit (variously known as Lombard's Kop fight, battle of Ladysmith, and 'Black Monday') an amusing little incident happened. One of the men—he was no more than a youth—of that distinguished corps, the King's Royal Rifles, found as he retired with the remainder of his comrades that he had left his water-bottle on the grass beside the boulder behind which, when

firing, he had taken cover. Heedless of the foolhardiness of the act, he deliberately turned round and retraced his steps, quite regardless of the hail of Mauser bullets and shells fired at him. He covered some distance without being hurt, and was endeavouring to locate his particular rock when a shrapnel-shell burst just above his head with a noise like the splintering of ten thousand panes of glass. Over rolled poor Tommy with a bullet in his thigh and another in his ankle. A few minutes later he descried a bearded Boer riding up to him, and, being quite ignorant of the humanity of the average Dutchman, gave up all hope, expecting to be given the *coup de grâce*. But, to his surprise and relief, the burgher dismounted, gave him a stiff 'tot' of brandy, bound up his lacerated limbs with his own—that is, the Boer's—bandages, and, putting him on his pony, took him to one of the commando's ambulances. Here the young rifleman was tenderly cared for until he was fit for removal, when he was sent into our lines in Ladysmith. When questioned as to his reasons for returning towards the enemy's position when every one else was retiring, he replied, 'Like the silly Juggins that I was, I forgot my blasted water-bottle, and returned to get it, as I saw no catch in 'aving to pay a bob for a new one.' Oh, Tommy Atkins! your ways are indeed inscrutable; for in times of peace you would not have hesitated the fractional part of a second to pawn that wonderful water-bottle of yours for the price of a drink.

Early in the siege of Ladysmith the Boer gunners working Long Tom on 'Bulwan' managed to locate Sir George White's headquarters, which they lost no time in shelling. To utilise an artilleryman's phrase, the direction of the first projectile was good, but the elevation faulty. The second, a beautiful shot, but still a trifle short, fell into some offices situated a short twenty yards below the General's house, blowing it to fragments, but fortunately without injuring anybody. And now, seeing what was the objective of the Boer gunners, the whole of the staff, with the sole exception of Sir George (who said he would not 'run to earth' for all the Boers in Natal), wisely deserted the premises and took cover in an adjacent 'bombproof,' which had been built for just such an emergency. The third of the series came hurtling through the air, crashing plumb into the back premises of the house, and exploded with a deafening roar. Expecting to find the body of Sir George blown out of all semblance of human form, the staff-officers hastened to the stricken house; but judge of their surprise and joy to see their popular chief emerge from out of the acrid smoke and shattered brick calm and collected as ever, and, better still, quite uninjured. Close at his heels followed a cat—the pet of the staff—her hair erect, tail as bushy as a squirrel's, and spitting like a fury. Flying past the group of officers, poor pussy made for a neighbouring tree, up which she lost no time in swarming. For some considerable time nothing would induce her to descend, but eventually, having partially recovered from her scare, she was enticed from her elevated position by a large saucer of milk. On examination it was found that one of her hind-legs had been lacerated by a splinter of shell; otherwise she was more terrified than hurt, and in no way incapacitated from indulging in her favourite sport of bird-catching.

If the writer is not mistaken, it was the *Ladysmith Lyre*, a clever little siege-publication, which was responsible for the following rather good story. Readers, however, are strongly recommended not to depend too much on its authenticity, for the very sufficient reason that Sir George White is not a humourist, and never has posed as one; and the title of the paper in which the tale was printed is liable to make one—well—sceptical. However, the story is given for what it is worth.

Early in the siege, it stated, General Joubert coolly sent in a message under the white flag to Sir George White asking him in the name of humanity to be so kind as to let him have, first, some Keating's insect-powder for the purpose of destroying the plague of vermin which was rendering his brave burghers' lives a curse to them; second, a small quantity (or as much as he could spare) of physics of various kinds with which to deal with a plurality of diseases which were playing havoc with his men and fast making it impossible for him to maintain a decent, respectable siege; third, a few hundred tons of forage, to keep his innumerable horses from starving! Sir George White, so it was reported, replied that he had much pleasure in forwarding the insecticide and medicine, but much regretted his inability to supply the forage, as he only had sufficient in stock for the use of the garrison for the *next two years*.

Even on that memorable day the 6th January 1900, when the Boers made their final desperate effort to take Ladysmith by storm, and brave men were lying in ghastly heaps everywhere on the ground they gave their lives' blood to capture or defend, humorous incidents occurred.

During a lull in the hostilities the colonel of a certain Natal corps caught sight of the padre of the regiment—a quiet little Wesleyan minister—busily loading and firing his rifle from under cover of a rock. Thinking this most unorthodox and hardly the business of a parson, the colonel approached him, and, laughing, said, 'Hullo, my friend! not quite the work, surely, for one of your cloth, is it, slaying your fellow-men?' 'I'm not slaying my fellow-men, colonel,' replied the minister; 'at least, I'm only firing at those horses over there. If their owners are so regardless of their lives as to get between me and the animals it's surely not my fault.' Then he went on firing at—the Boers' horses.

Attached to General Sir John Dartnell's column, operating in July 1901 in the Eastern Transvaal, was a civilian whose sole duty it was to collect and provide with transport all Boer families found

living on their farms. This official—whose correct name I dare not publish, but will call Robinson—had not a very ingratiating manner, especially when dealing with Dutch *vrouws* (married women), and often in the execution of his duty was unnecessarily harsh and severe. Our column was 'clearing' the Vryheid district at the time, and had halted one afternoon under the shadow of Hlobane Hill, the scene of Sir Redvers Buller's gallantry in saving the lives of two men in the Zulu war of 1879. Away in the distance were to be seen a couple of farmhouses with signs of life about them. A patrol of twenty-five men of the Johannesburg Mounted Rifles, under a subaltern, was sent to ascertain if the homesteads were occupied, and, if so, to warn the residents that they would be obliged to accompany the column next morning into Volksrust, there to be sent into the concentration camp. The civilian official went with the patrol. On their arrival at the first farmhouse, small vedettes were placed in advantageous positions to provide against possible surprises, whilst the remainder of the men dismounted and passed the time in catching fowls, which they promptly suspended to the dees on their saddles. The officer and Robinson entered the dwelling to transact their business. They found that there were some half-a-dozen elderly *vrouws* and two young girls living in the house. When the house had been thoroughly searched for firearms, Robinson curtly told the womenfolk that they would have to be prepared to load up their belongings on to wagons early next morning. 'May we take all our furniture as well?' inquired a greasy old woman, with a ferocious scowl. 'Good heavens, no!' replied Robinson. 'What next, I wonder? All I can let you take is a small portmanteau, sack, or bag each, with your clothing and your bedding. I'm hanged if I am going to find a dozen wagons for you.' '*Allemactig!* [God Almighty!] I'll take just what I like!' fairly screamed one of the Boer maidens on hearing this. Terrified as to the possible results of the girl's indiscreet utterance, the elder women joined in begging Robinson to take no notice of Sanna's remark, claiming that she was but a mere child and did not understand the facts of the case. But Robinson was not to be so easily pacified; his dignity was hurt, and he replied, 'Oho, you little spit-fire! for your confounded impertinence *you* shall take nothing at all. Do you quite understand? Perhaps *that* will teach you manners and a correct bearing towards us *verdomde khakis*, as you impudently call us. And bear in mind in future that I am not going to be cheeked by any Boer women when in the execution of my duty. Recollect, all of you, one bag apiece only; and you, you little imp! nothing at all.' Next morning early, under the white flag, he sallied out from the camp with two wagons. He reached the farmhouse without misadventure; and, having told the women to hasten in loading up their belongings, as he had no time to waste, he sat himself down for a smoke on the easiest chair he could find. He had not had twenty whiffs, however, when two stalwart armed Boers stalked into the room. Not at all liking the look of things, poor Robinson sprang to his feet and politely asked the strangers what their presence meant. 'Oh,' replied they, 'nothing in particular. We have just come to see that the ladies take everything they may require during their visit to Volksrust, and to arrange that *you* do the necessary loading up.' Robinson saw that the laugh was very much against him, and, like a sensible individual, did as he was directed. The wagons an hour later came into camp loaded sky-high with every imaginable article, Robinson riding alongside with a very crestfallen appearance. Of course, it is apparent that overnight the women had sent to their friends on commando, informing them of Robinson's behaviour and dictum, and asking them to rectify things. And they did.

It will be remembered that, after nearly eighteen months of splendid work, Major Gough, by ill-luck, at last met with disaster, three companies of his corps of Mounted Infantry being captured, in September 1901, at the Blood River Pass by an overwhelming number of Boers headed by Louis Botha. As there is no necessity to go into details, it is sufficient to say that after a stubborn resistance Major Gough's men, being hopelessly outnumbered, surrendered. Being very hard put to it to obtain clothing of any description, the Boers stripped their prisoners, officers and men, with but one or two exceptions, of all their garments, leaving them—well—in such a state that there was not a pocket among them. Their helmets they were allowed to retain, as that head-dress is utterly despised by the burghers. The unfortunate prisoners were then given a 'safe conduct' signed by Louis Botha, put on the road to Vryheid, the nearest British post, and laughingly told that the more haste they made the sooner they would be supplied with a new outfit at the public expense. The writer will never forget the day that these poor fellows came straggling into Vryheid (where he was stationed at the time), hungry, footsore, weary, almost naked, barefooted, and, above all, wild with indignation. But the unkindest cut of all was administered by a crowd of local Boer *vrouws*, who, collecting from far and near, greeted the 'khakis' with shouts of derisive laughter as they dejectedly walked past. The contents of the local clothiers' premises were immediately 'commandeered' by the military authorities, and shortly afterwards the men of the G.M.I. were swaggering about the street of the town apparelled in suits of Boer 'reach-me-downs' of antique cut, and with broad-brimmed felt hats of all shades covering their soldierly heads. But notwithstanding the sloppishness of his new clothes, there was no mistaking Tommy Atkins, for his martial bearing, his inimitable swagger, his professional air, his *tout ensemble* in fact, are ever impossible to disguise. I recollect asking one man if he liked his suit of mufti. His reply was very characteristic: 'Rather, sir. You see, it's such a bloomin'

long time now since I had a suit of "civies" on that it seems like old times again.' Then, pushing his hat to a rakish angle on the side of his head, he added, 'Hope I don't look like a blasted Boer, all the same, sir!' Shortly afterwards an order was issued that as there were a few ordinary khaki suits available, any men who preferred them to mufti could effect an exchange. There was not a single application!

Without doubt there were no finer soldiers, whether home-born or colonial, in the field than the Canadians, notwithstanding the fact that they were popularly represented as being quite undisciplined and insubordinate. Many stories, several of a very doubtful nature, and portraying the Canadian as a veritable savage, are told about Strathcona's Horse and other Canadian corps. I have no hesitation in saying that these tales are purely fictional, or at least are exaggerated out of all semblance of truth, and so should be accepted with caution. The following tale, if gruesome, has the merit of being strictly true:

During a skirmish with the enemy (time and locality being unimportant) one of the Canadians became detached from his unit, and did not rejoin until his corps had been in camp for some time. On his arrival one of his comrades said, 'Well, Charlie, so you have turned up again. Where have you been?' 'Just after some Boers, pal,' replied the new-comer casually. 'Did you put any of their lights out, anyhow?' 'I reckon I did.' 'So you say, lad; but I don't believe you nohow.' 'Makes no difference, chum; but, anyway, I've secured two of the varmints' scalps. See here,' calmly said Charlie, producing two horrible, hairy-looking articles from the rear of his leather belt.

An amusing story is told of General T., who is well known throughout the service for his rather extensive vocabulary of unparliamentary words and phrases, their employment, and his love of clever repartee. During the later stages of the war a general order was promulgated to the effect that all officers, whether on duty or on leave, were on their arrival at Johannesburg to report in person at headquarters. General T. at the time happened to be in command of the district, and was in the habit of strictly enforcing the order. At a certain club-bar one afternoon his attention was drawn to a subaltern of the Queensland Bushmen, who showed unmistakable signs of having just come in 'off column.' Walking over and tapping him on the shoulder, he said (the language is more or less toned down for the benefit of sensitive readers), 'Who the —— are you, young fellow, my lad?' 'I'm Lieutenant H. of the Bushmen, General, just up for a holiday.' 'Oh! are you? Then, why the dickens didn't you report at headquarters, eh?' 'So I did.' 'Ha! I'm —— if I bally well believe you. Come now, whom did you see?' 'Well, pardon my plain speaking, General, I reported to a cross-eyed, porky old bloke who couldn't give a man a civil answer.' 'Correct, my lad; that's my brigade-major to a T. Whom else?' 'Then I was referred to another department, where I saw a smooth-faced la-di-da, don't-cher-know, cuss-you young fellow, who spoke to me as though I were a pig!' 'Good again! That's my adjutant—silly ass, isn't he? I like you, my lad; you're a man after my own heart. Come and have a w.-and-s.'

THE PLEA.

How shall I woo thee, knowing that betwixt
Thy heart and mine so great a gulf is fixed?
Autumn and Spring: can love stretch hands across,
And take and give again, and feel no loss?

Years are for thee, whose harvest-sheaves are mine,
Long garnered into memories divine;
Years yet to open unto thee like flowers
Cradled in sunshine and baptised in showers.

How shall I woo thee? Thou art like a star
Poised in a cloudless sphere alone, afar;
And yet in dreams, in twilight dreams, am I
Part of thy beauty, native to thy sky.

Wherefore I, dreaming now, apostrophise
The fawn-like wonders ambushed in thine eyes;
For there, in lightning moments do I seem
Not quite the vapid dreamer of a dream.

Not thine, say they, the bliss of throbbing words:
Thou takest purer music from God's birds.
Too finely frank, too close to truth thy heart
To barter in so profitless a mart.

True to its course, thy calm, obedient soul
Sways to one wise, omnipotent control;
There is but darkness where there is not truth:
This is the crown and splendour of thy youth.

Autumn and Spring, the golden leaf and green,
My heart and thine, and all that gulf between;
Star of my soul! what solitary plea,
What one white truth may I lift up to thee?

A thousand throng about me. Take but this:
Must Summer die if Spring and Autumn kiss?
Nay, dearest! Summer, hand-in-hand with each,
Shall both a deeper, lovelier wisdom teach.

EDGAR DEWEY.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE TOREADOR'S TALISMAN.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

THE idea of taking a man's property from him by force has always seemed to me more objectionable than the idea of killing that same man in honest stand-up fight. Maybe it's a twist in the Buckingham nature to hold just that view of things. Maybe, again, it's a virtue that has never yet been properly appreciated by the world of stay-at-home tailors and tinkers. And, faith! if so, it's one I share with good men, including His Grace the Duke of Wellington himself, who could not tolerate the low tricks of pocket-picking which at times got the upper hand even of his army and the stern halter-discipline with which he tried to teach them better.

But there are exceptions to every rule, praised be Heaven! and when Providence, or maybe your own strong right arm, which is just the same as Providence visiting by the back-door, as it were—when either of them drops a gift plump into your lap, even when your fingers are red with blood and the cry 'At 'em!' is still heard to the right hand and the left, why then it is surely your duty to your little children to say 'Thanks!' and slip it among your bills and challenges.

'Tis my Lord Duke again who reminds me of this same useful lesson. As I said, no man liked better to have a good fixed salary and to stick to it. Yet when they voted him five thousand pounds for his share of Indian loot and what not (Seringapatam and half-a-dozen other cities), he accepted it, without grumbling indeed. And he paid his debts with it, too—which is another lesson to the ruck of us; no idle treats and picnics and things with it, but just handed it over to them that had the first claim on it.

He was a ten-man-in-one for you, if you like, or if you don't like either.

This plain snip of a sermon brings me to my story of the poor toreador's talisman and the events of a certain week in A.D. 1811, which might have enabled me to give my boy Daniel a university education and my little girl Molly a new frock every week for her lifetime, but which, in cold simple fact, didn't do any such thing at all, at all. And that's the luck of it, though it's not I, Bill Buckingham, that's complaining. 'Twould be no use if I were, moreover; and that maybe is why I'm holding my tongue about it so entirely.

I had been across the frontier from Portugal into Spain, Salamanca way, on special service, and was returning all flea-bitten from toe to scalp, when I found myself, one September evening, mighty near to the city of Guarda on its hill. I had worked it from Sabugal, with just my man Dermot Lake to keep me company, and we were both glad of an excuse to call a halt. That same excuse was the music from a granite cottage among the gorse-blossom a few paces to the left of the road: a guitar touched by the fingers of a genius!

'Tis no Portuguee, your honour, handling the gut like that!' said Dermot when we had both held our steeds, spell-bound, for a moment or two. They were leg-weary, poor beasts! and quite ready to pretend to an interest of that kind in the fine arts.

'No Spaniard neither!' said I. 'He'd be mad else. 'Tis just one of the heavenly choir dropped from the minstrel gallery in the sky. And I'm going to have a look at him.'

That was soon managed.

The cottage had the usual trim whitish inside, but with patches of green damp on it due to the moisture of the past winter (for Guarda stands terribly high towards the clouds, when they're about); and there were just strings of onions and frying-pans and things on the walls, and nothing tempting for a wicked soldier to seize at sight. They had learnt that wisdom in both countries by then; and, rich or pauper-poor, they'd swear by a variety of local saints that they hadn't the where-

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withal of a meal for themselves this time to-morrow. The Lord help 'em, no wonder either! What kind of fibs our good folks at home would be after telling if the French overran Yorkshire, Lancashire, and my dear old Tipperary herself, and asked about the contents of the cupboards as they did in Spain and Portugal, indeed and I've not imagination enough for guessing. But they'd be better fibs than any ignorant Portuguee could think of, I warrant.

I just stepped inside, and Dermot after me, without any ceremony, leaving the horses blowing at the door. Ceremony was just wasted on these Southern gentry: they beat you at the game before you could make a beginning, and so I for one had settled to do without it. 'Twas no bad notion. I'm not thinking an archangel would trouble to knock at the door of a poor Irish peasant when he and the pig found themselves together at the threshold, impatient to enter. Faith, no! he'd treat the poor people at home as if he were just one of themselves, like the pig. And that's what hard-working folks enjoy, whether it's steadily concerned they've been all day picking stones from the fields or tiring themselves out just sitting in the sun and wagering where they'll feel their next flea-bite.

There was an old man at the fire stooped over a pot, a handsome middle-aged man with the guitar in the heart of the room, and as pretty a boy by him in clouts as ever I saw. These were what the cottage had to show us when I gave them my '*Buenas!*' And then they all three did me reverence.

I was used to that compliment when I took the pains to stand my full height and square my shoulders. 'Tis not a few more inches round the stomach than need be that make the difference when the soldier-spirit in a man beams forth daringly in his eyes. And, moreover, I'd loosened my cloak, so that the red jacket and gold lace on me peeped at them like the dazzle of sunshine through the trees of a leafy lane. There was also the ivory-and-gold handle of that pretty little pistol I'd won at Busaco after pinking its late owner through the body; and my Sheffield blade showed its handle, ever ready for business, like Tipperary Buckingham himself.

Nor had Dermot Lake an indifferent cargo of abilities about him to support my own, so that in this year of grace 1811 we were likely in such a cottage to be welcomed respectfully.

'Don't let us disturb your solo,' I said affably, seating myself. 'That was the attraction, *amigo*—that and the pleasure of getting ten minutes' relief from those cursed saddles of Salamanca.' Having said this, I observed that the old man with the pot was a marvellously wrinkled person. I doubt if an artificer of wrinkles could have done more with his countenance than nature had done uninvited. He had mean little eyes and a palsy: God alone knows what other accomplishments.

When I spoke he cringed humbly; but I marked those little pig's eyes of his settle towards my waistbelt.

'Your illustrious lordship is English?' asked the Spaniard, with an eager smile that I liked.

I bade Dermot hold his tongue: the rascal had said out loud, 'Just look at his hair, sir!'

'English or Irish,' I replied, 'it is all one as touching your own illustrious lordship's interests. No offence meant.'

Then his hands, both of them, sprang out in greeting, and at the same time he cried to the boy, 'Salute, little one, the other honourable *caballero!*' And there we were, Dermot and I, each paired off at pump-handle work.

'It has very little fingers, that one, sir,' said my man afterwards. 'And did you ever see such a pair of bright eyes on a face?'

But the Spaniard was anxious to communicate some intelligence to me. He beckoned me aside.

'Mind him, sir!' murmured that forward idiot of mine.

'Get some coffee and tie up your tongue,' said I; and he set to work to obey me, shifting the Portuguee unceremoniously. The old fellow uttered an obsequious word or two, and then, taking a bowl of lettuce-leaves, left the room and began to call his fowls together outside.

'Señor,' said my Spaniard earnestly, 'do you know that there is a squadron of French dragoons in Guarda?'

Begad! I did not. I thought the allies were the stronger party in that town just then, and that Marmont had decided to carry his tail 'twixt his legs for a spell.

'Yes,' proceeded the man; 'and it is the colonel of the company that I am seeking. I am seeking him with this! Do you understand me, *caballero?*'

Faith! I did. He was a transfigured devil for one red instant, as he snapped forth the stiletto from his guitar's handle, and, clenching his teeth, held the blade as if for active service. Like so many in those days, he had chalked up a score which only bloody vengeance could pay.

'I shall tell you, señor,' he went on in a whisper, having boxed his dagger. He looked at his boy as if he didn't want him to be listening. The lad was close to Dermot, watching him at the pot. 'Have you heard of Rusendo the toreador?'

'Rusendo the Invincible?' I inquired.

'Yes, I am that, I suppose,' he said, with a shrug. 'At least I have never been pricked by a bull. I am rich. The world smiles at me, though it brings so much misery to others—and to me too, at last. He—Colonel Tarquin Vasche, as the cursed villain is called—he has killed my wife, my Dolores. It was fifteen days ago. He quartered himself at my *quinta* by Bejar, and—well, you, who are a soldier, understand. It will be his turn presently.'

'I am not that kind of soldier, my friend,' said I. 'But I understand.'

He looked at me with lowering, fixed brows, then again took my hand.

'Are you a Catholic?' he asked.

'The Tipperary Buckinghams have never been anything else,' I replied. 'Let me introduce myself, Señor Rusendo, as Captain William Lees Buckingham.'

'It is enough,' said he quickly, with one more fierce squeeze of my fingers. 'Señor Capitano, I dreamed last night that I was carried off to heaven by an eagle. That is a bad dream, and I wish to be prepared. You sleep here?'

I decided that I might do worse—if the larder permitted.

'Good,' said he. He touched the curious little bob into which his hair at the back had been packed. 'There is that here,' he said, 'which would in case of need help you to protect my little daughter if misfortune should come upon me. It was given to me by the Sultan of Morocco after an engagement at Tangiers. "If you are ever taken as a slave," said he—"which Allah forbid!—this little bull will be good ransom even for you, Don Juan." In the meantime, it may prove a talisman. My daughter is all I have now to live for, and'——

He stopped and glanced towards the boy, who was half-sitting on Dermot's knee, leaning against it with the grace of an old Greek statue.

'Daughter?' said I.

'Yes,' he whispered, much moved. 'My Juanita! She is safer thus. May she continue so! I could not leave her, though it is cowardly in me to let her face the risks which'——

He did not finish. I had heard something, and was on my feet with a call to Dermot. Down dropped the coffee-pot, and the little Spanish boy who was a girl cried 'Oh!' as some of the hot stuff splashed him.

'By the powers, sir, we're surrounded!' cried my man after a glance through the window. 'There's a score of Frenchies, and they've got the horses.'

I turned to the Spaniard, and asked him quickly what he would do. For myself, my pistol was out and my sword ready; and Dermot was just as prepared.

Dermot fired through the window.

'I've settled *him*, anyway,' he said contentedly. ''Twas the old rascal here, sir. He's done Judas Iscariot on us. Ay, you may well claw up the dirt of your own garden, you mean crather!'

The clatter outside continued. I slipped to the door and shot its heavy wooden bolt. That should mean five minutes for us, methought.

'Save her!' said Rusendo to me now in a hoarse whisper. The little maid was clinging to his arm.

But there could hardly have been a more hopeless kind of request. Hiding-place there seemed none in this box of a room, with its two shallow cupboards that could not have hidden a cat. True, there was a black, old chimney; but it was too obvious a resource, and the poor child's 'No! no!' of objection when Dermot pointed to it was as natural as could be.

Only one chance showed itself to me. Over our heads was a shelf for bacon slung close to the rafters.

'Cover that window. Be smart!' I cried to my man.

It was done, and then, standing on a chair, I explained my idea to the Spaniard. There was a hubbub now at the door and a summons to surrender. Rusendo took his daughter in his arms and lifted her up to me.

'Wait, father dear,' said the poor child when I was about to do my part. From the chair, she put her arms round his neck and hid her face on his cheek, with little sobs. It was a touching sight, though I had seen too many such since Rolica's day to lose my head over it.

She yielded to persuasion, and in another second or two I had the pretty little saint nicely sandwiched, her body actually squeezed against the grimy woodwork of the rafters.

'Now then, *amigo*,' I said to Rusendo, 'if you act prudently there ought to be no danger for either of you. Keep that dagger out of sight, man!'

He had drawn it and put on an expression to match.

'Door won't stand much, sir,' said my man.

Faith! then, it was time to deliver my plan of campaign; and Dermot stretched his ears to miss no word I spoke. He had amazing great ears. In the Puritan times of old there's many a humorous judge that would have felt *bound* to sentence them to be nailed to the pillory once he set eyes on them, with their broad flapping uppers that seemed meant for just that sort of discipline. But indeed 'twas no season to remember such mirthful trifles just then.

'We've no chance at all, sir,' said he when I had finished.

I thought differently. One peep through the window had satisfied me as to that. The Frenchmen were treating us to too many preliminaries. We might have been a walled city instead of a Portuguee hovel. Their officer was disposing his men this way and that, now making them lift their guns to their shoulders, and now changing his mind and setting them to stand with fixed bayonets as if to receive cavalry. And behind them were our two horses with pricked ears, and when I whistled the Cid he gave me a little signal which told me he was fresh again and on the alert.

'With luck,' I said, 'we might both pull it off. That old shrine a mile down the road will do for the rendezvous if we get parted. I'll wait for you there till midnight, and you do the same for me. The survivor will hurry on to camp after midnight alone. And don't forget your lesson, Dermot Lake, if you are the only one of us that gets safe to the General.'

We were both ready, with swords out.

'Señor!' cried the Spaniard, joining his hands in entreaty.

I'll do him the honour to believe it was only his daughter he felt fright about. But 'twas no matter

for that. I had my duty to the king to fulfil, and, faith! that was more to me and the country than his private vindictiveness; though it 's a harsh thing to call it by such a name when one remembers it was his own wife he was so eager to avenge.

'Señor,' cried I, 'God guard you!'

And then I nodded to Dermot, who softly moved back the bolt of the door. The instant it was free I kicked out the door itself and charged, bull-fashion, at the partridge legs in front to the right. And Dermot did his share too. There was a rattle of blasphemies, and twice Dermot's pistol cracked out. As for me, I gave two men the edge of my sword and one the point, and then I was alongside and on my Cid. And I tarried for no more. One stab of a bayonet got home through the muscles of my left calf and spurred my horse; but I shot the owner of that bayonet in the neck, and then went off with a loose rein down the hill, as old Tipperary had taught me how to do. A dozen bullets sang past me; but neither the Cid nor I was the worse for them.

RADIUM.

WITHIN the last decade several new elementary bodies have been discovered, bringing up the number of the elements to seventy-eight. Although each discovery has been a matter of intense interest to the chemist and the physicist, the ordinary individual, if he sees such an announcement in a corner of his daily newspaper, will pass it by with indifference as a matter that does not in the least concern him. When, therefore, it was reported a few years back that a new element had been found to which the name radium had been given, it did not raise a fraction of the interest which would have been attached to a new play or possibly even a new song.

It is told of a schoolboy in a chemical class that when the element nitrogen was under consideration he expressed the opinion that it was 'a duffing gas,' for it did not smell and would not explode. And this exactly represents the attitude of the ordinary person—the man in the street, as he is so often called—towards a scientific discovery. Unless it represents something quite out of the common way, or at any rate out of *his* common way, it fails to arouse interest or even attention. He would, perhaps, for a brief moment be attracted by the notification that argon, a new gas, had been found in the atmosphere, or that helium had been found in a certain mineral. The same fate awaited radium, and this new addition to the list of the elements would, like the two others, thenceforward have been banished to the text-books and the laboratories had it not been subsequently found to exhibit the most marvellous properties. And there is another thing which has claimed popular attention for radium: it is intrinsically the most valuable body ever known; so valuable, indeed, that it is quite impossible to say what it is worth. The most precious of stones and the finest pearls would be, weight for weight, as dross in comparison with it. There is a fascination to many minds about a thing which is so rare that even a millionaire could not command an ounce of it.

Radium is found in very minute quantities in a certain mineral known as pitch-blende. In this same mineral, which hitherto seems only to have been found in any quantity in Bohemia, the metal uranium was discovered by Klaproth in 1789; and it was named thus in compliment to Herschel, who had then discovered the planet Uranus. The chief use of uranium has hitherto been found in glass-staining, and it is noteworthy that yellow uranium-glass has the property of fluorescing under the stimulus of ultra-violet light, a current of electricity, or under the influence of the X-rays. Becquerel made many experiments with the salts of uranium, which, he found, were luminous for a time after exposure to sunlight. He also found that these salts, if wrapped in black paper and put upon a photographic dry plate for a time in a darkened room, left an impression upon that plate which became evident upon development. He at first attributed this to a kind of storing-up of the sunlight; but on trying uranium compounds which had not been exposed to light he produced the same effect. He next prepared some of these salts anew so as to eliminate all chance of error, and still the unseen radiations from them affected the photographic plate. Hence these radiations have been known as the Becquerel rays. It was also discovered that pitch-blende in like manner left a record upon the plate. To Becquerel is therefore due the discovery that uranium is capable of giving off minute corpuscles which can be detected in the manner described; in other words, it is radio-active.

Professor and Madame Curie, after investigating a number of substances, determined to make a careful examination of pitch-blende, and they therefore procured a quantity of refuse from the uranium-mines in Bohemia, a reddish-brown powder which represents what remains of pitch-blende after the uranium has been extracted from it: a worthless product until recently, but one which will now be very differently regarded. From this refuse of the uranium-mines the French professor and his talented wife, after a series of analytical operations which would have dismayed most workers, discovered three new elements which they named respectively actinium, polonium, and radium. Of the first two very little is known at present; the interest centres in radium.

Far easier would it be for any one to discover a needle in a haystack than it would be to separate from a ton of pitch-blende the small quantity of radium present in it—namely, about two grains; and it must be at once understood that radium itself is here only in the form of a combination with other elements. Radium bromide or radium chloride are the salts which reward the chemist for his patient treatment of the ore. At the present time there is not an entire ounce of the two combined in the whole world. Such a quantity would represent a big fortune. It is evident that under the circumstances any stated value must be merely nominal.

Radium, however, makes up for its extreme rarity by its marvellous properties, in which it differs from any other element known. Professor Crookes has devised a little instrument in which a piece of radium salt too small to be seen except by the help of a microscope is associated with a fluorescent screen; and when this is examined in a dark room the bombardment of the screen by the radiations is rendered visible as tiny flashes of light. It is also established by the evidence of the thermometer that the radium is hotter than its surroundings, and is constantly giving off heat. And this power of apparently creating heat without any loss of its own substance goes on as gaily as ever when the radium is cooled down to the low temperature of liquid air; whilst at the greater cold of liquid hydrogen its activity has been found by Professor Dewar to actually increase. As Professor Boys asserted in his presidential address to the Mathematical and Physical Section of the British Association, 'This discovery, which could barely be distinguished from that of perpetual motion, which it was an axiom of science to call impossible, had left every chemist and physicist in a state of bewilderment.'

The perplexity on the part of those who are best qualified to judge of the importance of the discovery may be better comprehended when it is pointed out that the phenomena attributed to radium seems to be contrary to certain principles which have hitherto been regarded as inviolable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. For example, the smallest particle of any elementary body that the mind can conceive is the atom; and an atom, although it can combine with atoms of other kinds to form a molecule, has hitherto been regarded as a thing which is so far stable that the atom of one element cannot be changed into the atom of another one. We know well enough that the old alchemists thought differently, and spent their lives in the endeavour to find out the secret of turning the common metals into the rarer kinds. The modern system of chemistry is, indeed, founded upon the individuality of the atom; and Dalton's atomic theory is the very grammar of the science. But the radium atom shows signs of degradation, and gives evidence that it is undergoing a kind of disintegration; and in the gases evolved from a solution in water of a salt of this new element, helium has been detected.

Another well-known and universally accepted dogma is known as the conservation of energy, which teaches that energy may be neither created nor destroyed. But here we have this radium atom throwing out energy in the form of heat without intermission and apparently without any outside help. It is as if we had an oil-lamp burning on and on after its initial charge of oil had been exhausted and without replenishment. One well-known experimenter, who has taken a leading part in the recent radium discussion, believes that before many months have passed over our heads some one will have constructed a machine which, instead of being worked by a storage battery or other source of energy, will be worked by radium. However this may be, it is certain that chemists and physicists find in this element problems very difficult to solve; and if this be the case with trained intellects, what a far more puzzling matter must radium present to those matter-of-fact persons who make up the bulk of their fellow-creatures! 'Seeing is believing' will exclaim many, 'and if we can have light and heat without paying for electricity, gas, or coal, we shall believe in the virtues of radium.'

Most persons will find it difficult, if not impossible, to imagine a little mass of matter, far too small for the microscope to detect, throwing out from itself a constant hail of infinitesimal particles without any apparent loss to itself. It is as if a rich man were to throw away his wealth broadcast without getting the poorer for his extravagance. Let us see if we cannot find something analogous to this behaviour of the radium atom amid the surroundings of our common life; something, of course, which we can see and handle. Perhaps the substance most fitted to our purpose is a grain of musk. If that small particle of matter, which weighs not much more than the five-hundredth part of an ounce, be put in a chest full of clothes, it will give its pungent odour to all of them, will make its presence evident to our sense of smell every time that chest is opened, and it will continue so to do for years without any reduction in its weight which can be detected by the most delicate balance. Something must be constantly emitted from that grain of musk in order to produce this effect. We may call them detached particles, or corpuscles, or anything else which the imagination may suggest; we cannot see them, and the only evidence we have of their presence is through our sense of smell. In the case of the radium rays we cannot smell them or see them, but we have evidence of their presence in the luminosity of certain bodies when brought within their reach. And, marvellous to relate, these radiations from the radium atom are of three distinct varieties, each having different properties and moving at a different velocity; but they all have the power of darkening a photographic plate, and of rendering air through which they pass a conductor of electricity. The wonder of radium itself seems to be

almost eclipsed by the brilliant researches which have made known its constitution and distinctive qualities.

Physicists and chemists are busy with the endeavour to find a theory which can be used as a working hypothesis for dealing with radium. One suggests that the new element is a compound of helium formed in prehistoric ages, and that its activity is due to slow spontaneous decomposition; another that there is direct transmutation of one element into another. It will most likely be a long time before science has said its last word about the problem presented to it by radium.

After every notable discovery the utilitarian and practical man comes forward with the question: 'Of what use is it?' The same question was no doubt at one time asked about the X-rays; and although it could not immediately be answered, it can be answered now. The X-rays have placed in the hands of surgeons a new and most valuable power. By their aid the living bones can be examined, and any deformity, fracture, or abnormal appearance noted. Even on the battlefield the course of a bullet through the human frame can be traced with unerring certainty, so that the foreign body can be removed with expedition. With improvements in X-ray production it is not too much to hope that the diagnosis of obscure diseases of the internal organs may be greatly aided. The X-rays have been the means of saving many lives and much suffering.

Still earlier might the question, 'Of what use is it?' have been asked of Faraday when he demonstrated the fact that when a magnet was brought near a coil of wire a current of electricity was generated in that wire. Of what good was that experiment? To that tiny germ we owe the electric light, electric traction on our tram-lines and railways, the electric motor in our workshops, and a means of transmitting energy, say, from a waterfall like Niagara over hundreds of miles of country. For Faraday's magnet and wire gave us the dynamo-machine. The tiny seed thus sown has increased to a huge growth with many branches; it gives employment to hundreds of thousands of workers and brings incalculable benefits to millions.

The discovery of radium is perhaps not likely to bring about such fundamental changes in our social life as has the dynamo-machine, and it is early yet to speculate upon what the future may bring forth regarding it; but we can say without hesitation that it has already proved in the hands of our hospital surgeons a therapeutic agent of great value. Cases of rodent ulcer, a cancerous disease which generally attacks the face of its victims, and, as the name implies, gnaws away the tissues, have been cured by the simple contact with the sore of a tube containing a few specks of the radium salt for a period of, say, fifteen minutes, repeated at intervals of a few days eight or ten times. And some of these have been cases which have resisted all other remedial agents, and in which excision was the last terrible alternative. It is sad and regrettable that reports of these successful cases, very possibly promulgated by the delighted patients themselves, should have been published in newspapers which indulge in sensational headlines. 'The new cure for cancer' may have attracted the attention of a few hundred more readers, while it raised false hopes in the breasts of many sufferers. For there are different sorts of cancer; and because the new treatment has been beneficial in cases of rodent ulcer, which may be described as a cancerous ulceration of the skin, it by no means follows that it must be effectual in those cases which more properly come under the vulgar term cancer (*carcinoma*).

It would seem, from certain physiological experiments which have been carried out at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, that radium may be death-dealing as well as health-giving. But this need excite no surprise when we remember that arsenic, strychnine, and many other drugs are valuable medicines as well as poisons. Five centigrammes of radium chloride were for three days suspended over a cage containing eight white-mice, and then removed. The little animals continued for a time to thrive, but they gradually became blind, lost the fur from their backs, and ultimately died. In like manner rabbits and guinea-pigs were killed, embryo chickens exposed during incubation to the rays were deprived of life, and even plants succumbed to the deadly influence of radium.

Some remarkable experiments showed, too, that in the case of certain larvæ development was altogether arrested by exposure to these rays, whilst other larvæ of the same age not interfered with followed the ordinary course of nature and grew into aged moths. It was as if, of twin-brothers, one remained a baby while the other became a grandfather. Other still more curious experiments with living creatures have been detailed, some of which are so startling that one hardly cares to describe them without full corroboration.

Among the many speculations to which the radium researches have given birth is one respecting solar heat. Many theories have been devised to account for the unceasing energy of the sun's heat, without which life on this earth must come to an end; but the conclusions based upon them must now be reconsidered. Helium, we must remember, was so named because it was detected by spectroscopic observation in the sun before it was recognised as a constituent of one of the earth's minerals; and if helium is there, it is a natural presumption that radium must be there too. It has been suggested that at the sun's high temperature radium may be far more energetic than it is here, and that a comparatively small quantity—a few grammes per cubic mètre of the sun's volume—might supply the whole of the heat given out by our luminary. There may be other as yet unknown elements in the sun of similar radio-active properties which may also contribute their share of energy to the general result. It would seem to be a bold thing to speculate in

this way on experiments conducted with a minute quantity of radium; but it must be remembered that the results of these experiments are as significant as if we had dealt with tons of that element instead of with grains. The story of Faraday's magnet should teach us that the importance of a suggestive experiment cannot be measured by the scale upon which it is conducted.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER XIII.—WHAT THE WATCHER SAW.

THOUGH utterly fagged out, I hailed a passing cab and drove back to the corner of Harpur Street, where, in the shadow, about half-way along the short thoroughfare, I discovered the young Italian keeping a watchful eye upon the house with the sign of the bear.

'No one has emerged, signore,' he said to me in Italian. 'I was here a few minutes after you spoke to me.'

The blind was still up and the signal still exhibited, the inmates evidently being unaware of the secret visit of the strange pair.

What connection could Father Bernardo and the old hunchback Graniani, away in Italy, have with that mysterious household?

'Has any one passed up the street during my absence?' I asked the merry-eyed Enrico.

'Several people, signore. One man, well dressed, like a gentleman, stood for a moment looking up at the window yonder as though he expected to see some one there. But he was apparently disappointed, and passed on.'

'What kind of man?' I inquired eagerly. 'Describe him.'

'A signore, with small, fair moustache, about forty. He carried an umbrella, so I could not see his face very well. He was tall, and walked erectly, almost like an officer. A four-wheeled cab waited for him up at the corner.'

'He didn't actually pass the house?'

'No, signore. He merely walked down here sufficiently far to obtain a view of the window; then, having satisfied himself, turned back again.'

In reply to my question, Enrico told me that he lived with his mother in Kirby Street, Hatton Garden, the thoroughfare running parallel with Saffron Hill. They had been five years in London: five sad, despairing years. Ah, the English! they were not *cattiva*. Oh no! It was their amazing climate that made them what they were. He pitied London people. How happy they would all be if they only lived under the blue sky of rural Tuscany! And so he went on, just as every poor Italian does who is doomed to the struggle and semi-starvation of life in our gray Metropolis.

I read the young fellow's character like a book. He had served his military term at Bologna, and had been waiter in the officers' mess. Then he and his mother emigrated to London from Genoa, attracted by the proverbial richness of the *Inglese* and the report that waiters in restaurants were well paid. On arriving, however, he had soon discovered that the supply of Italian waiters was much in excess of the demand; therefore he had been compelled to invest the ten pounds he had in a second-hand organ, and he and his mother picked up a living as best they could in the unsympathetic streets of London.

He seemed a good fellow, quite frank, and possessing that easy-going, careless manner of the true Tuscan, which never deserts him even when in circumstances of direst poverty. Your true son of the Tuscan mountains looks at the bright side of everything; a child in love, a demon in hatred, overcautious with strangers, but easy and tractable in everything. I chatted to him for some twenty minutes, at the end of which time I resolved that he should assist me further.

I told him how I had only arrived from Italy a few hours ago, and he grew at once excited. My train had actually passed across the rippling Serchio within a few miles of Ponte Moriano, his own village! I told him of my long residence in Tuscany, a fact which attracted him towards me; for your poor Italian of the kerb seldom becomes acquainted with an Englishman who understands his ways and his language. And when I explained that I wished him to assist me in a very important and secret undertaking, he at once announced his readiness to do so.

'Very well,' I said, giving him the half-sovereign I had promised. 'Go across to the public-house in Theobald's Road and get some supper quickly, for I want you to remain on watch here all night. I must rest and sleep for a few hours; but we must ascertain who goes and comes here. Above all, we must follow any one carrying a parcel. A valuable book was stolen from me in Italy, and it has been taken there.'

'I quite understand,' was his response; and a few moments later he left me alone while he went to obtain something to eat.

During his absence I took out a card and wrote upon it the name of the hotel to which I had decided to go because it was in the vicinity, and he could call me if necessary—the Hotel Russell.

When he returned a quarter of an hour later I gave him instructions, telling him that if he wished to call me urgently during the night he might run round to the hotel, where I would leave instructions with the night-porter, who would bring up to my room the card I placed in his hand.

Then, jaded, wet, and hungry, I took a cab to the hotel, and sent down to Charing Cross for my bag, which I had left in the cloak-room there. In half-an-hour I had a welcome change of clothes and sat down to a hearty supper.

Truly much had happened in those past three days; for within that period I seemed to have lived a veritable lifetime of doubt and mystery. The prophecy which The Closed Book contained was certainly true. I had handled it at my peril.

In Italy the circumstances surrounding the possession of the volume containing the secrets were strange enough; but here, in England, the mystery of it all was increased tenfold. It appeared very much as if there were some widespread conspiracy against me, but with what motive I utterly failed to comprehend. I had purchased the book at the price asked for it, just as I had purchased other manuscripts of similar type, unaware of its great antiquarian value, but attracted solely by the additional script at the end. Yet possession of it had brought upon me nothing but evil.

In a flash, as it were, I had returned from the charm of Tuscany into my own circle—the complex little world of literary London. That night I sat over a cigar prior to turning in, thinking and wondering. Yes, since that moment when I had bought the poisoned manuscript the world had used me very roughly. That there was a plot against me I felt certain.

Midnight came, and from my balcony on the third floor I stood watching the falling rain and the hansoms coming up from the theatres and crossing the square on their way northward. My presence in London again seemed like a dream, sick as I was of the sun-glare of the Mediterranean. My natural intuition told me that I should never return to Italy. My old friend Hutchinson would see that my collection of pictures, china, old furniture, and antiques was packed and sent to me. He had rendered me many kindnesses in the past, and would do so again, I felt sure, for he was one of my most intimate friends.

I was sound asleep when, of a sudden, I heard a loud rapping at the door.

'A man wants to see you, sir. He's sent up your card,' exclaimed a voice in response to my sleepy growl.

I rubbed my eyes, and recollected that the voice was the night-porter's.

'Very well,' I replied. 'I'll be down at once;' and, rising, I slipped on my things hastily, glancing at my watch and finding it to be five o'clock—four o'clock in English time, as I had not altered my watch since leaving Italy.

In the gray of dawn at the door below I met Enrico, who, speaking excitedly in Italian, said:

'Something has happened, signore. I do not know what it is; but half-an-hour ago a little old lady came out of the house hurriedly, and called a doctor named Barton, who has a surgery in Theobald's Road, next the fire-engine station. She seemed greatly excited, and the doctor hurried back with her. He's there now, I expect.'

In an instant the truth became apparent. Some one had attempted to open The Closed Book as I had done, and had become envenomed.

I explained but little to Enrico; but together we hurried back through the dim, silent thoroughfares to Harpur Street.

I felt a certain amount of satisfaction that the thieves should suffer as I had suffered. Like myself, they had opened the book at their own risk and peril.

The house, like its neighbours, was in total darkness, save a flickering candle-flame showing through the dingy fanlight, denoting that Doctor Barton was still within.

I asked the young Italian how he knew the doctor's name, and he replied that it was engraved on the brass plate on the door. By this I saw that he was no fool. Indeed, your Italian of the mountains is always successful in clever espionage, secret as the grave, and unrivalled in ingenuity.

Within myself I reconstructed the whole story. An unknown inmate of the house had been poisoned, and the doctor—a friend most probably—had been hurriedly summoned. Was he aware of the antidote, as Pellegrini in Leghorn had been? Poisoning is not the usual recreation of the law-abiding Londoner, and few general practitioners, even Harley Street specialists, would care to undergo an examination upon Tanner's *Memoranda on Poisons*, nearly out of date as it may be.

My chief object was to regain possession of my property. I had discovered at least two persons interested in it—namely, the old gentleman and the sweet-faced young woman who had entered that smart house in Grosvenor Street. There only remained for me to fix the identity of the unknown person within that dingy old house in Harpur Street.

The doctor emerged at last when it was nearly five o'clock, and it was quite daylight. He was shown out by my fellow-passenger from Calais, who thanked him profusely for his efforts, evidently successful.

For an hour or two I saw nothing could be done; therefore we both relinquished our vigil, Enrico returning to his home behind Saffron Hill to snatch an hour's sleep and some breakfast, and I going back to the hotel.

On thinking over all the curious events, I resolved that it was necessary to confide in one or other of my friends in London. At present none of them knew that I was back in town; but when they did I felt sure that a flood of invitations would pour upon me.

As I have already said, it was now my intention to settle down in England, and I was eager to begin house-hunting, so as to have a fitting place ready to receive my collections when they arrived from Italy. Some months must elapse before I could be settled in a country house, as I intended; therefore, on reflection, I resolved to seek the

hospitality of one of my best friends of the old London days, Captain Walter Wyman, the well-known traveller and writer. He was about my own age, and, like myself, had earned success and popularity by dint of perseverance and intrepid exploration. Inheriting an ample income from his father, the late Sir Henry Wyman, Knight, the great Wigan ironmaster, he had, after a bitter disappointment in love, devoted himself to the pursuit of geographical knowledge, and as a result of his travels in Asia and Africa the world had been considerably enriched by his information. Fever, however, had seriously impaired his health, and he was now back in his comfortable chambers at Dover Street, where he had only a few weeks ago invited me to stay if I came to town.

Yes; I decided to accept his hospitality in preference to the comfortless hotel-life, which, after long experience in various places on the Continent, I abominate. Of all men in whom I might confide, Walter Wyman would be the best. He lived for adventure, and, as the world is well aware, had had a considerable amount of it during his travels.

At ten o'clock that morning his white-headed old valet, Thompson, admitted me.

'Why, my dear Allan!' my friend cried, jumping from his chair, where he was enjoying his after-breakfast cigarette, 'this is a surprise! You're back, then?'

'Yes,' I replied. 'I came back suddenly last night, and am going to accept your invitation to stay.'

'Of course. You know we shouldn't be friends any longer if you went elsewhere. How long are you over for?'

'For good. I'm going to look out for a cottage or something in the country. I'm sick of Italy at last.'

Wyman smiled, offered me a cigarette, and ordered Thompson to bring brandy and soda. Careless, easy-going cosmopolitan that he was, it never struck him that strong drink so early in the morning was unusual.

He was dark, with a rather reddish complexion, tall, well groomed, dressed in a suit of dark blue, and well set up altogether. Although several touches of fever had played havoc with him, he nevertheless looked the pink of condition—a fine specimen of English manhood.

When I had lit my cigarette I spoke to him confidentially, and he listened to my story with the utmost attention. In that cosy room, the walls of which were hung with savage arms and trophies of the chase, and the floor covered with the skins of animals that had fallen to his gun, I told him the whole of the strange circumstances, relating briefly the incomplete story as written in The Closed Book and the remarkable conspiracy that was apparently in progress.

When I had described the mysterious visit of the tall old gentleman and the young woman to Harpur Street, and had related how I had followed them to the Earl of Glenelg's house in Grosvenor Street, he jumped up, exclaiming:

'Why, from your description, my dear fellow, it must have been the Earl himself, and the girl was evidently his daughter, Lady Judith Gordon! They've been abroad these two years, and to half London their whereabouts has been a mystery. I had no idea they had returned. By Jove! what you tell me is really most puzzling. It seems to me that you ought to get back that book at any cost.'

UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE LEOPOLDS.

By Alexander Macdonald, F.R.S.G.S.

THERE is no more fascinating coast in the whole world than that which forms the sea-board of the mystic Leopold country in north-western Australia. It is fringed with innumerable islands and indented with magnificent bays and inlets, which, for rugged beauty, might well compare with the majestic fiords of Norway; whilst the placid waters of a summer sea ripple ceaselessly over coral beds and pulsate through uncharted channels, unchecked by wharves or piers and unsullied by the flotsam of commerce. Here is, indeed, a region far from the haunts of white men, where Nature rules in all her solitary grandeur; yet it is a region which soon must attract the wandering Briton to its shores, for it abounds in mineral treasure to an exceptional degree, and is merely the border of an immense mountainous tract which is still but a blank space on our maps, but which private explorers and adventurous miners have termed the Golden Land of the Leopolds. Gold and diamonds are known to exist throughout all this dark corner of our great Empire; and its coral deeps have proved to be rich in pearls of the most rare description. What further inducement could man desire?

Yet there is the inevitable deterrent feature of such El Dorados to be reckoned with, and in this case it takes the form of hostile aborigines, who guard their domain jealously against all white intruders, and import a large element of risk into the fortune-seeker's life in these latitudes. To those who would venture into the heart of the shadowy Leopold ranges, I would therefore give the advice to exercise much caution, to be used in conjunction with good long-range rifles; and, incidentally, a prayer-book might come in as a fitting solace in case of emergency. I speak as one who has crossed this hostile territory; and while I can truthfully bear out the statement

as to its vast resources, the scarce-healed wound of an aboriginal's spear in my body remains as an impressive souvenir which must always damp my enthusiasm when writing of the interior Leopold country.

However, there is comparatively little danger to be feared when journeying by sea along the outskirts of the forbidden land, and there is probably more to be gained by such an expedition, for the treasures of the shallows as well as of the shores may be tapped, and an unrestricted highway for navigation is open for the transmission of results to more civilised parts. The pearling centre of Broome is nearly three hundred miles south of this unmarked coast, and the settlement of Derby, at the foot of King Sound, is almost equally distant from it. Occasionally a lugger may take a northerly cruise, but seldom are the winding inlets explored or exploited; a wholesome dread of coming to grief on some hidden rock or boulder prevents the usually unskilled steersmen of these craft from doing more pioneering work than is absolutely necessary. So it is that between latitudes fourteen degrees and sixteen degrees only a general knowledge of the northern sea-board has been obtained. Any surveys that have been made are useful only to the theoretical geographer, and the consequence is that the vast north-western division of Australia is probably the least-known area on the face of the earth.

Nearly four years ago I arrived in Broome from the central deserts, only to find that no ship was likely to touch that port for some time, owing to the prevalence of bubonic plague at Fremantle. There is not much to tempt the traveller to make a long sojourn in this blistering little cosmopolitan township, and I was by no means elated with my prospects. Indeed, after about a week of unadulterated misery, I proposed to my companions that we should start and walk towards civilisation, which was a foolish enough suggestion, born only of extreme discontent with our environment.

'It's a trifle over seven hundred miles from here to Perth,' said Phil the geologist, with a questioning smile.

Then Mac added his testimony. 'It's nearer a thoosand,' he grunted dismally, 'an' ye must mind we're no' camels.'

We were standing on the beach of Roebuck Bay, idly watching the movements of several luggers which were coming up the channel on a full tide, and as we gazed at the trim little schooners a common thought seemed to arise in our minds, causing us to sigh regretfully. 'If we only had a lugger, boys,' I said, 'we should soon get out of this young Hades.'

Just then an oddly shaped vessel, with higher freeboard than the rest, swept in from the sea with all sail set, and came surging up into the creek at an alarming rate.

'That's Gentleman James's boat!' exclaimed Phil, in amazement. 'I wonder what has brought *him* in here?'

Gentleman James was a well-known individual all over the Westralian coast, and we had met him several times before; but I knew that he rarely put into Broome unless compelled by stress of weather or some equally urgent reason. 'He may have called for stores,' I answered musingly. On came the strange craft, steering a true course between the numerous sandbanks and avoiding the shallows dexterously.

'It's Gentleman James!' was the shout that arose from the decks of the more leisurely pearlers, and with helm hard down they veered off to a respectful distance. Truly the latest arrival seemed to cause consternation among the fleet; each ship dodged and doubled to give him a wide berth, and their frantic manœuvres were amusing to witness.

'He *is* a reckless deevil,' spoke Mac admiringly; 'but he's bound to come to a sudden end if he doesna adopt mair canny tactics.' Then he made a trumpet of his hands and sent a stentorian shout across the waters: 'Gentleman James, ahoy!'

Immediately a bare head popped above the gunwale, followed by the beshirted shoulders of a squarely built man of middle age, as the steersman rose to glare at the signaller.

'Gentleman James, ahoy!' again bellowed Mac.

A light of recognition broke over the face of the daring sailor. 'Ahoy, ahoy, ye sand-groping gorilla!' he roared back, at the same time putting his helm across to port and bringing the prow of his clipper round into the wind. A few moments later the *Adventurer*, as the odd lugger was named, was safely anchored some fifty yards from the beach, and her sturdy owner was pulling towards us in his dingy.

'Couldn't you have struck the coast at a better place than this?' he shouted to me over his shoulder.

'We steered direct from Johanna Spring,' I replied; 'but if I had thought we were to be stranded here I would have kept the camels and made a bee-line for Brisbane or Sydney.'

The dingy had now grated on the shingle, and its occupant, leaping out, greeted us warmly. 'It's like a glimpse of the old country to see you,' he said. 'The sun-dried skunks on this coast aren't fit company for a white man.'

'Ye're like an Egyptian mummy yersel', Jamie,' reproved Mac severely.

'Ah, well! I shouldn't wonder,' laughed the wiry pioneer. 'But we can't kick against circumstances, can we?'

'Might I ask where you are bound for this time?' I put in mildly by way of digression.

'Heaven knows!' came the prompt response. 'I was thinking of prospecting along the Leopold country'—— He broke off abruptly, then gazed at us inquiringly. 'Will you come?' he demanded.

With one voice we answered 'We will;' and so a compact was made which afterwards was the means of our taking a much longer cruise in the *Adventurer* than we had ever intended. Gentleman James had

put into port, as I had guessed, for stores, and these were soon obtained and placed on board. Then we visited Gummows' Hotel, where we had been staying, and made our final arrangements for the journey.

It was late in the afternoon when we embarked, and the various schooner and lugger captains about advised us strongly not to venture seaward before the following morning. But we were anxious to feel the fresh breezes of the Indian Ocean playing on our cheeks; we had had enough of the mosquito-infested swamps and tainted atmosphere of Broome; and, further, I knew that Gentleman James was the most expert navigator in these waters.

The stars were beginning to appear when we weighed anchor and sent the broad lug-sails squirling up aloft like giant bat-wings; and as the gallant little ship gathered speed and pointed her narrow bows out into the vast waste of rippling wavelets, the Southern Cross shone brilliantly over the horizon and gave us a true bearing. All that night the *Adventurer* buffeted with cross seas and thrashed ahead bravely. The waves rolled over the forward hatch in a constant stream, and wallowed in the scuppers in effervescing pools of foam, and the flying spray drenched us in saline showers.

Towards morning the wind settled in to blow steadily from the west, and the buoyant craft heeled over until her lee-rail was buried in boiling surf, and her tough timbers trembled as she shouldered off the dark-green rollers and dashed headlong into the vortices of succeeding swells. It was a wild storm for a pearling-lugger to encounter, and I could easily guess how disasters might occur with less skilfully handled vessels; but Gentleman James kept an iron grip on the tiller, and with the knowledge of a seasoned mariner, avoided many overwhelming seas which reared their heads angrily on our port-quarter, then broke and foamed away by the stern. Daylight came at last; and with the first red streaks of dawn the boisterous winds faded away, and the ocean speedily assumed its wonted placid aspect. Before breakfast was over we were gliding along almost on even keel, with only the gentlest of zephyrs filling the great sails. The storm had completely spent itself, and we were furrowing the bosom of a smiling tropical sea. Away to starboard the rocky cliffs of Dampier Land were plainly visible, and our course was shifted so as to lead closer inshore. Hour after hour we coasted the grim-looking hills which bordered the southern limit of an almost unknown territory; then, as the shades of night were beginning to creep over the fathomless wastes, the *Adventurer's* bowsprit was again pointed seaward, and before the sun had risen on another day we had crossed the entrance to King Sound and were scudding north-north-east, where, behind a host of silvery isles, the frowning ranges of the distant Leopolds loomed up into misty clouds of rapidly dispelling ether.

'We're sailing in uncharted seas now, boys,' said Gentleman James, with much satisfaction. 'We're on the edge of the greatest *terra incognita* in the world.'

At noon our position worked out to be but a few minutes under the fifteenth parallel; and after some deliberation we headed eastward through a maze of stranded coral islets, and shaped a careful course along the mainland, steering into narrow straits and cunningly hidden harbours, and now and again making an anchorage that we might examine the many promising quartz-reefs which outcropped in great 'blows' immediately on the water's edge.

Days passed in this fashion without much real progress being made; but our discoveries of certain rare formations occupied our attention so keenly that we were no longer impatient with our surroundings. No more beautiful scenery could be imagined than that which may be viewed in these latitudes. The towering forest-clad heights, the imposing defiles, the peaceful inland seas, and the majestic splendour of the grim, mouldering cliffs—all were grandly picturesque, and served to impress us strongly, hardened wanderers though we were. A torrid sun blazed down on gently heaving waters, and reflected gloriously along the wildering hill-slopes; yet the fierce heat was tempered by the most delightful of cool breezes from beyond the glistening archipelago, and the blue wavelets lapped the pearl-strewn beach in rhythmic harmony.

It was after we had been cruising for nearly two weeks amid these pleasant scenes that our most important find was made, and then we had an opportunity of judging what might have been a very detrimental feature of the lonely land in a more practical manner than we desired. It was about two o'clock in the afternoon of a very hot day when we reached the head of a long, narrow inlet which stretched between two rugged mountain-spurs. The entrance to this channel had been made only with great difficulty, for a series of jagged coral boulders interrupted the passage, and we had to take to the dingy, and from a position of safety carefully manœuvre the lugger between the obstacles. It seemed as if Nature had purposely barred the way to one of her richest treasure-houses. However, we had arrived at the limit of the waterway without mishap, and were surveying the rich eucalyptus-clad country before us with much delight. Never had I seen so luxurious a vegetation in Australia. Rare mosses and gorgeous flowers extended all over the higher altitudes of the hills, while between the trees ferns of the most lovely description flourished abundantly. And not only this; down through the almost imperceptible valley a sparkling stream of clearest water gurgled and splashed over marble-like terraces of quartz, until it united with the arm of the sea in which the *Adventurer* lay securely anchored. For a long time we gazed around in silence, then our eyes sought the white shelving channel of the creek, and there lingered.

'What do you make of it, Phil?' I asked at length, breaking the solemn stillness.

'Auriferous quartz,' he replied laconically.

'Hundreds of tons of it,' supplemented Gentleman James.

'We'll get oot an' investigate,' murmured Mac; and out we went.

A rough scrutiny of the exposed matrix proved to us conclusively that the entire bed of the stream was composed of a true gold-bearing formation; but whether it would be payable to work without machinery was another matter. Phil lost no time in preparing a sample for analysis. Taking his prospecter's hammer, he tapped from the edges of the channel several fair-sized pieces of quartz, and these he commenced to beat into powder, using a broad, flat stone as a crushing-press. While he was thus engaged Mac proceeded to test the alluvial deposits of the broad delta by means of his ever-ready gold-pan, and soon both my companions were 'washing' their prospects assiduously.

The lighter sands in Mac's dish were quickly carried off by the overflow ingeniously contrived by that astute individual; and in a few minutes only a small quantity of dark, heavy granules was left in the grooved rim of the basin. As yet no gold had been observed; but on more water being added, and the pan canted obliquely several times, the bulk of the residue slid slowly aside, leaving in its wake a long comet-like streak of glittering metal.

'Got it!' exclaimed the manipulator, triumphantly handing the gold-pan to me for further examination.

'It's a mighty good prospect,' said Gentleman James complacently, 'and I guess we'll camp here for a bit.'

The presence of gold in the reef was now assured; and, judging by the rich nature of the drift, the mother-lode must necessarily be of considerably more value. As to this, Phil's analysis of the ore proved our contention to be not far out. Numerous little nuggets and slugs came to light when his sample was treated by the wet process, and an attractive trail of 'flour' gold was also in evidence.

'There's a fair sprinkling of these confounded iron pyrites in the stuff,' he said after we had given expression to our delight in rather a noisy fashion; 'but that would be nothing if we had a simple amalgamating vat.'

'We'll get that arranged later, boys,' interrupted Gentleman James, gazing around apprehensively, as a faint crackling broke upon our ears; 'meanwhile, the surface wash should be about as much as we can handle.'

Again a vague crackling echo was heard; this time it sounded nearer, and much more distinct than before. For the moment our gold-mine was forgotten, and we scanned the forest anxiously, not knowing what to expect.

'Might have been a herd of kangaroos,' suggested Phil lightly, returning to his work.

'Mair likely niggers,' growled Mac. 'The black deevils aye come along when they 're no' wanted.'

'I think we'd better get aboard, boys,' said Gentleman James meaningly. 'I've been on this coast before, and the natives are not so tractable as they are farther south.'

Rather reluctantly we started off for the beach, where the dingy lay half out of the water; but we had not gone a dozen yards when, with a series of demoniacal yells, about a score of stalwart aborigines burst out from among the trees and rushed to intercept us, brandishing spears and *kylies* in a manner that could not be misunderstood. In our eagerness over our discovery we had neglected to keep a strict lookout, with the result that the crafty natives had almost got between us and the dingy before our suspicions had been aroused.

'Never mind the boat, boys. Swim for the lugger!' roared Gentleman James; and a moment later we plunged into the blue water as one man, and struck out wildly towards the *Adventurer*, which lay about fifty yards from shore. A shower of spears whizzed over our heads as we bobbed to the surface, causing us to dive promptly; and when we reappeared a fresh fusillade greeted us, but fortunately fell wide and did no harm. I now got a hasty glimpse of the attacking force, and noticed that they were grouped around the dingy, gesticulating energetically, apparently arguing the point as to how many of their number it could carry.

'For Heaven's sake, screw on your best speed, boys!' adjured Gentleman James, blowing like a grampus, yet burrowing into the foam right manfully.

Our clothing did not impede us much, being of rather scanty description, for which we were then truly thankful, and we made wonderful progress; but just as we grasped the gunwale of the lugger the sound of oars intimated that our enemies were close in our rear.

'Up anchor, boys!' yelled Gentleman James, 'while I get the ship's armoury on deck.' He disappeared below, and Mac and I strained every nerve at the creaking windlass; but we were floating in nearly ten fathoms of water, and I could plainly see that it was hopeless for us to attempt an escape by flight.

'Get my hunting Winchester from the cabin, Mac,' I said when, after much exertion, only the slack of the cable had been taken in. 'We'll have to fight after all.'

He wriggled his bulky form through the after-hatchway at once, colliding in his haste with Gentleman James, who was coming up with an armful of miscellaneous rifles and cutlasses, the very sight of which ought to have been enough to frighten off the blacks. Our preparations did not take long to make; and before the dingy was twenty yards from the beach we had its numerous occupants covered by sufficient artillery to make a fair-sized hole in a modern cruiser. Those of the

tribe who could not visit us by sea now scrambled along the sands on both sides of the gully, and made the best of their time by launching sundry spears in our direction.

'I 'll give the beggars one chance for life,' muttered Gentleman James, standing up in the stern-sheets. 'They may understand the lingo of their brethren in the north.'

He forthwith proceeded to harangue the approaching natives in energetic monosyllabic words, such as no white man but himself could speak. The effect was magical. The rowers dropped their oars and gazed at him in bewilderment, and for a brief space not a sound broke the impressive stillness. Then a roar burst from the lips of the savage boatmen—a strange, half-articulate roar that was taken up by the dusky aborigines on the beach and echoed and re-echoed over the waters.

I listened in amazement, entirely nonplussed by their odd behaviour; but as my ears became familiar with the repeated cries I could trace the constantly recurring words, 'Gen'leman James! Gen'leman James!'

'By the Great Howlin' Billy!' roared Mac, 'they've recognised our Jamie.'

It was true. Gentleman James's early pioneering journeys had made him known to many of the wandering tribes of the north, and his kindness to black men generally had borne fruit at last.

'We're all right, boys,' he said, stepping down from his perch. 'They remember my visit to this coast ten years back; and as I have always acted on the principle of treating a black man square, I don't think we need now be the least afraid.'

It was as he said. The blacks have long memories, and in this case we benefited exceedingly by that circumstance. We were permitted to continue our mining operations unmolested; indeed, we gained much assistance from many willing members of the band, so that our stay in their vicinity lengthened out for days and weeks. Then, when the alluvial deposits had been worked out and provisions were getting scarce, Mac, Phil, and I set out in the *Adventurer* bound for Singapore, where we intended to purchase some necessary mining-plant; and Gentleman James remained behind with the natives, whom he trusted implicitly, and there we found him on our return, many months later, worshipped as a king by the most hostile savages of the Australian continent, and by his influence doing a great good to the cause of civilisation.

NEW ANECDOTES OF CELEBRATED PEOPLE.

By Orion.

I ONLY once had the pleasure and privilege of meeting Sir George Grove, one of the best story-tellers of his day, at the house of Bailie Symons in Glasgow. I sat next him at dinner, and listened with delighted attention as he told some of his famous anecdotes. Bailie Symons was convener of the committee in charge of the musical arrangements at the first Glasgow Exhibition, and Sir George was his guest on the occasion of its opening. After dinner we drove to the Exhibition for the rehearsal of Dr Hedderwick's ode and the other parts of the musical programme.

Several of the stories I then heard, and of course many more, I find in Mr C. L. Graves's very charming *Life of Sir George Grove*, recently published by Messrs Macmillan. For a number of years Sir George was editor of *Macmillan's Magazine*, and for a still longer period was one of the literary advisers of the firm. Here are some of his hitherto unpublished anecdotes about celebrated people.

POLICEMEN AND THE NATIONAL ANTHEM.

Queen Victoria formally opened the Crystal Palace on Saturday, 10th June 1854. Scarcely had the illustrious party taken their places, and the cheers with which their arrival was welcomed subsided, when the music of the National Anthem was rolling in rich volumes of sound over the length and breadth of the Palace. Never, perhaps, was this noble anthem heard with more overpowering effect. Many shed tears; many more found it difficult to restrain them; but one result was even more remarkable. There is a rule that under no circumstances shall a policeman uncover while on duty. The strains of the National Anthem, however, were too powerful. One communicated the contagious influence to another, until a large proportion owned the power of present Royalty by taking off their hats. While in this state an awful glance from Captain La Balmondiere reminded them of their breach of discipline, and the headpieces were at once resumed; but it shows the effect of the music, and was nearly as great a compliment to Mr Costa and Miss Novello, who sang the solo parts, as the recognition which the former subsequently received from the Queen.

CONCERT AT WINDSOR CASTLE.

On 30th June 1887 Grove writes: 'At Windsor it was splendid! The Queen had us put into the Waterloo Room, which is magnificent for music. My young heroes [the students of the Royal Academy of Music, of which Sir George was president] rose to the occasion, and I really do not think that the overture to *Ruy Blas* had been often played better.

Many of the audience talked loud, but the Queen was very attentive and very intelligent. Charles Morley and I were taken to her afterwards by the Prince of Wales; and I understood her to say that she was very much pleased, and that she was astonished to find them playing so well. She also asked questions about the performers; but her voice was so low that I missed many of her words. [Was Grove growing deaf?] It was a splendid night. Two kings at least, and lots of beautiful women of the highest rank. The most interesting thing to me was to see an Infanta of Spain for the first time in the flesh! Another very interesting event was the transformation that occurred when the Queen said that we were not to play in the Tapestry Room, but to go into the Waterloo Gallery. Just as in an Arabian tale, when you stamp your foot everything is carried away, &c., so here, on the instant (as it seemed to me), thirty or forty men appeared, carried off all the desks, seats, music, &c., and the change was made within five minutes.'

YEOMAN GROVE AND WILLIAM IV.

The family of Grove had an uninterrupted descent from the Conquest as proprietors of Penn in Buckinghamshire. The last possessor, Mr Edmund Grove, died in June 1823, at the advanced age of ninety-four. He was known to most of the surrounding nobility and gentry by the name Yeoman Grove, the designation formerly of those who farmed their own small properties. Yeoman Grove was likewise known to King William, who permitted him an unusual freedom. Whenever they met in the street at Windsor, as they frequently did on market-days, he would grasp the royal hand with fervour, and, in a way peculiarly his own, inquire, 'How does your Majesty do? How is the Queen? How are all the children?' On these occasions the King indulged in a hearty and good-humoured laugh.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON APOLOGISES.

'Henry Weigall the sculptor,' Grove wrote in 1897, 'was one of the few people who could boast of having had an apology made to him by the Duke of Wellington.' He had a friend named Mrs Jones of Pantglâs, a rich Welsh lady, who was a good deal in London. She was also a friend of the Duke of Wellington, and nothing would satisfy her but that his Grace should have his bust executed by Weigall. 'The Duke had a very low opinion of sculptors; however, Mrs Jones's influence was sufficient to prevail on the Duke to visit Weigall's house with her one day. They were shown into the studio, and the Duke seems to have had some difficulty in taking off a *paletot* which he wore. Weigall, who was the very pink of politeness, stepped up to him, and placing his hands on the Duke's shoulder, said, "Allow me to assist your Grace;" upon which the Duke was very wroth, and turning sharply round, he said, "Take your hands off me, sir!" which Weigall immediately did, and went out of the room; nor could he be brought back unless the Duke would consent to make him an apology. As the Duke could not be prevailed upon to do this, Mrs Jones and he left the house with their purpose unfulfilled. However, a few days later they reappeared, and then the Duke did grumble out something like an apology, with which Weigall was fortunately satisfied, and the bust was made, and very successful it was. It is the only bust I remember to have seen which shows the extraordinarily deep furrows in which the Duke's eyes were set.'

THE DUKE SHYING EGGS.

Grove contrived to establish parallelisms between Beethoven and the Iron Duke; 'for I find in his pocket-book,' says Mr Graves, 'a note of an anecdote which his informant had from the Duke's cook. It is headed "Beethoven," and runs: "Duke of Wellington endeavouring to show the servants that he only required *one* egg at breakfast, and, when he failed to do so, calling up the kitchen-maid and *shying* them at her."'

BISHOP WILBERFORCE.

One day Bishop Wilberforce 'had been doing some business at Penge, and came up to my room with his chaplain; and after a little while he said, "I have got to buy some toys for one of my grandchildren, so you must take me out and show me where the toy-stall is." . . . There was the usual difficulty in choosing; so I took up a little black doll which squeaked when it was pinched, and said, "There, my lord, that ought to be interesting to a Wilberforce." "Oh no," he answered; "take it away. I have heard about nothing else all my life."'

TENNYSON.

The beginning of Sir George Grove's friendship with Tennyson was due to the desire of the directors of the Crystal Palace, probably at Grove's suggestion, to obtain from the Laureate an inaugural ode. Grove went down to the Isle of Wight with this object, and thus wrote of his interview: 'Tennyson was very kind and good to me. He received me with the greatest cordiality, but he could not see his way to writing the poem; and the net result of my visit was the beginning of a truly delightful friendship, and his explanation of the difference between a "cowslip" and an "oxlip," which I asked him, apropos of his line—

> As cowslip unto oxlip is,
> So seems she to the boy.

This he answered by picking one of each in the copse behind the house, and showing me how the one stood erect and the other drooped its head.'

A TENNYSON PRESENTIMENT STORY.

Tennyson told Grove that he heard the following story from the man himself, and had every reason to believe it: 'There was a certain Mr Phillips,

a rich attorney and member of the corporation of Shaftesbury. Every year the corporation had a haunch of venison given them by the Duke of Westminster or some large landowner in the neighbourhood, and it was their rule to discuss it at an inn some three or four miles distant from the town. Phillips was a great gourmand and very full of fun, and these occasions were thought a great deal of. At one of the dinners, just as the venison was brought in, Phillips got up and said, "I must go." There was a universal protest at this; but he was firm, and said something was drawing him home—he could not tell what. The horse was accordingly put into the trap, and off he went. When he got to his house in Shaftesbury, he found his wife sitting in the parlour with her jaw dislocated, and in a flood of tears, and with the bell-rope in her hand. She had gaped and pulled out her jaw. She then pulled the bell, but the bell-rope had come down in her hand, and she had no alternative but to fling herself into a chair and think of her husband, which brought him home!'

TENNYSON ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

Early in July 1869 Tennyson wrote to Grove asking him to be a fourth in a three weeks' trip to Mürren, the others being the Rev. S. Eardley and Frederick Locker-Lampson. On the 12th of August Tennyson wrote him from the Black Horse Copse, Blackdown:

'My dear Grove,—I am in a house eight hundred feet above the sea—no roads and no post—or I would have thanked you earlier for your proposed glass of Locker & Co. to be drunk in my honour on the 8th [Tennyson's birthday]—a day which I always feel inclined to pass like a Trappist, without speaking, or to keep it sitting in sackcloth and ashes. . . .—Ever yours, A. Tennyson.'

TENNYSON AND THE BUGLE.

Grove sent Tennyson a part of the *Dictionary of Music* containing a reference to the Laureate under the heading 'Bugle,' and this elicited the following answer: 'Very good of you to send me your great work, and to mention me in it, though I cannot see how I can "immortalize" the Bugle, which will go on blowing till the last trumpet blares it down without any help of mine.'

GLADSTONE AND DISRAELI.

Dean Stanley is the authority for the following: 'Lunching at some public entertainment to Ministers, he sat next Mr Gladstone. It was shortly after Gladstone had gone out and Disraeli come in. After the luncheon was over, Disraeli came round to where they were standing, and said, "Why have you left Parliament? We *must* have you back; we *must* have you back," in the most playful way. On which Gladstone said, "There are some things which are possible and some which are impossible, and what you have asked belongs to the impossible." On which, turning to Stanley, Disraeli said, "You see, it is the wrath of Achilles."'

GROVE'S FIRST MEETING WITH STANLEY.

'A great event in my life! I saw the Dean of Westminster for the first time. He was then Canon of Canterbury, and it was there I saw him in 1853 or 1854. . . . It was in his house at Canterbury, and he was finishing *Sinai and Palestine;* and I recollect as well as yesterday the way he came forward to me, with his hands out as if he were welcoming an old friend, and how he showed me what he was engaged on (the Appendix to *Sinai and Palestine*). He showed me that in Hebrew there were distinct words for all the different kinds of natural objects—for mountains and hills and rocks and plains and rivers and torrents—and that while in Hebrew these terms were never interchanged, in the English Bible they were used indiscriminately, and that a great deal of light might be thrown on the narrative if these were set right in our Bibles, and other things of the same sort rectified. He set me alight in a moment, and I fairly blazed up. I rubbed up my Hebrew, of which I had learnt the alphabet at Elwell's school. I got up German enough to plough through Ewald and Ritter, and plunged with delight into a sea of Biblical research. Now, the Dean would have you believe that it was I who had invented the appendix to his book, in which the Hebrew topographical terms are described and catalogued. But that is only his way of putting it. It was *he* who invented it, and I just carried out what he devised, and did the mechanical part of the work for him.' But so highly did the Dean value Grove's assistance that he wrote to Jowett: 'I ought never to write a book without a Grove or Albert Way to correct references and proofs.' It was to Stanley also that Grove owed his connection with the *Dictionary of the Bible.*

DEAN STANLEY'S STORY.

In 1878 Grove accompanied Dean Stanley to America. His pocket-book during the voyage contains this entry: 'A Scotch friend of A. P. S. being at Valparaiso, and walking on the seashore, meets a Spaniard, who walks up to him and says in good English:

> "On her white breast a sparkling cross she bore,
> Which Jews might kiss and infidels adore."

The Scotchman said, "I am delighted to meet you. How do you come to speak English so perfectly?" The Spaniard replied, "On her white breast"—— (all over again). This was literally all the English the man knew; and, as Stanley's friend could speak no Spanish, the thing stopped there.'

WHAT STANLEY'S DEATH MEANT TO GROVE.

'That Monday [of the funeral] was a wonderful day. There was every one in the Abbey, all

the great and eminent men of all parties and schools in England. It was all very orderly and impressive, and just as he would have had it. And then by degrees I began to feel what I had lost, and to realise how I had lived on him, and how I had unconsciously referred to him on all kinds of points, and how many difficulties vanished when I thought, "Oh, I shall see Stanley next week, and I will ask him." It is quite curious that since his death hardly a day has passed but something has turned up in the papers or the Bible or a book to make me say before I recollected he was gone, "Oh, I will ask Stanley about this." . . . The feeling of regret that I was not more to him, that in so many directions there were walls between us, has distressed me so much that I can hardly bear it. I accuse myself terribly; there are so many things on which I might have come down to him and shared his *perfect simplicity* and unselfishness. You have no idea what he was—in one thing, the curiously simple way in which he trusted one. You told him a thing, and he never seemed to question it for a moment; that you, his trusted friend, had told him was quite enough. . . . No doubt he had littlenesses somewhere; but I never saw them. And now he has gone quite out of our reach—that's the most wonderful thing of all. When his breath actually stopped, and one knew that he was gone, my first thought was one of intense curiosity and longing—Where is he? What is he doing or saying or feeling? Can he feel or speak? And then the dreadful blank of the answer, "You *can* know *nothing*."'

MADAME BONAPARTE OF BALTIMORE.

Neither Grove (who was deeply interested in all that concerned Napoleon) nor Stanley, Mr Graves tells us, saw old Madame Bonaparte-Patterson, then living in Baltimore. The Dean called upon her, but she declined to see him, and sent down a message: 'All my feelings are dead, except hatred of mankind.' Another characteristic saying of hers is recorded in Grove's pocket-book: 'God has given me three passions: love, ambition, and avarice. My love is slighted, my ambition is thwarted, and I exist upon my avarice.'

MR SPURGEON AND SMOKING.

Mr Spurgeon came down to see the directors of the Crystal Palace with reference to his preaching a sermon on the General Fast, October 1857. Grove writes: 'After his interview with the Board was over, I took him to my room in the passage close to the board-room to get his hat and coat. As soon as we had got inside my room he said, "You haven't a place here where I can smoke?" "Oh yes, I have;" and I opened the door of the little room behind my office. He then lit up, and I was emboldened to say, "Then you do not mind an occasional cigar, Mr Spurgeon?" "Oh yes, I do, young man," he replied. "It is the regular cigar that I like."

SPURGEON'S PREACHING AND SERVICE.

The sermon Sir George Grove heard Spurgeon preach at Exeter Hall was interesting, but not very flattering to his scholarship. His text was: 'They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand.' He said, 'You will observe here how definite the promise is. It does not say they *will* never perish, but it is the definite form of the future: they *shall* never perish.' 'It gave me rather a shock, for I was well aware that there is no definite future in Greek; and, whether the English is "shall" or "will," it is the plain future in the Greek. But one thing struck me very much: the singing of the hymns. He gave them out two lines at a time, and often accompanied his reading with an observation such as "*Now*, with all the devotion you are capable of." Then the congregation sang very low and solemnly. "*Now*, with all the vigour of your lungs." And then they made as much noise as possible. It gave great vitality to the hymns.'

Such are some of 'G.'s'—as Sir George Grove was lovingly called by his friends—reminiscences of the celebrated people among whom he lived, and with many of whom he was on the most intimate, friendly, and affectionate of terms. For others—and there are many more—my readers must go to Mr C. L. Graves's account of one of the most charming and best-known men in the literary and artistic circles of recent years.

NORTHWARD HO!

THERE be sun and sand in this arid land,
Bright birds that may not sing;
Fair, scentless flowers, and heat-parched hours,
And the pall the night doth bring.
But waft me the smell of the heather-bell,
Give me the mavis' note,
The Highland sky as the clouds scud by,
The lift of the fisher's boat.
Grant me but these: a North Sea breeze,
And the lash of the far-flung spume,
The spindrift foam that sprays my home
And stains the golden broom.
That my chastened soul may regain the goal
It ingrate cast aside,
When a fool fared forth from the frozen North
To seek a warmer bride.
Come, oh, ye breeze that stirs the seas!
And kiss me on the mouth;
Let me breathe the soul of the hardy Pole,
For I faint in the sultry South.

H. ROSE-MACKENZIE.

PIETERMARITZBURG.

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OPIUM-DENS IN LONDON.

AFTER long experience in the police department of the public service, I was appointed, in September 1894, chief-inspector to the London County Council, and in that capacity I had my first practical acquaintance with the London opium-den; and, truly, I found it extremely disagreeable.

One of my first official visits was to the Asiatic Sailors' Home in the East India Dock Road, where the foreign sailors mostly congregate. Although that institution—which, by the way, is of world-wide reputation—was not registered as a lodging-house, the superintendent kindly furnished me with full particulars as to the management and working of the huge concern, and allowed me to inspect the place thoroughly. At the time of my visit there were between three and four hundred foreign sailors in the Home, and in the whole course of my wide and varied experience as an inspector I have never seen such a motley assemblage; indeed, such a mixture of different nationalities could not be found in any other building in England. Russians, Greeks, Turks, Hindus, Lascars, Japanese, and Chinese were hobnobbing together, as though there were no racial or other difference between them, but that all were members of one happy family; and what struck me as being still more remarkable was that they seemed perfectly docile and amenable to the ordinary rules of the institution. I may be wrong in my estimate of their character, but the impression made upon me was distinctly unfavourable. Oriental cunning and cruelty seemed to be hall-marked on every countenance, and they gave me the impression that not one of them was reliable or could be safely entrusted with power or authority of any kind. Until my visit to the Asiatic Sailors' Home, I had always considered some of the Jewish inhabitants of Whitechapel to be the worst type of humanity I had ever seen. Since then the Jewish denizen of Thrawl Street has taken a 'back seat,' and I give the palm of rascality to those denizens of the East India Docks.

Wondering how it came to pass that such diverse elements could be assimilated and brought under the control of an institution which has only one law for all, I questioned the superintendent, and he assured me that, notwithstanding the different manners and customs represented in that mixed company, they got along fairly well. 'But the Chinese certainly give us more trouble than all the others put together,' he added, with a significant twinkle in his eyes.

'How is that?' I asked.

'Well, we have to keep the attendants constantly looking them up, in order to prevent opium-smoking and the various filthy habits they indulge in. It is not unusual to see Chinamen dragging and carrying their fellows here in the evenings; and we have to be very careful indeed how we handle them on such occasions, otherwise a riot would ensue.'

Where the opium-dens were, and what went on inside them, was long a puzzle to me, and for months after my visit to the Sailors' Home I tried every conceivable plan to gain access to one which I at last discovered in Limehouse Causeway.

I found later that these shanties were managed by cunning and artful Chinamen, who, to throw undesirable inquisitors off the scent and to serve as a 'blind,' kept a small shop for the sale of chandlery or other goods, the real business (opium-smoking) being carried on at the back of the premises and in the rooms upstairs. The inner entrance to the den was closely guarded by several fierce and ugly Chinamen, carrying long-bladed knives encased in a waist-belt, who protested that they could neither speak nor understand a word of English! By their ferocious looks and gestures and their excited jabberings, it was quite evident that I was looked upon as a dangerous and unwelcome visitor; and although on my first visit I would have liked to force my way through the armed and scowling guard, I had no desire to feel my ribs tickled with their murderous-looking knives.

All things, however, come to him who waits, and by a mere accident I obtained admittance to one of these dens some months later. In passing through Limehouse I saw a woman leaning

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against the door of a shop which I had all along suspected was screening an opium-stew, and I got into conversation with her. She was an Irishwoman, and was lodging with a Chinaman, the proprietor of the establishment. After much parleying, and by means of a substantial bribe, I induced her to 'talk over' John Chinaman; and in the end I was not only allowed to inspect the building and its contents, but received a card inscribed with some Chinese characters, which enabled me to gain admittance to all the opium-dens in East London.

I was not slow in availing myself of the opportunities thus accorded, and next day paid a formal visit to the largest of the six known to me in the East End.

This favourite resort of the opium-slaves consisted of a three-story building, with the inevitable small shop in front. On entering I found a bland, smiling Chinaman behind the counter, dressed in his national habiliments. As usual, he could not understand English; so I produced my card adorned with the talismanic hieroglyphics, at which he looked intently for a moment, and then a wonderful improvement in his linguistic capabilities became apparent. His homage to me was simply ridiculous, and in fairly good pidgin-English he welcomed me with outstretched arms.

First of all I had a look at the stock-in-trade, which consisted of a few soap-boxes, not one containing a bar of soap, and the majority quite empty; but, to make up for this deficiency in ordinary stock, there was a tin box which, on examination, I found to contain some five or six pounds of tea. A similar receptacle contained about the same quantity of sugar; and a few loaves of bread and some boxes of matches (all prominently exhibited in the front window) completed the inventory.

After my survey of the 'shop' we made our way into the interior, where the real business was carried on. The first parlour was evidently the laboratory or workshop devoted to the manufacture from the raw material of that delectable compound which even then was being consumed upstairs. Mysterious-looking pots, pans, strainers, wooden vessels, and testing instruments were in evidence on all sides, and there was the unmistakable odour of opium in its various stages of manufacture. The room was a smoky, dirty, unpleasant-looking place, of about ten feet square; and there the opium-supply for all the dens in London was prepared. The finished article lay weltering in a huge basin, and looked very like a mass of treacle. The first thought that occurred to me when looking round this loathsome apartment was that any victim of the habit at all particular about cleanliness who once saw this vile stuff prepared would never indulge in opium-smoking again.

Going upstairs, I found two rooms set apart for opium-smoking, and, above these, two others used as bedrooms. The only furniture in the smoking-rooms were bare wooden benches, fitted to the flooring, ranged all round the walls something like the bunks in a casual ward. Upon these bunks or benches four or five Chinamen were indolently reclining on their sides, puffing away at the opium-pipe; and two or three were lying on their backs in a dazed and helpless condition, jabbering in an incoherent manner and apparently quite oblivious to their surroundings.

The proprietor pressed me to have a smoke to test the virtue of the drug, but I declined with thanks. The smell of the place almost made me sick, and I made my way out of the fetid atmosphere as speedily as I could.

Other five dens which I visited on the same day were all located within a radius of a mile, and bore a strong resemblance to the one I have described; but three of them had gaming-tables and other conveniences generally found on premises where gambling is carried on. Some of the games played by the Chinese can only be understood by John Chinaman himself. Indeed, I am quite convinced that the Celestial is an inveterate gambler; and as it would probably take a lifetime to learn a game (*fan-tan*) I saw played in one of these places, I will leave the subject of Chinese gambling severely alone, and simply say, without fear of contradiction, that 'John' is the greatest gambler on the face of the earth.

In the largest opium-den I visited there was smoking accommodation for about twenty men; and in rear of the smoking compartment was a large shed with an earthen floor covered with cocoa-nut matting. This shed served as a place of repose for those who had smoked 'the pipe of peace' and had been overcome by it. Here they would retire, fling themselves down on the matting, and 'enjoy' the beatific visions conjured up by the deadly drug.

The opium smoked by the Chinese is mainly made from a watery extract called *chandu*. A pellet of this extract, about the size of a pea, is held over the flame of a small spirit-lamp by a wire or other suitable support until it burns. It is then placed in the small metal bowl of the opium-pipe and smoked until it produces the inevitable effect.

In concluding this account of my visit to opium-dens, I will state briefly the results of the use of the drug as I have marked its operations.

The smoking of opium is the form in which the Chinese chiefly indulge; and, whilst the practice is equally alluring, it is almost as disastrous as the habitual opium chewing or eating which has been so well described by De Quincey, and is the form favoured by the Turk and the Persian, with whom, indeed, it is a prevailing vice. A withered body, yellow countenance, crooked spine, radical disturbance of the digestive organs, and gradual destruction of all bodily and mental powers are the penalties for a habitual indulgence in the habit, which, once acquired, holds its victim with astounding tenacity. Its first effect is said to produce a very pleasurable

sensation of exhilaration, increased muscular power, and an insensibility to mental or bodily fatigue ensues and continues for a time, according to the general condition of the smoker. Then lassitude and a feeling of the most agonising depression takes the place of the former artificial vitality; and when the influence of the drug has entirely ceased to operate, a state of torpor and stupefaction is the unfailing result, making the habitual opium-smoker or opium-eater look more like a galvanised corpse than a live human being.

It is to be hoped that the local authorities will endeavour to stamp out this abominable opium-traffic in the East End of London, without delay.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER XIV.—THE COUNSEL OF FRIENDS.

WE discussed the best mode of regaining possession of the book, but our conclusions were not very clear.

My friend Walter set about giving old Thompson orders to prepare my room, for he was one of the few bachelors who could afford to keep a spare guest-chamber in his flat. It was a hobby of his that his chambers should remain in just the same order during his absence as when he was at home. He had been travelling sometimes for two years at a stretch, and yet when I had called there I found old Thompson just as prim as usual, merely replying to callers, 'Captain Wyman is not at home, sir.' Thompson was a wonderful servant, and had been old Sir Henry's right-hand man until his death. Indeed, he had been in the service of the Wymans for a trifle over fifty years, and appeared to treat Walter more as a son than as master.

My friend fully agreed with me that I had done right in engaging Enrico as watcher. He would be useful, and could act as spy in places where we could not afford to be seen. That there was some remarkable conspiracy in progress Wyman was, like myself, convinced; but what it was he failed to comprehend.

We carefully discussed the curious affair, and after an hour formed a plan of campaign which we promptly proceeded to carry out.

While I remained there resting, he took a cab and called on the doctor named Barton.

When Wyman returned he explained that he consulted the doctor, and on my friend's feigning the symptoms of poisoning which I had explained, the unsuspecting medico had at once remarked that only a few hours before he had been called to a similar case. He suggested to Wyman that perhaps both had eaten something unsound purchased at a shop in the neighbourhood.

Then, after receiving a dose, and being compelled to swallow it in order to keep up the fiction, my friend had commenced to chat with the doctor, and learnt that the patient he had been called to was a clean-shaven, middle-aged man who had apparently about nine months ago come to live in Harpur Street. The name he gave was Selby, no profession—at least as far as the doctor knew. He had been struck by his rather mysterious bearing. The little old lady was probably a relation, but of that he was not quite sure. The name I had found in the *Directory* was that of the present tenant. The patient had apparently made no remark to the doctor about The Closed Book. Barton had found him suffering acutely, and betraying all the symptoms of poisoning; but beyond that he knew nothing.

Yet Wyman's visit had cleared up one or two points, and had given us the name of the man into whose possession The Closed Book had passed.

Presently we went forth again in company, and at the corner of Theobald's Road found the young Italian still vigilant, although palpably worn out and very hungry. Nothing had happened, we learnt. No one had come out of the house; but the little old lady had come to the door and taken in the milk and bread from the baker. She apparently acted as housekeeper.

We dismissed Enrico for four hours, and I took his place, while Walter Wyman went down to the Naval and Military Club, where, he declared, he was certain to meet a friend of his who was intimate with Lord Glenelg, and from whom he might obtain some information.

'What connection they have with this affair is a profound mystery,' he remarked; 'just as much of a mystery as the fact that they are in London when believed to be abroad. My friend Colonel Brock told me only the night before last that they were with friends up at Mussooree, in the north of India.'

'Well, it seems they're back again now,' I remarked.

'So it appears,' was his reply; and he stepped into a hansom and drove down to the club to gather information, leaving me to lounge in the vicinity of that rather dark and cheerless London street.

The weather was damp and muggy, and the continuous traffic in Theobald's Road jarred upon my nerves. Even in the broad daylight the exterior of the house in Harpur Street was dingy, with an air of distinct mystery. The shutters of the area window remained closed; but the stuffed bear-cub had now been removed from the upper window, having served its purpose.

Soon after noon Wyman met me again. He had been active every moment, had seen his friend, and

had, moreover, called at Grosvenor Street under some pretext, only to discover that the Earl and his daughter, having returned unexpectedly from abroad two days ago, had left again that very morning.

Was it that inexplicable signal that had caused the pair to flee from London again?

The reason why they had been both dressed shabbily was now obvious. They were in London in secret, and feared recognition.

Every hour that passed rendered the mystery the more profound. Still, Walter Wyman's interest was now thoroughly aroused, and he declared his intention of sifting the matter to the bottom.

The question now arose as to the means by which we should get back the book stolen from me. In the bar of the public-house where I had taken refreshment on the previous night we further discussed the matter. To attempt to regain it by interviewing the man Selby would, we felt assured, be in vain, for of such value was it and so widespread the conspiracy that he would probably either deny that it was in his possession or openly defy us. On the other hand, it would be a dangerous matter to commit a burglary there, and more dangerous still to enter forcibly and demand my property. Even Doctor Barton had confessed that there was something puzzling and forbidding about the blustering man's manner and antecedents.

Therefore, we found ourselves at a complete deadlock.

I wished heartily that I had ordered the old woman to be stopped on landing at Dover pier.

Could the police assist us? Wyman thought not; at least not in their official capacity. We should frighten this Mr Selby, and if so, would probably lose the precious volume altogether.

We both saw that it was a matter in which there must be no bungling. My friend Wyman was as shrewd a man as any in London, and this fighting with conspirators was work just to his liking. He was one of those men who, in whatever tight corner he found himself, either at home or abroad, always managed to wriggle out of it.

In the first place, we had no knowledge of the character of the man with whom we had to deal; while, in the second, we were utterly in the dark as to the motive of the conspiracy against me from the moment when the rare Arnoldus had passed into my hands.

That we should act promptly and with firm determination was imperative; but what line to take we knew not.

I could not forget those words that had escaped the lips of Lady Judith Gordon when she had lifted her eyes and saw the fatal sign. Sight of it had utterly crushed her, for light and life had gone out of her sweet, pale face in a single moment. It was the sign of death, she had said. What could she mean?

The more we discussed it the more determined I became to act fearlessly and go straight to the point by going to the police-station and demanding the little old woman's arrest. Such a course would bring matters to a head, and yet I still hesitated to show our enemies my hand. At present they were unaware of my presence in London, and surely their ignorance of this would be to our advantage, inasmuch as the looker-on sees most of the game.

I felt that I wanted an expert opinion, and suddenly recollected that in the old days, when living in London, I had been on friendly terms with a detective-sergeant of the Criminal Investigation Department named Noyes, who had been attached to the Hunter Street Police-Station. I had several acquaintances in the Metropolitan Police, as most literary men have; but to Noyes I had been indebted more than once for showing me certain phases of Unknown London. Therefore I knew that if I sought his advice he would willingly give it.

Leaving Wyman to watch, I thereupon took a cab to Hunter Street, and inquired of the inspector on duty for my friend, who, I was informed, had been promoted to the rank of inspector, and was posted at the chief station of the T Division at Hammersmith.

I returned in the cab to Wyman, and then lost no time in going out to Hammersmith.

I found my friend, a loosely built, heavy-jawed man of middle age, sitting in his upstairs office; and when I entered he rose to welcome me warmly. Then, on my telling him that I had come to seek his advice, he settled himself at his plain writing-table to listen.

The story I related interested him just as much as it had Wyman; but now and then he pencilled a note upon the sheet of paper he had instinctively placed before him. I related the whole facts from first to last, concealing nothing. The secret poisoning appealed to him, clever detective that he was, for every man attached to Scotland Yard will tell you that a good many more people die in London of poison annually than ever doctors or coroners' juries suspect.

'Now, what I want is to get my property back again without these people knowing,' I explained at last.

'I quite see,' he said. 'If they knew you had followed them up so quickly it might put an end to their game without you ever knowing what their motive has been. Yes; you want that book back at all costs, but in a secret way. You can easily lay information before the magistrate; and I could, on that, go and search for the stolen property. But that's hardly your game, Mr Kennedy. We must use methods a trifle more—well, artistic, shall we call it?' and his big face broadened into a grin.

'Well now, what do you suggest?' I asked.

But, instead of responding, he asked me for a detailed description of the rare and interesting volume. Then, when I had given it to him,

he raised his eyes from the paper whereon he had made some memoranda, and, with a mysterious smile, asked:

'Would you be willing to leave the affair entirely in my hands, Mr Kennedy? I have an idea that I might, with the assistance of a friend, be able to get hold of the book without this person Selby knowing that it has gone back into your possession. If I attempt it, however, you must not be seen anywhere in the vicinity. Any observation kept upon the old lady or upon this fellow Selby must be done by your friend Captain Wyman. Would you be inclined to act under my directions and lie low until I communicate with you?'

'Certainly,' I answered, although not yet understanding his point.

'If there is a conspiracy, you'll very quickly be spotted if you remain hanging about Harpur Street,' he said. 'I think, if you're prepared to pay a sovereign or two, that I can get hold of the book for you. Only it will have to be done secretly; and, in order that you should not be suspected of regaining possession of it, you must go away into the country and wait until you hear from me. We don't want them to suspect anything, otherwise we may not be able to solve the mystery of it all.'

'I'll leave the whole affair in your hands, Noyes, of course,' I responded. 'When shall I go into the country?'

'To-day. Go where you like, to some place within easy reach of town, and stay there till you hear from me. Don't go back to Harpur Street, because it's too dangerous. You must be recognised sooner or later. I'll find Captain Wyman and explain matters to him. Why not run down to somewhere on the Great Northern — to Peterborough, for instance? It's on the main line, and the first stop of the express trains to the north—an hour and a half from King's Cross. You see, I could get down quickly if I wanted to see you, or you could run up if necessary. There's a good old-fashioned hotel—the "Angel." I stopped there once when I was after a German banknote forger, and was very comfortable.'

'Very well. I'll go there. That will be my address till I hear from you. Tell it to Captain Wyman, as he may want to write to me.'

After some discussion, in which he steadily refused to further enlighten me upon his scheme for getting hold of The Closed Book, we returned together by the underground railway to Charing Cross, where we parted, he to seek my friend Wyman, and I to hide myself in the small provincial town of Peterborough, where I arrived that afternoon about half-past four.

As Noyes had declared, the 'Angel' was replete with old-fashioned comfort, a relic of the bygone posting-days and a centre of agricultural commerce on market-days. Except the cathedral, there is very little of interest in the town of Peterborough; for of late years it has been modernised out of all recognition. In itself it is ugly, although situated in the centre of the rich green pasturage of the Nen Valley—a busy place, where the hand of the vandal has been at work everywhere save perhaps in Narrow Street, the small, old-fashioned thoroughfare wherein the 'Angel' is situated.

I spent the evening examining the interior of the cathedral, afterwards taking a stroll as far as the village of Longthorpe, and after dinner retired early, for I had not yet recovered from my swift journey across Europe.

The following day passed, and still the next, yet I could only idle there chafing and anxious regarding the success of Noyes's undertaking. Letters from Wyman showed that, aided by Enrico, he was still keeping observation upon the house, although he had seen nothing further of my friend the detective after his announcement of my departure.

I began to wonder if Noyes had broken faith with me. Yet we had been the best of friends in the old days when I had lived and worked in London; and I thought I knew him well enough to be confident that he would assist me in every way within his power.

Therefore I wandered the streets of Peterborough or lounged in the bar of my hotel, in hourly expectation of some message from him.

His silence was ominous, and my uneasiness increased until, on the third day, I determined to remain inactive no longer.

(To be continued.)

REMINISCENCES OF A SCOTCH MANSE.

MY children often ask me to tell them of the days when I was a small child in a Scotch manse, many years ago. They seem to find a special delight in these old stories, when curious rumbling coaches carried one to all but the very important centres.

My father was a tall, fine-looking man, with a very austere manner and very Calvinistic views. He considered the fact of his being 'our father' must ensure perfect obedience, submission, and love on our part; and I fear our changed views on these points are almost enough to make him turn in his grave. Our mother, however, was a heaven-given one, so tender and quick of sympathy, and deliciously blind to the trespasses of her eight wild boys and girls.

The old manse was near the church—only a terraced garden between, and just beyond the grand German Ocean. So in stormy weather the foam from the sea clung to our top windows, or in the sweet summer the sun's reflection dazzled. A quaint

harbour lay just below the huge cliffs beneath the garden, where ships came in to carry away potatoes, grain, and similar produce. This harbour was ever to us a craved-for delight, but strictly forbidden, alas! by our mother; and this made it utterly impossible; for ten thrashings were bearable compared to vexing her dear heart. Even boating, for her sake, was renounced. The Isle of May lay just across from us, and a little farther along the Bass Rock: blessed places, which solved for us the difficult problem of where little boys and girls came from, for all girls near us came from the May and all boys from the Bass.

We attended church twice every Sunday, and even when but three years old sat through sixty minutes' sermon with wonderful submission.

Our father belonged to the old school of ministers who committed all their sermons to memory. Once the two sermons were built, he would walk some two miles along the braes getting it all by heart—fasting all the while. His people, who revered him, called his favourite brae 'holy ground.' Our fear of disturbing all this burden of sermon kept us in a state all Sundays of fear and trembling and of mouse-like silence.

Such sinking of heart on Saturday nights as we witnessed the locking away of all toys and fairy-books, knowing that the morrow held for us no nice magazines or any secular books or sweet walks on the summer braes! Without the never-failing sunshine of our mother we might have mutinied; but she clasped our hearts with so strong a band of love that we would willingly have endured twice as much for her sake.

An object of great merriment to us in church was the 'beadle'—Thomas Ross, a little, bent, white-haired man of dwarfish height and marvellous array. His buff trousers, blue cut-away coat with brass buttons, waistcoat of gray wool embroidered with pink roses in silk, large blue tie, and a collar—well, he could just peep over it; perhaps it kept him from being too mundane, for he was obliged to look at the minister. Beside my father's magnificent frame he looked delightful. One wintry Sunday Thomas as usual had carried up the big Bible, descended, and waited our father, ready to follow him up the stairs and close the big door of the pulpit. My father, sitting by the vestry fire in his big plaid over his gown, and deep in his sermon, walked into church plaid and all. It caught on a twirly ornament of the stair-rail and fell off. Thomas duly picked it up and returned it to the vestry. As the plaid fell off, however, it showed some big holes in the gown, and this was noticed by a number of the people. On the eve of the following Sunday, Thomas arrived at the manse so full of importance as to be unbearable, carrying a box in which reposed a magnificent new silk gown. While this was being taken to my father we decoyed Thomas to the long upstairs hall, and, fetching the old gown from its cupboard, we dressed him in it. He was much pleased as we made him parade up and down, until sounds from the study made us fall back into order and Thomas into decorum. On Saturday afternoons it was his duty to dust the church, and these were great times for me. I would mount the pulpit, preach him a sermon, sing psalms, and have all my dolls baptised. Thomas rewarded these attentions by never-failing bouquets of 'none so pretty' and thyme in my pew each Sunday.

Just about this time a new pulpit was given to the church, and the old one was *pro tem.* put in the garden. My brother Rex had been extra wicked and sent to bed for the day, and my mother had some social function on. Happening to look out at one of the windows of the drawing-room, she caught sight of Rex in his night-gown delivering an eloquent address from the pulpit, while we others sat in silent and admiring rows on the garden path, our hands clasped round our ankles and chins on knees. Later, when we had all been sent to bed, and our mother was below engaged with guests, our riot of fun became fast and furious. Twice a maid was sent to quiet us, then a final threat of the 'taws.' Still the fun and laughter, until our mother appeared, strap in hand; whereupon we all were suddenly seized with a fervent desire to say our prayers, and down we dropped on our knees. My mother regarded us for a moment in silence, then said, 'Ah, you are all in the Holy of Holies;' and gently closing the door, she returned to her visitors.

On Sunday morning the gardener, Sandy, was specially ordered to shut up all the cocks of our many poultry-houses, and his instructions were to march up each cock and shut him in the washing-house. In time the cocks became very learned about the performance, and when the first bell began they would approach their various gates and wait, then calmly march to their lock-up. One great yellow Brahma was a special sinner in crowing, and he was always the first to be 'shoo'd' up to the washing-house. He became very tame in course of Sundays, and we all declared we had taught him to say various words by special thumps on his back. And how he enjoyed being mesmerised! One Sunday, alas! he had been forgotten, and our father was deep in his carefully committed sermon of sixty minutes when the yellow Brahma let forth his roar. There was a pause, a glance at my brothers that withered them, and Sandy slipped out to march the disturber to his cell; but the train of thought was lost, and a hymn had to be given out while the minister collected his lost threads.

In the opposite wing of the church from where our two pews were sat three gaunt, tall, unkempt men, all dressed in frock-coats of black cloth. We named them 'The World,' 'The Flesh,' and 'The Devil.' Their name was M——, and they were a constant torture to our father, either by their singing, restlessness, or inattention.

The feeling was strong against wind-instruments everywhere in our shire; but one parish near us

decided to get one of those patent harmoniums which require no organist. The psalm or hymn is inserted, and the instrument does the rest. The minister had given out the first four verses of the Hundred and Nineteenth Psalm, and the harmonium started all right, but did not stop at the fourth verse, but went on and on until the whole psalm was done. The exhausted leader of his flock then commanded its removal into the churchyard, where it played on until the small hours of the next day, and every man, woman, and child had gone to behold this strange and disobedient 'mad chest o' whistles.'

There was always church service on Thursday evening, and in the winter it was our special delight to cut faces on a number of big field-turnips, scoop out the inside, insert a lighted candle, then dangle them from the nursery windows to frighten the church-goers. Perhaps our terror of being found out added to the pleasure; anyhow, even at this late date a thrill of pleasure passes over me at the very recollection! Then, roasting apples at the nursery fire—a pin for each of us stuck in the wooden mantelshelf, and the apple dangling from a thread, a saucer below each to secure the delicious syrup. Never have roasted apples tasted half as nice since. Then the evenings with our mother while she read to us and we roasted chestnuts!

At family prayers, morning and eve, we read two verses round each, and the servants were always brought in and made to read too. Our new cook, 'Sanna,' a woman of great size and lung-power, was reading as usual until she came to the verse, 'And Moses did exceedingly fear and quake;' she said 'and *quack*.' There was a general explosion; we were ordered to our rooms, while our mother was seized with a sudden and very severe fit of coughing which required the burial of her face in her handkerchief. Another day our mother asked Sanna how old she was. She replied, 'I 'm dirty, and my husband 's dirty-two' ('I 'm thirty, and my husband is thirty-two').

There was a regular needlewoman kept to mend our many socks and stockings, and even to make the small boys' trousers; but one day there was revolt. Jack had fitted on a new pair to please our mother; but when she left the room he threw the trousers at Mrs Bruce, saying, 'Wear them yourself, Bruce.' Result: he was promoted to the big boys' tailor.

A very bright spot in our small lives was made by a dear old farmer, Richard Grace. His house was not far from the manse. He was a lonely man—unmarried; and on his broad but tender breast we sobbed out many of our childish griefs. Once our brother Mark did not wait until the completion of his toilet, so anxious was he to tell Mr Grace something. His nurse, after a futile search in the house, found him seated on the good man's knee, his small body clothed only in his little flannel shirt, surmounted by his wide-brimmed garden-hat.

We had, like many other families, an aunt Jane, a very prim and wealthy old lady. She had married late in life, and had an old maid's idea of what children should be like. I believe she was very fond of us in her own way; but there were few practical proofs. Her splendid garden boasted fat gooseberries, juicy apples and pears; and, oh, the strawberries! But we were not allowed the full run of this Eden, and how we mourned! She was a widow, and was seized by periodical weeping attacks *re* her lost partner. Then it was our brother Mark shone out. He would draw his fingers through his hair, bringing it over his brows, turn up his folded collar until it reached well up his cheeks, turn down the corners of his mouth, and say, 'Oh dear! oh dear!' squeezing out a tear meanwhile; then, springing up, catch the old auntie in his arms, and say, 'Cheer up, old lady; I 'd rather marry you myself than see you as put about.'

Our postman, Titus, was a great character, and was ever weighed down by the fact that he was 'On Her Majesty's Service.' He would never look at any one on the street when he carried the letters; but I've known him to relax somewhat in our garden. One snowy Christmas our sister Max had espied Titus from a top window, opened the front door, and rushed out, forgetful of the icy state of the garden path. She could not stop herself once started; and Titus, seeing this, opened his arms and she rushed into them, and they waltzed on down the path until a kindly hedge stopped them. Afterwards, when Max married and went abroad, he would tremble with delight when he saw the Indian stamp on the letter, and purchased a huge whistle, which he blew quite a quarter of a mile from the manse, so that our mother might know the wished-for letter was near. He was also obliging enough to sweep the manse chimneys periodically. He had a glass eye, which gave him much anxiety; so on those eventful mornings he would produce from his pocket a pill-box with a little pad of wadding at the bottom, and with the aid of a hairpin fork out the glass eye, and softly placing it in his box, put it under nurse's care. A few years ago I visited again the dear old town. Titus was still postman, and one day I met him. He signed to me to follow him, with supreme dignity and gravity, up a little alley. Putting his hand in his breast-pocket, he handed me his photograph. I have it still. His masonic dress makes him look so nice, and his glass eye is in full evidence.

In the old churchyard we used to pleasantly shudder, but doubt if we should have liked it by night. It was so arranged that only a part of it could be seen at a time, and the 'dead-house' gave a reality to many of the weird stories we were told and read of, telling of 'body-lifting,' &c.; and the quaint epitaphs on the tombs were wonderful—one quite wished to have known the composers.

It was a cruel coast on which we lived, and during the winter months there were frequent shipwrecks.

I can remember one in particular. It was a Sunday night about nine o'clock, when the cries and shrieks of the drowning people could be clearly heard above the storm. Our father and the boys went to help; my mother stayed to pray. I seem still to feel the chill of the window glass as I pressed my face against it in a top room overlooking the sea, shuddering as the cries were carried to me on the wind. Next day rows of bodies lay stretched out in the room below the town hall, and in the churchyard rows of graves tell of that awful night.

Many years have passed since these old days of which I write. Our sweet mother has entered into her kingdom. Those of us who still live are scattered far. A new generation of children run about the manse garden; and I wonder if they will some day look back as pleasantly as I do on the grand though somewhat troublous days of youth.

THE TOREADOR'S TALISMAN.

PART II.

I DIDN'T draw up until a chestnut wood, studded with granite boulders as big as elephants, offered me some charming cover; and here I spent a pestilent cool evening for the time of the year. I reckoned on finding my man at our meeting-place: we had blundered through so many scrapes that I dare say I was a trifle presumptuous by this time in the demands I made of Dame Fortune. Not, however, as it turned out.

And so in the dead of night I groped back up the hill to the hermitage. But there was no sign of the fellow, and I confess I was annoyed. It seemed to me he deserved his fate if he had been killed in failing to do what I had done with such ease.

I gave him several minutes' grace, and then, stiff though my spiked leg was, decided to explore a little higher still. The horse I tethered at the back of the shrine, where Dermot would be sure to see it (and draw conclusions) if he arrived in my absence. A lame man indeed, I stumbled on and cursed the granite stones that troubled me in the dark.

But all was quiet save for the wind that moaned from the cold Estrellas to the west. A spark or two of light where Guarda's sentinels footed it under the old castle ruin were the only tokens that I was not alone here, these three thousand feet or so above the sea's level.

I crawled on till I was close to the hut of the unfortunate rascal of a Portuguee who had played us so evil a trick. The croak of a carrion crow here made me stop sharply and peer to the left, where two or three enormous chestnut-trees with hollow trunks made black blots on the hillside. I had noticed them twice that day; the second time, even in my scamper, I thought of them that at a man's worst there would be splendid cover for his back in one of them to help him to die. From the nearest of these trees something now swayed obscurely, and, looking at it, I saw another bird rise from it and spread its wings.

It was a hanged man, of course. Portugal and Spain had such decorations in plenty between 1808 and 1813.

My concern in this particular hanged man was to ascertain if it might be Dermot. But instead of Dermot it was Rusendo the Spaniard, and I had scarcely learnt this when another shape loomed out from a lower bough farther on. And this was the poor little Spanish girl, Rusendo's daughter!

Bad times they were to lead to such doings—bad enough to please the devil himself in his foulest humour!

I tried the other trees after this to see if my man might be a third tit-bit strung up for the Guarda birds to sup on. But there was no Dermot; and then I cut down the bodies and stroked the cold cheeks of that poor maid whose fate might yet have been worse than it was. A parting in the clouds shed a sulky light on the child's face and briskly flitted from it as if ashamed of the contrast of its own ugliness with her serene angel-expression. I covered her with chestnut leaves and twigs to keep the crows off until the morning, when it was to be hoped the Church would see to decent burial for both of them.

And Rusendo also I began to cover up, babes-in-the-wood fashion. But in the act of cutting more twigs I remembered his words about that black ball of hair of his. To be sure, the coiffing itself was only a toreador's fancy, to give him an individuality to catch the eye; but he had implied something more than that.

I stooped to his head, and, fumbling at the blob, produced a little metal effigy of a bull weighing about two ounces. This was all, and it was as of no more account than a silver snuff-box that I pocketed it and afterwards finished my task. In the meantime I had examined the cottage itself and found no trace of Dermot. And now that all was done that could be, I was for the shrine again and a brisk night-journey over the mountain into the Zezere valley.

But having returned to my Cid, here I found Dermot Lake as calm and usual as if he were just back from a mere five-mile ride for a rooster. He was handling my horse's legs, and his own horse stood by and approved his occupation.

'I'm glad to see you, my lad,' I said.

'Indeed, sir, and it's myself that was in spirits just now when I discovered your honour's charger. Belike it's no time now for explanations,' said he.

'No time at all. We must to horse and away, said I. 'Hurt anywhere?'

He answered hesitatingly.

'No, sir—only my feelings. It's as an old woman I'm dressed, sir; and but for being able, by the grace of God, to split up her gown and reef it into a make-shift kind of breeches, it's a petticoated female I'd be this minute.'

Indeed, now that I looked at him more narrowly, he was an odd figure. But as he was sound in wind and limb, this was just nothing at all; and so off we moved up the hillside, leading our horses, and I mighty soon with little curiosity left in me about Dermot's adventure. My leg was crying for a bed to rest itself on, and the more I said to it 'Gee up!' the more heavily it moved. I was glad to mount when we had turned the ridge, and the rest of the descent, with the river bellowing in its gorge to the right, was no such torment. Our mounts fared badly, poor things, and with daybreak we changed them for a couple of broad-backed mules that brought us into Covilhã by breakfast-time. And here I joined Barnard's Rifles and got the blessing of medical comforts, and my man moulted his frock and could challenge the blue sky with his cocked nose as impudent as ever again.

As for his escape, there wasn't a deal in it. A clubbed musket had stretched him out while he stood rejoicing at my luck, and when his senses returned he was in the Guarda lock-up, in his shirt and socks and never a thing else. If he'd been anything but an Irishman such a situation would have chilled the heart of him; but, being what he was, he set to work on the sensibilities of the moustached wife of his jailer (an ancient body), and with a hap'orth of blarney made putty of her. She not only gave him a file, but helped him to shift the bars of the window and lavished her wardrobe on him. Nor was that all either. She told him where his horse was stabled, and how he could get it. And all the reward she asked was the favour of his prayers on saints' days, and his promise that when the British army again cleared Guarda of the French he would do what he could for Maria Pereira.

Faith! she had her reward, honest creature. The last I heard of her she was a grandee in Lisbon, with a dozen nephews and nieces courting her for the money she had saved as cook to the British Minister there. The Duke managed that for her, as he managed so much else for the deserving small fry as well as the heroes in the land.

But to get on with my story as far as Rusendo the toreador has a hand in it. With a healed leg I found the Duke and gave him my news, with which he was moderately pleased.

'When are you going to get killed, Bill Buckingham?" he asked afterwards, as dry as dust. 'They talk about *my* life being charmed, but I couldn't have rushed that crowd in Guarda like you without picking up a few tiresome leaden friends. You're the most wonderful man in the Intelligence Department, not excepting Colonel Grant himself.'

As may be supposed, I thanked my lord for that compliment.

'And the most lucky!' he added, as if he meant it.

It was an inspiration that made me at that moment haul out the little golden bull which I had taken from the toreador's head.

'Has your lordship any fancy for trinkets like this?' I said, seeing that for once he appeared to have a spare minute or two.

'Very pretty,' quoth he; 'very neat,' examining the article. 'Whom did you kill for it?'

I'll do the Duke the justice to say no one was more ready to apologise like a gentleman when he had misjudged a fellow-soldier. I told him the entire history of the thing; and then he gave me back the toreador's talisman, and smiled.

'I'm sorry, Buckingham. I wronged you just now,' he said. 'I eat my words to the last syllable of them. And keep your booty, man. Much obliged to you; but I've no room for such lumber. I've another kind of bull to get by the horns, and, egad, sir! it's taking me all my time. Good-day to you, Captain Buckingham.'

After that it was just chance and a bad evening at piquet with Forrett of the Light Division which brought me to the most disappointing pitch of necessity that ever came even to one of the Tipperary Buckinghams, a family renowned for their chastenings at the hands of Providence.

I gave Forrett my I O U for the seven guineas I was short, and in the morning looked up Harky Hart, that sharp son of Jerusalem who made two fortunes between 1811 and 1816 as a camp-follower and purchaser of things that had lost their proper owners.

He was called Harky for his way of prefacing an offer with a 'Harkee, captain!' 'Harkee, my lad!' and so forth, according to the quality of his customers.

Harky Hart was immediately interested in my bull when I had again related its little history.

'Now that, captain,' he said, 'is something like. It's gold, of a sort, and it's not ill-shaped. They bring me china vases six feet high and mirrors ten feet square, and, by Joshua! they grumble if I don't pay for 'em by the square inch when it costs me a fortune to keep the rubbish from being smashed to little pieces. I'll give you five guineas for this, captain, just because it's so small.'

I told the rogue I'd been offered ten. It was true, too; though Danby White made it a deucedly provisional offer: he'd give it me when we were both in England again.

'Harkee, captain!' said the rascal to this; 'it's broken. You can hear its ribs rattle. But I'll tell you what; I'll pay for it at three guineas the ounce, and that's full melting-price, or thereabouts.'

Out came his pocket scales, and with great grum-

bling Harky Hart handed me seven guineas and a quarter.

And then he pulled his own nose as if he were possessed by immeasurable glee, and remarked:

'That was a very pretty story the poor bull-fighter told you, Captain Buckingham; but don't you think the Emperor of Morocco was making fun of him?'

'Faith! and it has occurred to me, Harky,' said I.

'Yes; and unless it was not so,' said he, hoisting a burning-glass to his eye and examining the bull, 'it is you who have made fun of me. I have given you a magnificent price. God grant I have not wronged myself and my dear little children at home!'

I hadn't finished laughing before the Jew waddled away, with many dubious shakes of the head. The idea of Harky Hart wronging any one except a client was too subtle for my sanity. And that evening I passed the joke along at dinner as something too good to keep, and the laugh went with it again. Only one fellow kept a steady countenance. It was Grimstone of the Engineers.

'I'll lay you an even guinea,' said Grimstone when we were quiet, 'that your talisman would have been cheap to Hart at a thousand guineas.'

'Take him, Bill,' cried Forrett; and, faith! I booked that wager as I booked so many others I'd no probability of proving.

'Right! I'll see Hart about it in the morning,' said Grimstone.

But in the morning there was no Harky Hart anywhere to be found or heard of. He had cleared off for Lisbon with an ambulance-party, and thus for the present there was an end of him.

And, egad! it wasn't a time with the rest of us to be thinking deeply about him or guinea-wagers either. Badajoz, Salamanca, Vittoria, San Sebastian, and Mars himself alone know how many tough little affairs filled up our leisure. And I was never idle even when the rest were playing at winter quarters.

The allies were wonderful throughout these months and years, as all creation that matters to us knows full well; and the Duke was—himself, consistently.

This brings us to December 1813, St Jean de Luz, and a ball at the Hôtel de Ville which his worship the Mayor was good enough to give at the General's suggestion. I was at that ball, and so was Grimstone.

Of course there were mighty few ladies to help us along—eighteen, to be exact; and maybe three hundred of us officers. That was how Grimstone and I happened to be waltzing together.

Grimstone came prancing up to me when I was drinking a drop with Baysham of Lord Hill's division, and finely excited and amused he seemed.

'Will you give me the pleasure of a dance, Miss Buckingham, dear?' said he, with a monkey smile.

'After you've drunk something, Grim,' said I. 'And what's in the wind?'

He winked at the others.

'A very fine lady's in the wind, Miss Buckingham,' said he. 'I'm thinking you'll be as jealous as Jacob when you see how she glitters.'

With that I stopped his nonsense by taking his arm for the joke, and allowing him to lead me into the circle. Maybe my figure was not exactly ladylike, and, faith! it's not grieved I am to own it. I laughed as loud as the others, begad! I did, when Grimstone slung his arm round my waist.

'Got a guinea about you, Bill?' he whispered, with another of his grins ere we started.

'Not a franc,' said I. 'Why?'

'Tell you when you're winded,' said he; and away we whisked.

He continued his story when we were getting our breath, with our legs straight before us, sitting on the blue benches by the wall, with mirrors at our backs and a man serving champagne to us.

'Seen Harky Hart?' Grimstone asked.

'Not since—you know when,' said I.

'No? Yet he's about. His wife's here too. I'll introduce you. Come along.'

He jumped up and rudely enough stopped Brigadier Benson, who was passing with a guy of an old woman on his arm. But the Brigadier forgave him.

'It's all right. Don't apologise,' he said.—'*Merci beaucoup, madame!*' and with a brisk bow he released himself from this red-faced creature in white silk and feathers, with diamonds by the hundred about her, and one superb gem in her hair just below the feathers.

'Baroness,' said Grimstone, 'my friend Captain Buckingham solicits the honour of an introduction.'

'With pleasure, sir,' cried she, all eagerness, smiles, and perspiration.

And then I made my bow, and was only half through it when I understood that it was Harky Hart's wife to whom I was being presented. And then we all laughed. They were gay times as well as red times.

'I'll leave you,' said Grimstone, 'and by-and-by you'll pay me my guinea.'

Before I could say another word the woman was astonishing me.

'Captain Buckingham,' she whispered, 'what a beautiful romance it was about you and the diamond! My husband Reuben says he won't have the impertence to face you, but "Rubbish!" says I. "I'll tell him myself, and he'll behave like a true gentleman about it, as sure as my name's Susannah." This is it on the buckle of my plume.'

'I give you my word, madame,' said I, 'that I don't know what you're talking about.'

She laughed with the noise of a rocket.

'La, no,' she said; 'how simple of me not to remember! But it's nothing to your own simplicity, captain. My husband says so too, and, buss me! he *should* be a judge. Why, the diamond was in the little gold bull's stomach, if I may mention such a thing to a gentleman and an officer. Reuben guessed there was something good in it, and he

found the opening, and—he's refused five thousand guineas in Bond Street for it. The best of it is, you haven't a claim on Reuben for another farthing! He bought us a title last year in one of those little German kingdoms that used to have kings each to 'em—so he says, Captain Buckingham; but that's between you and me and the looking-glass. But it's a sure thing he wouldn't have wasted his money on such extravagance if it hadn't a-been for the diamond. "It'd grace a princess, old woman," said he; and though I'm only forty-seven, captain, I wasn't offended for joy of thinking how my beauty was going to be adorned, and my name too.'

Grimstone had drifted back to us; he was fingering his chin and smiling.

I grasped misfortune with iron fingers and rose—I *hope* with the composure of a gentleman.

'You may mention me to your husband if you like, madam,' said I, 'and tell him that I have no wish to excel in the more sordid arts of life. I bear him no malice. Your servant.'

And, faith! in ten minutes I was roaring with laughter about it, and telling the tale for all listeners. But it took some doing. And Grimstone's guinea was a painful trifle to hand over in such circumstances.

Thank God! the Buckinghams could no more outwit a fellow-creature like Harky Hart than they could fly with the old family manor-house tied to their boots!

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

SHELL-FISH.

WE have heard much of late of the 'oyster scare' due to the contamination of that favourite delicacy, owing to its feeding in polluted water. But for every oyster consumed as food there must be hundreds of the smaller kinds of shell-fish which form a staple article of diet among the poorer classes. In the humbler streets of our cities may be seen barrows loaded with mussels and cockles, which are sold by the saucerful. In a report made to the Local Government Board in 1895, it was shown that these fish, which are cooked before being hawked about the streets, are a source of danger from the fact that the cooking is not sufficient to thoroughly destroy the micro-organisms of enteric fever or cholera, should they be present. The Fishmongers' Company have lately caused some experiments to be made by Dr Klein, their bacteriological adviser, and he confirmed the opinion expressed in that report. It would seem from these experiments that the common practice of plunging the shells into boiling water lowers the temperature to such a degree that the heat is not sufficient to sterilise their contents, and that if the boiling be continued until this result is brought about the fish are unsaleable. It is suggested that by a system of steaming in properly devised apparatus the difficulty might be met. Mussels, it is stated, are more difficult to deal with than cockles; they are very foul feeders, and not easy to sterilise.

PEARLS.

It is, perhaps, because the oyster is so tolerant of germs of different kinds that Professor Dubois of Paris was led to try an experiment which is said to be successful, although we should be inclined to take it with the customary grain of salt. He has, it is said, found it possible to inoculate oysters with the disease of which the pearl is a result. The Chinese have for a long time practised the art of pearl-culture with the fresh-water mussel, the method adopted being the insertion into the living mussel of little balls of wax. The creature is then returned to the water, and endeavours to reduce the discomfort arising from the presence of these intruders by covering them with a layer of nacre or mother-of-pearl. Specimens of shells lined with rows of these artificially induced gems can be seen in many of our museums.

CIDER-MAKING.

A report on the subject of this industry, written by expert workers, has recently been published by the Board of Agriculture, and it is to be hoped that farmers in apple-growing districts will profit by it. We learn from it that at present the work of cider-making is of a most hap-hazard kind, no two districts producing a cider of like quality, whilst very often the product from two farms in the same district will be totally unlike. What is wanted is greater uniformity of practice, greater cleanliness, and an effort to disestablish 'rule of thumb' in favour of scientific methods. In the year 1897 large quantities of apples were bought in Somersetshire and taken to France for conversion into cider, and the question naturally arises, how could it pay our farmers better to dispose of their fruit thus than to make it into cider themselves? There is a notion that the public demand here is for a sweet cider, which is more easy of production than is a 'dry' kind. But possibly the public care for this because they have no experience of anything better. 'Place before them a good dry cider,' says one of the authors of this report, 'and few would ask for wine.' They recommend the making of three brands of the beverage: 'A,' extra dry, containing not more than 2 per cent. of sugar; 'B,' dry, with 4 per cent.; and 'C,' sweet, containing a greater excess of saccharine matter.

Cider-making is one of the few industries in which foreigners have not as yet entered into competition with us; but if our farmers neglect it, they may step in to meet the demand for a good quality which undoubtedly exists in this country.

LAYING THE DUST.

A few years ago there was much correspondence in the papers concerning the advantage of salt-water for street use at our seaside resorts. It was naturally claimed that to employ fresh-water which had been carefully purified for drinking purposes was wasteful in the extreme. The sea was inexhaustible, and the use of its water on the roadways gave the surface a compactness which it did not before possess. Besides, a supply laid on for watering purposes would be gladly taken advantage of by those who valued a sea-bath in their own houses. Perhaps the most convincing argument in favour of the innovation was the saving to the ratepayers which it promised. Alas for all these anticipated benefits! after a few years' trial sea-water is pronounced to be an utter failure for watering purposes. The salt-mud which it makes in conspiracy with the soil dissolves the varnish off the carriages, the salt-dust deliquesces on the goods of the tradesmen, and the water itself corrodes the pipes in which it is carried to its mischievous work. One more sin is laid to the score of the water: in escaping from the leaky pipes it gets to the roots of the trees and kills them off wholesale. Further particulars concerning this matter may be gathered from a report recently made to the corporation of Hastings, Sussex, by their engineer.

INSECT PESTS.

The South African farmer has to reckon with a singularly large variety of insect depredators, and of these the tick which infests goats, sheep, and cattle is perhaps the most dreaded. A recent issue of the *Cape of Good Hope Agricultural Journal* contains the account of the manner in which a farmer successfully combated the scourge so far as it affects goats. He had a large flock of these animals which were badly affected with the tick, and he found what appears to be a remedy in the wild garlic. He gave the goats a small quantity of this plant, and, although the insects were not killed, they forsook their hosts. The following year the animals were quite free from the pest when the tick-season arrived. It will be a good thing for South African farmers if this simple treatment be found efficacious in other hands, and we shall look forward with interest to corroboration of the statement made.

CHIMNEYS THAT SMOKE.

Among the minor inconveniences of civilised life is the chimney with a down-draught, which causes the smoke to retrace its steps with the most disagreeable results. Many devices have been introduced to cure this evil, as an extensive view of chimney-pot land in any of our cities will prove. But we are not aware that the various wonderful forms which have been given to the smoke outlet have had any effect in correcting the vagaries of the really obstinate chimney. A new appliance, which has the merit of simplicity, while it is almost invisible from the street-level, has been introduced by Messrs Greig & Smith of St Andrews, N.B. It has the form of a cross, which is made of such a size that it will fit into the opening of an ordinary domestic chimney-pot. This cross is made of galvanised iron, and is composed of a series of V-shaped channels, one below the other. The idea is that when the wind strikes the opening from any quarter, it will, instead of finding an uninterrupted channel down the chimney, strike these metallic canals and be immediately deflected upwards. The invention has been fitted to a number of houses in St Andrews, and is deservedly appreciated.

DESTRUCTION OF NATURAL SCENERY.

There is something like a continual battle going on between those who value the beauties of nature and regard them as a precious heritage, and those whose ideas are of a more utilitarian character. Such a conflict is just now raging in the county of Somersetshire between rival factions, one of which is desirous of preserving that grand gorge in the Cheddar cliffs, the like of which cannot be matched in the country, and the unique piece of river-scenery at Clifton near Bristol; while the other is intent upon smashing up the limestone at both places for the purpose of making road-metal of the pieces. There are plenty of other places from which the stone could be procured, but there happens to be a road with an easy gradient to the railway at Cheddar, and a convenient waterway at Clifton, thus making transport of the mineral cheaper than it otherwise would be. It is to be hoped for the credit of human nature that the threatened obliteration of two such beauty spots will not be allowed to proceed.

REAFFORESTATION.

It is a relief to turn from such vandalism to the scheme formulated by the recently inaugurated Midland Reafforesting Association, the object of which is to cover with trees and verdure the waste-lands, pit-tips, and 'spoil' banks—the refuse of mining operations—which have led to a considerable stretch of land being known as the 'Black Country.' It is estimated that no fewer than thirty thousand acres of land have been converted into these waste-heaps, half of which are now lying idle and useless. One cannot turn such land to farming purposes; but it is known that certain kinds of trees will flourish on it, and the prospect of turning this ashy wilderness into forest glades is a very pleasing one. The cost will not be great, and all lovers of nature are appealed to to help in the work by subscribing towards it. It may be re-

membered that trees are not only grateful to the eye; they purify the air by absorbing noxious gases and present us in exchange with life-giving oxygen.

VELOXITE.

This is the name of a new smokeless gunpowder which has been, after nine years' hard work and countless experiments, invented by Colonel W. Hope. He claims for it several advantages. It has nearly double the power as a propelling agent, weight for weight, of Waltham Abbey powder; it contains no nitro-compound, no sulphur, phosphorus, chlorate, or dangerous ingredient of any kind. It can be hammered on an anvil without explosion, and its fabrication from exceedingly cheap materials is absolutely safe. Its manufacture is singularly quick, veloxite made in the morning being ready for use the same afternoon. It has no shattering effect upon the gun, and can be used for small arms or field-pieces indifferently. We glean these particulars from a letter which the inventor recently addressed to the *Times*.

A NEW GAS-ENGINE.

The gas-engine, sometimes in company with the electric motor and often alone, is fast filling the place in which formerly the steam-engine held undisputed sway. It takes up far less space than the steam-engine, for no boiler and furnace are required, and it is more economical in maintenance. It is not a matter for surprise that many inventors have been endeavouring to improve an appliance for which there is such a great demand, and one of the foremost of these is Adolf Vogt, who has invented a gas-engine which it is believed by many will bring about quite a revolution in engine construction. Its consumption of gas is small, it gives in one cylinder two impulses per second, and the explosion of the gaseous mixture takes place in water. This is the novel feature, for the presence of water in the cylinder keeps the working parts perfectly cool, and no lubrication is necessary. At the present time only a small engine of less than two horse-power has been made; but it is found to consume no more gas per indicated horse-power-hour than a two hundred horse-power ordinary gas-engine requires.

DUST-RAISING MOTOR-CARS.

No one can deny that one of the great inconveniences connected with the motor-car is its tendency to raise thick clouds of dust from the highways through which it passes. Recognising this evil, the Automobile Club caused an inquiry to be instituted into the question, under the supervision of Colonel Crompton, C.B., and Mr Crawley. The cycle-track at the Crystal Palace was selected as the theatre of operations, and a portion of the track was laid with the sweepings from a flour-mill, which were raked over and renewed between each test. It was soon found that the eye was not capable of estimating fairly the great differences which existed in the dust-raising abilities of different cars, and the camera was enlisted as recording officer with the most satisfactory results. Two cameras were employed, and the cars were photographed by them simultaneously as they travelled past at various speeds; and the photographs, some hundreds in number, show that, while certain cars are very dusty ones, others raise no more dust than a horse-drawn vehicle. From these experiments it would seem that the amount of dust raised does not so much depend upon the kind of tire employed as was at first believed, but rather upon the amount of space below the car. If this is quite unimpeded by hanging gear, or in any other way, the dust raised is not considerable.

DANGERS OF DUST.

It may be remembered that the low death-rate in this country during the past year is attributed by experts to the abnormal amount of rain which kept down the dust, and with the dust pathogenic germs. We may judge from this that dust must be regarded as something more than a mere inconvenience. And to do the motorists justice, we must own that it is even more disagreeable to them than it is to pedestrians and others. An hour's motor-ride on a dusty road means that the pulverulent soil finds its way into every crevice of the clothing and mats the hair into a semi-solid mass. Hence the use of defensive armour in the shape of goggles, overalls, &c., which are supplied by so many enterprising dealers. A special form of antiseptic soap has been introduced, under the name of rubstitute, by Messrs Kay Brothers of Stockport, for the special use of motorists. A bath after a dusty journey is not a matter of luxury, but of necessity.

ALLEGED RADIUM CURES.

According to advices from New York, Dr J. W. Horton of that city has met with some success in the treatment of internal cancer by the help of radium. We should hesitate about giving currency to a report which might raise false hopes among sufferers from this dreadful malady did not the method adopted by the doctor exhibit some original features. At the same time, it is as well to state that there is at present no corroboration of the alleged cures. The treatment consists in dosing the patient with quinine sulphate, and then holding near the body a tube of radium. Quinine sulphate becomes luminous (fluorescent) when brought near radium, and the novel part of the treatment is the employment of this fluorescence as the curative agent. But the liquid will fluoresce by the action of the ultra-violet rays, by the radiations from an exhausted bulb through which an electric current is passed, or by the X-rays. Hence any of these agents should prove as efficient in this new treatment of malignant growths as radium.

MUSHROOMS.

The January issue of *Knowledge* has an interesting article upon the growth of the mushroom, and combats the popular belief that this fungus comes to maturity in a single night, although it is true

that when a certain stage of development has been reached below ground it makes a spurt, and its growth is completed in one or two days. The spores of the fungi are dispersed in an interesting manner, the most universal agent in the work of distribution being the wind, as can be observed when a puff-ball is crushed under foot. Insects are also agents in spore diffusion, and they are responsible for the spread of fungus epidemics by alternately visiting or feeding upon diseased and healthy plants. In the group of fungi to which the 'stinkhorn' belongs, and of which there are only three representatives in Britain, we have an interesting example of the work of insects. The surface of the fungus is covered with a green semi-fluid secretion, sweet to the taste, but with a very fetid smell according to human ideas. In this secretion the spores are embedded, and various insects, but mostly flies, devour these spores, which are unaltered in their passage through the alimentary track. We thus see that in some of the fungi the allurements of sweet taste and smell are used for unconscious dispersion of the spores, just as in many of the flowers cross-fertilisation is secured by the same agencies.

FACTS ABOUT PERU.

Mr E. Higginson, Consul for Peru at Southampton, has sent out a circular and map containing many interesting facts about that country, which, he says, has an area approximately six times that of the United Kingdom, or three and a half times that of Germany. What the Republic wants is more population, the density of which is as one to seventy compared with the United Kingdom. More industrial and agricultural activity is also wanted, and more capital to develop minerals. The white race is most largely distributed along the coast; the bulk of the Peruvian population, over two millions of the native Indian race, lives in the Sierra, where the climate is healthiest. The natives are described as strong and frugal, and much sought after as mining labourers. They are not the least like negroes, but are descendants of the Incas, and are of a strong constitution, with a light skin. The main agricultural products are sugar-cane, coffee, cocoa, cotton, maize, and grapes. On the coast there are immense natural deposits of guano, some of which have not yet been exploited. Rubber and gold production is on the increase; that of silver, formerly so large, is capable of increase. The Oroya or Trans-Andean Railway crosses the Cordillera at a height of fifteen thousand six hundred and forty-two feet, and leads to the rich mines of Cerro de Pasco, forming part of the route leading to a port on one of the navigable tributaries of the Ucayali. Lima, with a population of one hundred and twenty thousand, has a good system of electric tramways; while at Callao, the chief port, the largest ships can come right alongside the quays.

DISUSED PIT-SHAFTS.

The sudden sinking into the earth and burial alive of an unfortunate man in one of the main streets of Hanley has called attention to the existence in North Staffordshire and many other places of disused and forgotten shafts which may at any time prove death-traps to those walking above them. In the Potteries district some of the towns are said to be honeycombed with these old workings, and in Cheshire subsidences due to the pumping of brine are common enough. At certain places in Australia, notably at Ballarat and Bendigo, there are several of these dangerous chasms, which again and again have been the scene of terrible accidents. There seems to be urgent need of a law which shall compel such pits to be filled up or otherwise efficiently guarded when mining operations cease. It would possibly be a very difficult measure to carry out, and we must remember that such shafts have been sunk in what were originally sparsely inhabited places. Towns have now sprung up on the site of the old workings, which have in too many cases been covered over with perishable material.

THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN GREENE.

A SHOOTING ADVENTURE IN INDIA.

By PILGRIM.

THIS happened a good many years ago; but I saw it happen, and it made an impression on me which is not yet effaced. I was with my regiment in India at a remote little station in the North-West Provinces, on the borders of the Nepal Terai. *Terai* means, I may explain, forest and swamp, the home of every description of wild animal, from the lordly elephant and fierce tiger to the timid deer. I was keen on sport in those days, and made the most of my opportunities, as the trophies show which now adorn the walls of my ancestral home. Most of my hunting expeditions were made alone, or in the company of one or two kindred and congenial spirits, generally brother-officers. But every year, in the month of April or in the beginning of May, we used to organise 'drives' on a big scale in the forests near the cantonment; and on these occasions a large party always went out, five or six guns at least; for these drives were exceedingly popular. In the first place, they involved no particular trouble or exertion—no camping out or anything of that kind—as they took

place within easy riding or driving distance of the station; in the next place, good sport was assured, as the forests were full of game, and it was easy to drive it up to the guns; and, finally, there was a good *al fresco* lunch to look forward to, and generally a little excitement to expect, as the jungles were known to hold dangerous beasts, such as panthers, as well as deer and pig.

On the particular occasion of which I am telling six of us were out, and Captain Greene was one of the party. He was a retired officer. He owned a little property in the place, and lived on it. He did not very much care for shooting, and was not much of a shot, but he generally joined us in these annual drives; and being 'a good sort,' he was always welcome. The rendezvous was about twenty miles from the station. Another man and I had gone out the day before to collect the beaters and organise the drives, and make all the arrangements. It was the first week in May, and the heat was terrific.

The forests hereabout covered hundreds of square miles. The trees were principally *sál* (*Shorea robusta*), and there was very little undergrowth. At this season of the year the ground was thickly strewn with dry leaves, and the scurrying feet of driven animals could be heard by the expectant watchers at their posts long before the beasts themselves were viewed.

The drives were engineered thus: The forests were already divided up into huge blocks, each fully a mile square, by clearings, or rides, about twenty yards wide, cut right through them in every direction. These were supposed to be some protection against fire. They were, at all events, very useful to us for our shoots. The guns were posted at intervals of two hundred to three hundred yards along the edge of one of these clearings, each man standing behind a tree, and improving his shelter with impromptu screens made from boughs and bushes. His gun-bearer or coolie crouched by his side. On the far side of the block, a mile away, some three hundred or four hundred native beaters were marshalled in a long line by orderlies and head *shikaris*, and at a given signal they all moved forward together in the direction of the guns. Their orders were to advance slowly and silently; no talking or shouting was allowed; but they just tapped the trunks of the trees with their sticks as they marched along. That was quite enough to put up whatever game was ahead without actually terrifying the disturbed animals into headlong flight.

On this particular day, when all was ready, I was on the extreme right of the line. Greene was next to me. I had seen all the others placed before taking up my own post. My parting words to Greene had been, 'Now, old chap, mind you shoot straight, and we 'll make a big bag to-day.' And he had answered, 'Right you are. So long!'

I reached my place. The signal was given, and the drive commenced. I have often wondered since that some one was not shot on these occasions. We could not see each other; and as all the shooting was at animals crossing the clearing, bullets used to hum up and down the line and glance off the tree-trunks in the most exciting manner; and it was always an intense relief to me when the day was over to know that no killed or wounded sportsman or beater had been added to the bag. I know I always lay very low myself, and kept well under cover. On this occasion game was plentiful. Spotted deer (*Axis maculatus*) streamed out in herds. Surely there is no more graceful or beautiful creature in creation than the *cheetul* stag: that is his name in India. With his dappled hide, his branching antlers, his perfect proportions and slender, supple limbs, he is a picture as he stands at gaze for a moment and 'snuffs the tainted gale.'

But it is no time for sentiment. Bang! goes a rifle, and the lordly leader of the herd drops in his tracks without a quiver, shot through the heart, while his harem of startled does dash panic-stricken across the fatal line, and in ten seconds are out of sight, and almost out of hearing. The nylghau too, the great blue bull, a kind of heavy antelope, is frequently beaten out; and sounders of wild-pig rush madly across the dangerous zone, generally losing some of their number *en route;* for we are hundreds of miles from any pig-sticking country, and here it is quite permissible to shoot the old gray boars if you can. I have 'downed' one myself this morning, and a couple of stags too, so I am quite satisfied, and I may get more yet. But the beat is coming on apace. We impose silence on the drivers, as I have said, but towards the end of a drive, as frightened animals try to break back, they get excited, and shout encouragement and yell cautions to each other in no uncertain tones. But what is that shriek on my left? That is not from a beater. Again and again! And who is this? A coolie, with blanched face and starting eyeballs, who staggers up to me, and gasping out, 'Sahib, a tiger! a tiger! My sahib is killed!' drops breathless on the ground.

Everything in the shape of a cat is a tiger to a terrified coolie. I knew there were no tigers in that particular bit of country; but there were panthers not a few in these forests, and they are quite as dangerous. So, realising that some accident had happened, I left my post, and, followed by my orderly, ran down the line as hard as I could go. It did not take me long to reach Greene's post. It was empty! But fifty yards beyond it a struggle of some kind was going on, for the long grass was moving violently, and, mingled with the sound of snarling growls, Greene could be heard calling for help. Never shall I forget the tragic picture that I saw as I rushed up. A magnificent panther, itself paralysed by a broken back, had Greene on the ground, having seized him by the knee, which was crunched up in its powerful jaws! The unfortunate man had dropped his empty rifle, and, exhausted and helpless, and bespattered with blood, his

own and the panther's, had almost resigned himself to his fate when I came up. 'Shoot him, sonny!' he said. 'Shoot him quickly, for God's sake, or he'll do for me!' I did shoot, but I had to be careful, as man and beast were so mixed up. However, I put the muzzle of my gun within six inches of the panther's shoulder and killed him on the spot. Even then he did not relax his hold, and we actually had to pull his jaws open to release Greene from the deadly grip in which he had him fixed. I then helped the poor fellow to rise. But it was only for an instant. His right knee was pulp.

We laid him out on the ground, and put a folded blanket under the mangled limb. Then we lopped down some saplings and made a rude litter, and placing him on it, started for home.

But home was twenty miles away across country, and it was already long past noon. However, the journey had to be accomplished, and the sooner we were off the better. We had cut his trouser-leg off the mangled limb, washed the wound as well as we could, and bandaged it with our handkerchiefs. That was all we could do for him—and give him some whisky to keep him going. The poor chap was wonderfully cheery and plucky, though the heat was awful and the jolting of his rude conveyance agonising. He was a good deal cut and torn by the panther's claws on the shoulder and inside the thigh, but the only place bitten was the knee. He would talk, though I begged him to keep quiet. He told me he had seen the grass in front of his post waving. Some animal was evidently moving through it. He thought it was a boar probably; so he fired, and, whatever it was, it dropped. Then, poor fellow! he did a wrong and a foolish thing. Contrary to all rules of the game, he left his post to see what he had shot. The grass happened to be unusually thick just in this place; and, his coolie helping, he worked through it, separating it with his hands to make a way as he advanced. Searching thus, he suddenly almost trod on a huge panther; and before he could recoil the beast had seized him. Its back was broken by the shot he had fired at it, so it could not move from the spot where it lay; but he had so literally stumbled on to it that it had him in an instant, and, as I have said, never let go again till it was dead. The coolie fled immediately, panic-stricken and shrieking. He himself struggled on the ground in vain with the huge cat that held him fast. One barrel of his rifle was still loaded, and he managed to fire it, but without effect; and he realised that it was only a question of seconds, when I appeared upon the scene and released him. Such were the simple facts. But they cost him first his leg, and then—a day or two later—his life. Our mournful little procession dragged its weary way into the dusty station as day was breaking on the morning following the accident. One of our party had ridden ahead for help, so a doctor had come out to meet us, and everything was ready for the reception and care of the sufferer. An operation was performed without delay, the leg being amputated high above the knee. But the shock to the system had been too great; he never rallied from it. He died that night, and was buried on the following evening. There was no parson in the place. Our colonel read the funeral service, and I commanded the firing-party that paid him his last earthly honours. It will be long before any of us forget that 'drive.' I ought to add that we brought the dead panther in too, knowing he would be viewed with special interest. He measured, as he lay on the ground, from the tip of his nose to the tip of his tail, eight feet three inches! He was, in fact, a monster.

TEN YEARS AFTER.

THUS do the gods control their puppets' game.
Ten years ago to-night—the time is long;
I wonder if you can recall the same
Like singer some forgotten song.

Do you? The years are long and time is kind.
I was a boy, and your great eyes
Forgave me when they might have struck me blind.
Forgiveness then was Paradise.

I, young, so loving, and (I thought) so true,
Aspired to you. Your smile was wise
At my avowal—I so foolish; you
An angel in a thin disguise.

How grand it was to love! and you were kind
Beyond my scant deserving; you
Who thanked me like a queen for love resigned.
For long? E'en then I think you knew.

You knew me, told me that my love would die.
I burned denial, every chord
Beat out avowal of my future lie:
'I love—forever is the word.'

Well, it was sweet, and we are friends
Of that grand sort who make life bright;
To-night I come to think the good God lends
Such souls as yours to give us light.

So late? Just let me take your hand once—there!
I curtain in my old sweet life;
The sweeter act has now begun. I hear
A footstep. Do you know my wife?

ALAN. E. MULGAN.

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SIXTH SERIES.

A COMEDY OF LIEUTENANTS.

By Richard Arthur.

IN FOUR PARTS.—PART I.

ON a still August evening, during the war with Napoleon, a cosy group of three was seated among the hydrangeas on the lawn of Government House, Guernsey. In a patriarchal easy-chair sat His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, a picture of easy dignity; in his mouth a huge cheroot, and on his head a huge straw wideawake. At his right hand, in a still easier chair, sat Her Excellency the Governor's lady. Both the Governor and 'Madam' (as she was called in St Peter Port society) were worth looking at. They were living embodiments of the adjective 'jolly.' Jolly were the curves and lines in their hearty and capacious figures; jolly it was to see how the old General would slap his wife on the shoulder at a good joke, and how liberally they would both laugh at it till the very tears rolled down their ruddy cheeks. And jolly were the beaming eyes of His Excellency as they revelled in the rich evening prospect which unfolded itself at his feet. For he was a perfect Syntax in his zeal for the picturesque, and always caused his chair (and Madam's) to be so planted as to command the widest sweep of the delightful seascape which lay far below. And on this evening his view was a glorious one. The setting sun was flooding the islets of Herm and Jethou with radiant changing colours, like the shiftings of the kaleidoscope; Sark, in the transparent stillness, might almost have been within musket-range from Castle Cornet, though you remembered that nearly three good leagues of water lay between. And so quiet was the air that not a leaf trembled, and the very puffs of smoke from the Governor's cigar curled lazily up, as if loath to hasten into invisibility on an evening so resplendent.

The third figure in the group was that of a naval officer, a blue-eyed, muscular, supple-limbed man of thirty. In his stiff stock and tightly buttoned uniform coat, the whole erect and alert aspect of the man marked the firm though courteous protest of a strenuous life against an easy one. His name is Pengelly—Lieutenant Pengelly, in charge of the signal-station at Jerbourg: no light sinecure in the year of grace eighteen hundred and three, the narrow seas swarming with the tricolour, and every French port, from Cherbourg to La Rochelle, as ready to pour forth a cloud of privateers at an instant's warning as the crags at Moulin Huet to pour forth a cloud of sea-mews, rousing the twilight shadows with their screaming, at some burst of shouting or chance-shot from the lonely heights far above.

'No, sir,' said the lieutenant. 'I stand to it that we want more brains. Of course we've got the pluck, and all the rest of it; but whenever a man has to play the part of a fox, why, we're nowhere. Our people are quite safe at "out cutlasses to board;" but when it's a matter of wit we always go under. Only the other day, you remember, Jordan allowed himself to be fooled by a man whom he picked up in mid-Channel, and who declared himself to be a starving American, but who turned out (when the mischief was done) to be a French spy with a crop as full as any turkey. Farquharson, again, gets outwitted by the most transparent trick at the hands of that scoundrel Sheridan—a man who would have been strung up to one of our yard-arms if our chaps had the smartness of a dormouse. And Franklin falls into the stale old trap laid for him by the Frenchman who pretends to be beat, hauls down his colours, and while you're thinking how nice your name will look in the *Gazette*, gets you at an advantage and licks you. If I were the Admiralty I'd have no mercy on chumps. If a man has a piece of bad luck, all right. Don't let him suffer because Providence saw fit to bear up a seventy-four against his thirty-eight. But once a man lets himself be tricked, then amen. No second chance—make him cut the service instanter. Let him go into the Preventives if he likes, and raise cabbages.

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But we've no use for a chap who can't smell a dodge ten miles off.'

'Gad, my boy!' said the Governor, chuckling with quiet merriment at the lieutenant's vigour, 'I'm thinking pickled cabbage would be cheap after a year or two of your plan. You'd need a Benevolent Association for the Employment of Weak-Witted Naval Officers on the Cultivation of the Land. I suppose you'd make it retrospective; put out all the old Johnnies who've got snug shore-billets because they can't be trusted on deck, eh?'

'I would, sir, most certainly; bad example for a chump to feel that he's only got to hang on long enough and there's a nice house for him in Portsmouth Dockyard, with a fat living and nothing to do but consume Government stores all the rest of his life. I'd bundle them all out—half-pay, if you like; nothing more.'

'But,' said Madam, 'don't you think your measures would be downright hard on some—poor Farquharson, for instance? You may say he was tricked; but how could he tell the order was false?'

'Ah, by the way,' said the Governor, 'what was that tale?'

'Why,' said the lieutenant, 'it was off Brest, you remember. French and Spanish fleets were lying blockaded in the harbour, and Cornwallis told off Farquharson in the *Pigmy* to watch them. He took up a position just out of range of the Pointe Mathias Battery. It was black night—not a thing to be seen for the darkness; but every one was on the *qui vive*. Farquharson himself was peering through the gloom, fancying something was afoot shorewards, he couldn't tell what, when suddenly a voice softly hailed the ship: "Is that the *Pigmy?*" "Yes; who are you?" "Cap'n's coxswain of the *Diomede*, sir, with a note from the Admiral for Cap'n Farquharson.' They flashed a light outboard; the boat looked genuine enough—four blue-jackets and the coxswain. The note was passed up, and proved to be an order directing Farquharson to man and arm boats instantly for a cutting-out job—silence—no lights—muffled oars, and all the rest of it; tailing up with "The coxswain who brings this note will guide your party to a rendezvous with the boats from the *Agincourt*, *Pallas*, and *Diomede*." Well, they bundled into the boats, and off; the *Diomede* gig leading. After rowing for nearly half-an-hour they saw, as well as they could through the darkness, a number of boats ahead. Some one passed the word to lie on their oars; but hardly had it gone round before there was a blaze of light and a devil of a rain of shot at them from all quarters. The boats round closed in, and turned out to be, every man-Jack of them, either French or Spanish! Farquharson and his people stuck to it for some time, till at last he found his men dropping by the dozen, so he gave in. To cut a long tale short, the whole thing was a trick to draw Farquharson off and cut out the *Pigmy*. The letter, of course, was a forgery; the precious coxswain was actually Sheridan himself disguised. Of course you know who he is? One of the '98 rebels—a distant relative of Wolfe Tone and a *lieutenant-de-vaisseau* in the French navy. Farquharson was in Lille for six months, and then he got exchanged. They gave him the *Ganymede;* but if I'd been at Whitehall a cabbage-plot would have been his portion. Where were his seven senses? As if cutting-out expeditions were arranged between sunset and midnight, and captains' coxswains were Brest pilots!—No, Madam, I'm sorry; but I can't find a grain of excuse for Farquharson. He's a good fellow—none better; but, as I say, his vocation is cabbage-growing, not commanding a king's ship against a pack of —— foxes like the French.'

'Well,' said the Governor, laughing, 'here's tea, and we'll drink "more brains" to the navy.'

Upon the lawn there now appeared a solemn procession of two—Mouilpied, the Government House butler, who had outlived no less than four Governors, and was himself an institution; and Harvey, the Governor's own servant, whose portentous gravity furnished a perpetual foil to the joviality of his master and mistress. Between them they carried what our forefathers called the 'tea equipage'—a table, and on it some of Madam's favourite Crown Derby. But before placing it Mouilpied drew from his pocket an imposing official envelope, sealed with many seals, and directed to Lieutenant Pengelly.

'This has just come in, sir, by the smack *Marie*. Jean Le Cheminant himself brought it up. He says he was mackerel-fishing outside Lancresse Bay this forenoon, when he was hailed by an English sloop-of-war beating down Channel from Portsmouth. They sent a boat off to the *Marie* with this letter and an English guinea, and bade Jean haul in his nets, get back at once, and deliver it to you without the delay of an instant.'

Pengelly turned the letter over in his hand for some seconds, as one does with a package the time and manner of whose advent is unexpected. At last, seeing nothing mysterious about the heavy Admiralty seals or the superscription, he tore it open with a 'By your leave, Madam,' and rapidly glanced through the contents. His first look of surprise melted into one of satisfaction as he said, 'By George, Governor! here's a budget. May I read it out?'

'By all means, my boy. Fire away.'

'Well, there are two despatches; in order of date this is the first:

'"(Copy.) ADMIRALTY, WHITEHALL, *August* 1, 1803.

'"To Lieutenant Francis Pengelly, R.N., at Guernsey.

'"SIR,—I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you that you have been this day appointed, in command, to H.M. gun-brig *Hecate*, now refitting at Portsmouth, and

under orders for foreign service. You will be relieved in charge of the Jerbourg signal-station by Lieutenant C. J. O'Flanagan, who will arrive at Guernsey to take over the appointment on or about the 25th August instant, in H.M. frigate *Lion*. You are requested to be ready to embark on the *Lion*, which will return to Portsmouth after discharging military stores at St Heliers.

'"I am further directed by My Lords to request that you prepare:

'"(1) A statement showing depth of water, prevailing currents, and suitability for anchorage at the following points: (*a*) Off the Hanois; (*b*) in the bays of Vazon and Grand Havre; (*c*) at any available point off the north or north-east of the island.

'"(2) Full particulars of the accessibility, in all states of wind and tide, of the harbours of St Peter and St Sampson.

'"You will be good enough not to rely upon any existing maps or local information for these particulars, but to cause soundings, &c., to be taken under your personal supervision immediately on receipt of this letter, so that the details may be handed by you to Lieutenant O'Flanagan on the 25th instant.—I have the honour to remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

'"(Signed) EVAN NEPEAN, Secretary."

'Well, that's dated the 1st. Now, this is dated a week later:

'"ADMIRALTY, WHITEHALL,
August 8, 1803.

'"To Lieut. Pengelly, R.N.,
at Guernsey.

'"SIR,—The cutter *Gwendolen*, carrying the Admiralty despatch of 1st inst., was, I regret to state, captured by a French privateer off Alderney on the 3rd instant. I enclose, under cover herewith, a copy of that despatch; but, in view of the fact of its capture, My Lords have thought it well to make the following change in the arrangements therein laid down. Instead of H.M. frigate *Lion*, H.M. sloop *Fanny* will, wind being favourable, put in at Guernsey, for the purpose of landing Lieutenant O'Flanagan, *on the 22nd instead of on the 25th instant*. You will have the goodness to be ready to repair on board on the 22nd; and My Lords regret that this necessary alteration will limit the time at your disposal for compiling the particulars required. Nevertheless, they rely upon your zeal to have the most complete information ready for Lieutenant O'Flanagan on his arrival.—I have the honour, &c.,

'"EVAN NEPEAN, Secretary."'

After a few quiet but deeply sincere words of congratulation the Governor said, 'Let's see—today's the 12th. That gives you ten days. Upon my word, you'll have to look alive, Pengelly, my boy, if you're going to explore Cobo and Rocquaine. Now, what the devil can they want all that stuff for? Surely they've got charts enough at Whitehall. And if *they* haven't, I *have*. But I suppose my pigeon-holes are the "local information" upon which you are to rely if you dare. If they really want to know anything, why the deuce don't they apply to Sir James Saumarez? What on earth's the good of keeping a strong squadron in these waters if they can't land a survey-party instead of taking a signal-officer from his packing to go dabbing about all over the coast with a hand-line? Upon my word, if they're not just a pack of old apple-women! Here we've been at war ten years, and they're asking for soundings, as if Guernsey were a foreign port, and not such a thing as a pilot in the island!' And the Governor roared with laughter.

'Usual experience, sir,' said the lieutenant. 'Admiralty methods and common-sense, like oil and water, never mingle. But' (looking at his watch) 'I must be off. I'll just take a cup of tea, Madam, and then you'll please excuse me. Wonder who this O'Flanagan is? If I were the Admiralty I should be precious careful about giving commissions to Irishmen. This fellow may be a very good man; but Ireland's riddled with suppressed treason. The First Consul has got scores of O'Briens and O'Connors in his pay. And who knows whether Dennis O'Sullivan or Maurice O'Rourke may not be doing Boney better work nosing about English quarterdecks and dockyards than if he were to mount them in full fig as officers of his own household?'

'My dear lieutenant,' laughed Madam, 'if you don't take care you'll begin to suspect the very nose on your own face. Why, His Majesty has no more loyal servants than his Irish officers. Isn't Lord Castlereagh himself an Irishman? And so is Sir Arthur Wellesley. And Mr Burke was an Irishman, if ever there was one, and yet he was more loyal than half his English colleagues. And Grattan—there's a man for you! all burning with love of Ireland, and yet no one doubts *his* loyalty. And only the other day I was turning over the *Annual Register*, and I noticed that nearly half our generals and admirals were Irishmen or Scotchmen—and more Irish than Scotch! So there's for you!'

'Yes, I know, my dear Madam; but they are all tried men, who came in before Whiteboys and United Irishmen. They've eaten the king's salt long enough to be trusted. No, it's the younger men I'm thinking of—men who may have been out with Bagenal Harvey, like that villain Sheridan—rebel to the bone. No more tea, thank you. I must go.—Of course I shall see you again, Governor, between now and the 22nd.—And, Madam, I'll call and say good-bye, if I may, the night before I sail.'

'If you *don't*,' said Madam, 'I shall begin to wonder if you suspect me as well as your Whiteboys and yellow boys.'

And with a hearty laugh the lieutenant strode away across the grass, and the Governor and Madam re-entered the house.

GUANAJUATO.

THE Mexican city of Guanajuato might aptly be described as the patriarch of mining-camps. It was famous and venerable when Humboldt visited it in the early days of last century, yet to-day sees it an active producer of the precious metals; indeed, it seems as though the ancient mines which ring the city round on every side are once more about to experience the excitement of a boom.

Hitherto the methods of the Mexican mine-owners, both as regards mining and reduction, have been of the most medieval description. Men, half-slaves, have laboriously climbed up chicken-ladders with skins full of ore on their backs, the strings of men working up and down the shafts with the precision of a dredger's buckets; and the ore has gone to the antiquated Chili mill and the *arrastra*, by which only the richest ores could be profitably treated. But, now that the American has put his money into the future of the country, the most modern methods are rapidly supplanting these ancient devices. Glaring erections of crinkly galvanised iron are rapidly modernising the scene, and one cannot but regret the disappearance of the old erections built of sun-dried bricks, with their red notes of colour, which are demolished on all sides to make room for their monstrous successors. In addition to the changes of buildings and machinery, there is also the more momentous change of men. The happy-go-lucky Mexican mining magnates, who for the most part lodged their profits in French Rentes and went to live in Paris, are being succeeded by smart, energetic American managers, backed by boards of directors who will not stint them with money for improvements and developments.

Despite all disadvantages, it is very remarkable what profits the old mines were able to show under the régime of their former owners, as the following amounts bear witness: Valenciana, sixty million pounds; Reyes, sixteen million pounds; Cata, ten million pounds; San Cayetano, ten million pounds; Villalpando, eight million pounds; Sirena, eight million pounds; and also the many minor properties which must have had an enormous output in the more prosperous days. It must, of course, be borne in mind that such stupendous aggregates are the result of scores of years—in some cases centuries—of work.

The Mexican owners of the Valenciana mine have been approached on many occasions by American syndicates with large offers for its purchase; but up till now none of these negotiators have ever got even the length of an option. The mammoth mine has been flooded for many years, so that, in addition to the large price asked for it, the prospective purchasers will have to face the gigantic task of clearing the water out of the workings. The present owners refuse to include the Church of Valenciana and its precincts in any bargain they may make, since it is regarded in Mexico as one of the worst forms of sacrilege to work a mine below consecrated ground. This reservation prevents the exploitation of the rich mother-lode which is said to run directly beneath the church's demesne; and even supposing the church to be included in the sale, it is doubtful if the Mexican miners could be induced to peril body and soul by driving pick or drill through ground which they have been taught to believe is holy.

Guanajuato, a town of some sixty thousand inhabitants, stands at about six thousand six hundred feet above sea-level. One long and very narrow street extends the whole length of the town, from the beautiful Gardens of the Cantador and past the Granaditas Prison. Within that building a large number of Spaniards took refuge, in the days of the revolution, from the fury of the Mexican rebels. The Spaniards managed to hold out for a considerable time, having laid in an enormous stock of victuals some months before the outbreak of hostilities, and a well within the walls amply supplied them with water. As the Mexicans were unprovided with cannon to effect a breach, they could do little more than wait for some propitious moment for attack; and at last the darkness of a moonless night afforded them the opportunity. Then a mass of faggots was piled before the great doorway, and a path burned to the hated oppressors. It is said that not a man, woman, or child survived.

The summit of a neighbouring hill is crowned by the quadrangular-shaped Pantheon, or public burial-ground. Here, by descending a corkscrew flight of stairs that worms its way far beneath the surface of the earth, a dimly lighted vault is reached. The air in this chamber is charged with a peculiarly offensive odour, emanating from an enormous stack of human skulls and bones collected at one end; but by far the larger portion of the space is devoted to what must be one of the most extraordinary and gruesome sights in the world: no less than a collection of modern mummies. It is well within the range of possibility that widows or widowers or sons or daughters of these objects of the strangers' curiosity may be in the land of the living. Only a short time ago the remains used to be exposed to view without a shred of covering; but, as a concession to public opinion, they have recently been shrouded in white sack-like garments, which leave only the face, legs, head, and arms bare. The mummies, about thirty in number, are propped up in a standing attitude, women on one side and men on the other. The mummifying process is wholly natural. Originally buried in the strongly alkaline earth of which the cemetery is composed, the bodies of those for whose interment the relatives have neglected to pay the proper fees are unceremoni-

ously resurrected at the end of five years, and examined in order to discover what progress, if any, they are making towards the desired state of desiccation; and should the bodies be deemed worthy of the invidious honour, they are translated to this chamber of horrors.

Beyond the prison the main street passes the entrance to the market, an evil-smelling place, where the perfumes from the flower-stalls do not mitigate the odours of frying meat and the stench of decayed vegetable matter. Oranges, citrons, limes, bananas, guavas, mangoes, cherries, tunas, cherimoyas, granadillas, pine-apples, and even strawberries are for sale at prices which would raise a riot in Covent Garden. Strawberries, for example, can be bought for about threepence a pound nearly all the year round.

Continuing on the journey up-town, the visitor is apt to indulge in a smile at the quaintness of the signs over the windows of some of the shops. 'The Horn of Plenty' designates the den of a dealer in ropes, whose whole stock-in-trade might be purchased for a few *pesos*. 'The Nineteenth Century' adorns the front of a tanner's unsavoury hovel; and the tanner has probably not the faintest notion that a new century is already three years old. 'The Transvaal' looks a trifle like a grim joke above a butcher's.

Now the Jardin de la Union is reached. Here, round its triangular acre of green, bordered by the tall eucalyptus, is the fashionable promenade of the youth and beauty of the city; and while the military band is playing in the cool of the evenings an endless procession of señoras and señoritas and their duennas perform a stately circuit in one direction, the men as invariably forming a stream passing in the opposite one. Needless to say, 'gin a body meet a body' there is often a surreptitious interchange of *billets-doux* even under the very nose of the watchful duenna.

The palace of the Governor, on one side of the Jardin, is faced by the Casino. In former days the latter was the mansion of a silver-king; but it has been converted into a handsome clubhouse which, although primarily intended only for Mexican members, includes all the prominent Englishmen and Americans in Guanajuato among its membership. The Mexican members spend the greater part of their leisure in wooing the fickle goddess over the fiddle-shaped green baccarat-table; and, as many of the members are very wealthy men, the game is sometimes played for high stakes. In fact, it is by no means uncommon for a man to be a winner or a loser of ten to twenty thousand dollars during a night's play.

The Teatro Juarez is, without doubt, the chief pride of the city. Notable anywhere, and possessing an exterior unsurpassed for architectural excellence by any theatre in London, its vast proportions and superb interior arouse curiosity as to the reason for its existence. It is discovered upon inquiry that the gigantic playhouse is a bluff, a white elephant, a 'folly.' There is not sufficient power in the city's dynamos to light it, even if any company were courageous enough to lease it.

Everywhere there are churches: tall, narrow-shouldered edifices, which present fronts adorned with ornate carving. Within they are gaudy—gaudy with that distressing gaudiness which condescends to the display of shabbily gorgeous draperies. For example, a green hock-bottle full of tuberoses may be seen placed with devotional intent in front of an exquisitely wrought crucifix. There are anachronisms on all sides. These great churches are rich, and the priests are wielders of enormous power; and under a fair ballot the Government of the country would be at their mercy. Fortunately the suffrage is in the hands of the comparatively small number of educated Mexicans who, as employers of labour, array themselves in opposition to the Church, which encourages idleness by its insistence on the observance of numerous feast-days, and is the arch-enemy of progress. A few mine-owners go so far as to offer a bonus of 10 or even 50 per cent. in addition to their ordinary wages to the men who will work for a month on end without regard to feast-days; and in most cases the experiment has been found to work admirably, in spite of the fanatical threats of the priests.

Down every trail from the mountains that hem the city in, descends an endless cavalcade of mules and asses laden with ore packed in huge leather bags slung across their backs, from early morning until late at night filling the narrow streets with the din of continual tramping. Horsemen are also in constant evidence: fantastic figures, with tall steeple-shaped hats, their short jackets profusely braided with silver, trousers as tight as a groom's, but belling out at the bottom in true coster fashion; on their heels are enormous spurs; and many of them go armed to the teeth, even carrying long swords of antique appearance. Riding with stirrups so long that their legs hang almost straight, and holding breast-high by a single finger the horsehair cord which serves them for reins, they do not at first glance present the appearance of horsemen; but it is better to reserve an opinion on this point until we have seen a *charro* astride a 'bucker.'

Down-town, in the lower quarter, is the bull-ring, where fights take place nearly every Sunday afternoon. As a rule the show is rather second-rate; but the tiers of stone benches are invariably crowded, and even the house-tops and hillsides in the neighbourhood swarm with sightseers, who are able to get a glimpse of the arena from their lofty perches. Occasionally there are variations in the ordinary programme, as, for instance, when 'Don Tancredo'—the traditional name always given to the performer of this feat—stands draped in white and motionless on a barrel in the centre of the ring. The bull on its entrance charges full-tilt at the white-clad figure, stops abruptly within a few feet of it, shakes his head in a puzzled sort of way, paws

at the earth, backs away, charges again, and again stops and sniffs the mysterious object. Finally, concluding that he has been in some way fooled, he whirls round on his sworn tormentors, who have by this time entered the ring. Throughout the rest of the fight the bull pays no more attention to 'Don Tancredo,' whose nerve must needs be of the best to enable him to pose as a statue in face of such a peril. Sometimes, when public calamities make calls for charity, benevolence takes the form of a bull-fight—as we would say, 'Let us get up a bazaar'—and the gilded youth of the city take the field. As a rule they make shocking bad play, and when it is all over we feel the sensation that possesses a man after being through a bazaar at home: that he has been 'done.' Pole-jumping over the bull is a popular diversion, and one highly appreciated by the gallery; but a really ludicrously funny show is sometimes given at the conclusion of a fight, when scores of *peons* are permitted to enter the ring, and each in turn endeavours to mount and ride a barebacked steer. The men are all horsemen, more or less; but a steer is not a horse, as most of them find out to their sorrow.

The people are blessed with most extraordinary endurance under pain, and with an equally extraordinary courage, so that in their differences they will fight while suffering in the most horrible manner. Unfortunately, scarcely a day passes without affrays of a desperate character; but in his wildest moments the *peon* hesitates about attacking a white man.

The burglars are the chief inconveniences of life in Mexico. They will ascend to the house-top, and with a rod and a line armed with a monstrous big hook, patiently angle through the windows, dragging out coats, hats, towels, &c., till somebody alarms them or they have as much plunder as they can carry. In all cases of burglary the victim goes, of course, to the police, who will smile amiably and announce that they know quite well where the stolen goods are to be found, and will disclose the exact whereabouts on payment of a small commission. This is how the police get half of their living.

Guanajuato is destined to create some stir in the mining markets of the world shortly; therefore this description of the ancient city and its inhabitants at the present time ought to be of considerable interest.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

By William Le Queux.

CHAPTER XV.—THE OLD MONK'S SECRET.

TO idle in a provincial town without friends and without occupation is neither pleasant nor profitable. In London one can always amuse one's self and pass the time; but in dull Peterborough my principal excitement, in addition to visiting the much-restored Cathedral and the local museum in the Minster Precincts, was to watch fat stock being sold by auction.

Anxiety consumed me as to what had occurred at Harpur Street, and whether The Closed Book was actually lost to me. I had telegraphed twice to Noyes, Hammersmith Police Station, but had received no response. His silence was in no way reassuring; therefore I resolved that if I heard nothing by nine o'clock that night I would return to London by the last train.

I dined at seven after a dismal day, and while at table the waiter entered the coffee-room where I sat alone, saying that a gentleman wished to see me. Next moment Noyes, dressed like a commercial traveller in dark-blue suit and bowler hat, entered the room.

There was a smile of triumph on his face, from which I gathered instantly that he had been successful. He carried a black leather bag in his hand, and this he opened as soon as the waiter had gone out, saying as he produced a brown-paper packet:

'I'm glad to say, Mr Kennedy, that I've been able to do the trick. It was a very delicate matter, and the affair presented features and difficulties which I had never anticipated.'

'Then you've actually got it?' I cried eagerly, opening the parcel and displaying the precious volume.

'There it is, as you see,' he laughed. 'Only, please don't ask how I got possession of it, because I'd rather not say—you understand?'

Detectives are apt to be mysterious sometimes; therefore I did not question him further. For me it was sufficient that he had been able to secure the book without the thieves knowing into whose possession it had passed. I was well aware of the great circle of criminal acquaintances Noyes had in London, and I suspected that it was through one of them that the book had been obtained.

'I wired twice to you,' I said when, at my invitation, he seated himself at the table to join me at dinner.

'I know,' was his response. 'It was not necessary to reply. In such a case as this patience is everything. You were just a trifle too impatient, Mr Kennedy—if you'll pardon my saying it. I had promised to do what I could, and did so, with the result you see.'

I know I deserved this quiet reproof, and admitted

it, for patience is one of the many good qualities I do not possess.

He would explain nothing of the means by which he had obtained my property, although he told me one or two strange facts concerning Selby and the little old lady who had travelled from Paris.

'I've seen Selby,' he said. 'At first I seemed to have a faint idea that I'd seen his face before, and that he was wanted for something. But I've searched at the Yard, and found no photograph resembling him, so I suppose I must be mistaken. The old woman's name is Mrs Pickard. She knows several foreigners living at different places, mostly people in good circumstances.'

'You haven't seen anything of a tall, dark, and very handsome young woman—Italian probably?' I hazarded, wondering if the actual thief had arrived in London.

'No. Captain Wyman is still on the watch. He's as good as any man I've ever had under me—quite professional in his methods. And that young Italian, too, seems a smart sort of chap. You picked him up quite accidentally, I think you said?'

I explained how I had sought Enrico's aid, and what opinion I had formed of him.

'Well,' Noyes remarked as he gulped down a glass of Bass with evident gusto, 'I shall return to-night, but you'd best remain here, Mr Kennedy; or, if not here, somewhere in the country. You must not be seen in town. Bury yourself away from there, and leave all the watching to us. You've got the book; therefore be careful it does not go out of your possession again.'

'Trust me,' I laughed. 'When I've gone through it all I shall put it in a bank for safe keeping.'

'It ain't the sort of thing to leave about if the leaves are really poisoned, as you say. I've been afraid to open the thing,' he remarked.

'I'm tired of this place,' I said, longing to return to London.

'Then go somewhere else—to the seaside, for instance. You're quite near the east coast places here.'

'A good idea,' I exclaimed. 'I'll go to Sheringham to-night. I stayed at the "Grand" once, and will go there again.'

'Very well,' he said; and we concluded our meal and lit cigars afterwards, chatting over the various remarkable features of the mystery. My decision to go to the little watering-place, now becoming so popular, pleased him. My absence from London was imperative, he declared, and at Sheringham, if dull, I could at any rate get some golf. How long I should be compelled to remain there he had no idea.

'Let me complete my inquiries,' he said. 'They are very difficult; but I don't despair as long as Captain Wyman will continue to assist me. Perhaps, when you've deciphered the whole of the book, a further clue will be furnished to the motive of all this secrecy and conspiracy.'

'I shall resume at Sheringham to-morrow,' I replied. 'I expect to discover some secret which will throw further light on recent events.'

At nine o'clock, after an exchange of expressions of confidence, we drove together to the Great Northern Station, and after seeing him into the up-express, I took the slow night-train, *vid* Wisbech and South Lynn, to the clean little fishing-village of Sheringham, which Harley Street has recently discovered to be so healthy, and which society is now commencing to patronise.

I took a private sitting-room at the 'Grand,' overlooking the promenade, an expensive luxury, to be sure, but I wanted quiet and privacy in my investigations; and next morning, after my breakfast had been cleared, I first assumed a pair of thick driving-gloves, and then reopened The Closed Book at the page where my reading had been so abruptly broken off.

I think, in order to reproduce the record plainly, it will be best to give the transcript just as I copy it from the time-stained poisoned pages now before me, with all its quaintness of expression and curiosities of orthography. The latter looks puzzling, but will be found to be quickly mastered.

What I further deciphered, then, was as follows:

'READER WHO DAREST TO SEEKE WITHIN THIS BOOK, I commend me unto you as heartily as I may think, trusting in God that you be (the which Jesu continue) in good prosperity. It is not out of your remembrance that my lord of Valentenois had sworn to kill me because I had given help unto my lady Lucrezia, and had more than once used the knife contayning the antidote, striking as I had stricken my lord of Pesaro those whom he attempted to poison. Hence my lady, seeing that her lord was dead, and right knowing her helplessness, induced me to recover her jewels and flie to England with them, there to await her ladyship's arrival, her intention being to seeke the gracious intercession of our lord Cardinal Wolsey, who had befriended her when in Rome. Loth as I was to leave my lady alone in the Vatican, that place of so many black deeds, I saw that to serve her I must obey; hence did I at once repair unto the spot near unto the village of Monte-Compatri, where I had concealed my lady Lucrezia's wondrous jewels within a strong casket of wood and iron. The Borgia emeralds, be it knowne unto you, were the finest the world had ever seen, and were once the property of the Great Turk the Sultan Muhammed, who is said to have obtained them from the ruins of ancient Babylon. They were set in the forme of a neck-collar, each stone as large as a mann's thumb. And preserved with them were diamonds, pearls, and rubies of value enormous, and with the which was the sealed phiall of the secret venom and the antidote. All these did I recover securely, and having bade farewell unto my lady, journeyed to England after many adventures that need not be herein recounted. Arrived in London, I again concealed mi lady's precious treasures, and took up my

lyving in the house of my friend Sir George Goodrick, in East Chepe, on the iij. daye of January in the yeare of our Lord 1501.

'For the space of one year and two monthes I remained in London, until a messenger came from my lady with the amazing news that she had become wedded unto the lord Don Alfonso D'Este, heir of the lord Duke Ercole of Ferrara, and, having removed to Ferrara, did not intend travellynge to England at that presente. In her letter she told me how that at last she had wedded a man she loved, and that with her confessor she was seeking the forgiveness of her God for the black deedes her brother Cesare had compelled her to commit. Furthermore, she tolde me that knowing her jewels were in safe keeping in my hands, she wished me to still retaine them in their secret hyding-place until such time as she should arrive to see mi lord-Cardynal Wolsey at Hampton. She pointed out that I, well knowing of the terrible deedes committed by her, and therefore havyng been more than once her assistant in her murderous treachery, was as guiltie as she. The blood of many of those who had been envenomed was upon my hands, therefore it was for me to make penance and seek forgiveness.

'HER WORDS were those of a penitent woman, and they caused me to think. She was happy with her husband, but uneasy on account of her guiltiness of mind. She was repentant, and wished me to be so. For a long time I thought over her words, until at last becoming convinced that being privy to those foul poison-plots wherein death was dealt secretly to every enemy, I was also an assassin and accursed. Wherefore, after much reason, I resolved to hide mi lady's treasure and enter as a novice the order of Saint Benedict at their great abbey of Croylande in Lincolnshire, hoping that the rigours of a monastic life would open up to me the glories and comforts of religion, of the which I stood sorely in need.

'PLEASE IT YOU, READER, to understand that I repaired to Croylande, and having sunk the casket of my lady's jewels in the fish-pond one hundred and thirty and one paces south-east of the grand altar of the abbey, midway between the shores, I entered as novice of the sacred order, Roberte de Deepynge then being abbot. Through eighteen full years did I make penance, leading a religious life and making peace with my God. Our abbey was one of the finest and well-favoured in all England, and my lyfe was spent mostlie in religious work among the people. At times I visited the abbeys of Peterborough, Thorney, Fynshed, Fountance [Fountains], St Albans, and our great Glassynburie [Glastonbury], travelling much, and making many and long pilgrimages. Much that I did see at Glassynburie was indeed of a scandal; but my bounden duty most humbly remembered, I speak not of the evil deeds of those supposed to live in sanctitie. One day in April, when I passed across the tryangular bridge at Croylande towardes the Abbeye, having been to the priory of Castor to visit the beadsman Willyam Petre, a monk, my friend named Malcolm Maxwell, brought unto me a travel-stained messenger from Ferrara, who tolde to me the death of my lady Lucrezia, and gave unto me a letter written to me an hour before she died. She urged me to continue my lyfe of religion and peace with God, and sente me as her dying wish that her pryceless jewels should remain concealed because a curse rested upon them. She wished that no man should see or touch them, but her will was that they might only be used in the cause of the holy Catholic church. And for that purpose she left the treasure in mi hands, together with the poison-phiall and the secrete antidote to be used if occasion warranted in the same cause, these also beynge concealed with the marvellous gems in the mud of the fish-pond. This news overburdened my heart with greefe, and I vowed unto God (praised be Him) that I would faithfully fulfil my lady's commandments, and still continue in my unfained fidelity of my allegiance. Wherein reducing to remembrance the prised memories and perpetual renowned facts of the famous Duchess, yet having the reader's most benign and gracious favour, I resolved to still remain in the sanctuarie of the abbey, although I hadde in mi possession some of the finest jewells known unto the world, and the whych, if solde, might keepe me in prosperity all my days.'

THE CRIMINAL ALIEN.

By EDWARD JOHN PRIOR.

THE alien, and particularly the criminal alien, about whom so much has been heard lately, constitutes one of the most vexing problems of the hour.

Opportunity has been given me on various occasions of obtaining a very thorough knowledge of the criminal alien and his ways, and I have come to the conclusion that, although he is many things which he ought not to be, he is very interesting. To many (including, I am afraid, some Royal Commissioners) he is little more than a name denoting something objectionable; but to people like myself, who have been brought into contact with him, he is a very live reality.

I believe that, indirectly, the criminal alien within our gates is a product of civilisation. In a more direct way he is one of the evils introduced into our country by our very free ports. For the purposes of the present article the former proposition has an academic value only; but the latter is a

matter which Parliament will probably be considering in the near future. Parliament has very often a way of ignoring the recommendations of its Royal Commissioners; but it is to be hoped that in this instance it will not do so, for the criminal alien is a very serious danger. Pages of statistics show that the alien is at the present time coming to our country in his thousands. Many of these aliens are criminals; but they are not labelled such for the one very good reason that it is nobody's business to know anything about them. The alien manages to pay for his wretched passage, and after he has been safely landed at the London Docks the people who bring him here are relieved of all responsibility. He and his proceed to find their way into the sordid and cheap lodging-houses of the Commercial Road and thereabouts, and then commences the great tragedy for which the British ratepayers pay.

Let me show you how it commences, how it is that the detectives and policemen of the East End make the criminal alien's acquaintance, and how it is that the patient magistrates who preside at Thames Police Court find their time taken up in listening to the translated utterances of unwashed Poles.

In the first place, it should be understood that aliens are not all criminals. The greater proportion of them are not. Some of them, it is true, have been evil-doers in their own country, and they have only come here to escape the storms which have gathered on their native heaths; but there are many others who come here with the honest intention of making a living. They have not prospered at their own homes, and they have been persuaded to leave them by the cheap-labour touts who, one regrets to say, are sent out on recruiting expeditions by certain small East End contractors who get their work from the large boot and upholstering factories. Many of these aliens find their lot a hard one. They are unfortunate in their new work, they get discharged, their scanty means disappear, and they become objects which one may justly pity. Stranded in an unknown country, not speaking a word of the language, what are they to do? Many drift into crime. As criminals they are not a success, and in due course they go to prison. The criminal alien who has had the advantages of experience and who was a criminal over the seas finds his illegal career a little more successful; but as an expert purse-snatcher he cannot compete with his British rival, and so he goes under. Of the alien who comes here and prospers in his honesty I am not going to speak. He usually works hard and well at a sweating price.

It may be taken generally that the average alien who comes to these shores is a man or woman who has been kicked in his or her own country—that is to say, not the individual who is fired with a burning desire to get on in the world or endowed with an adventurous spirit, but the individual who has been seriously buffeted by fate, who has experienced the worst kind of poverty, and who is very anxious for any change. There are some progressive spirits who have heard glowing accounts of this glorious country, and who jump at the chance of what sounds like wealth and luxury. Very often they are disillusioned; but the man who comes because of those things does not make the criminal. He either settles down to his hard lot or finds his way to America, where he cannot easily go, and where he finds it every bit as hard. In one thing an alien is like a Scot: he rarely returns to his own country.

But the very unsatisfactory alien who has no guiding principles of any ethical value finds that he has left the gloom, the poverty, and very often the oppression of his own country for a harder but a freer life. When the novelty has worn off he looks around for a change. He sometimes sets up in business on his own account, and it is a somewhat curious fact that very often he prospers. There are many flourishing aliens in business in London who are good citizens. But a representative of this particular type is not one of them. He drifts into an illegal business. He finds it pays amazingly well. The business is also an immoral one, but that gives him no qualms of conscience. As he is at liberty to do just what he pleases, the life suits him. In time he embraces other businesses. He learns the art of receiving stolen goods; he becomes something of a money-lender. Then his house is raided. He is fined. He pays up readily. He is again caught and fined. Then, in time, he goes to prison. He becomes a criminal; but his prosperity remains, for he has amassed much money. This type of man—greedy, grasping, irresponsible—is one of the curses of London. As far as the decent community is concerned he is an absolute 'waster,' but from the more individual point of view he is a prosperous and particularly cunning rogue. There are many such as he well established in ill-gotten wealth, and not only are they vile themselves, but they are also corrupters of morals.

And the criminal alien may be said to import immorality. With a little knowledge of the ways of men like this it is often easy to read between the lines of the record of police-court cases and East End suicide inquests. Within the power of these aliens are certain women. Many of them, knowing no shame, induce other women to leave their native countries and join them. Many of these recruits are innocent girls. They are quite ignorant of the life which awaits them; but they are helpless. There is a well-deserving organisation at Tilbury which meets all the emigrant-ships and does its best to befriend young girls coming over in this way, yet the officers of this society will tell you their ends are very often defeated. The criminal alien is cunning. He knows how to manage this white slave business, and thus one of the saddest tragedies of modern life is continually being enacted in the capital city.

A case occurred only the other day in Clerkenwell where a young girl died from kicks inflicted by a

man into whose house she had been introduced by her own sister. The girl came to England in all her innocence, and when she learned the kind of life she was expected to lead her natural spirit rebelled. She resisted to the utmost, and now she is dead.

While dealing with this particular branch of alien crime it may be mentioned that the police are very much alive to the danger. Their activity is largely owing to the strong attitude taken by Sir Albert de Rutzen, who, as chief magistrate at Bow Street, has had to deal with an extraordinarily large number of cases arising out of the raiding of houses in the Gower Street district. Fines amounting to thirty pounds and even fifty pounds have not checked the evil in this neighbourhood, and thus the magistrates have sensibly adopted the course of sending the miscreants to prison without the option of any easily paid fine. The police who have taken part in these raids tell a dismal story. Most of the victims have strongly expressed their desire to escape from the kind of life; but owing to circumstances have been unable to do so.

There are many other criminal aliens who take to more simple roguery. These form the real criminal class at which the Royal Commission rightly set its teeth. They act as pickpockets (a few of them get really expert); they learn the burglar's craft; they sink to highway robbery, and by a simple process of evolution become East End roughs of the worst type. I say the worst type advisedly. In my opinion there is nothing more dangerous than the ruffianly alien. I have seen him many times: I have seen him caught red-handed, I have seen him making his fight for liberty, and I have seen him often in the dock at Old Bailey.

He belongs to the type which is particularly interesting. After the committal of various misdeeds he again stands before the magistrate at Thames Police Court. The one I have in my mind now was everything he should not have been, and the ratepayers are now paying for his keep. It was in the afternoon when they brought him up for one of his first and minor offences against the law. The court was hot and stuffy; it was crowded with the aristocracy of Commercial Road, for this man was well known. The magistrate was obviously tired and disgusted; there had been nearly forty aliens before him on that day.

His name, which sounded like half-a-dozen crackers exploding, was loudly called. The man who then stepped forward appeared to be the worst of his class. He was short and dark. His hair was long and closely matted together, and every one could see that he was a stranger to soap and water. His clothes were rags; vermin swarmed over him. In his way he was an interesting but disgusting object —a poem in dirtiness.

'Do you speak English?' shouted the magistrate.

The alien, as though faintly understanding, shook his head.

'Want an interpreter?'

The alien nodded.

The heavy-jowled man who knows many tongues stepped forward.

'Two shillings—have you got two shillings?' bawls the sergeant in attendance.

With the interpreter's assistance the alien understood what was required of him. He dived deep in dirty pockets and counted sufficient money to make up the interpreter's fee.

Then the business proceeded.

The police constable in the box said the alien was an upholsterer by trade, and he was summoned for refusing to remove a sofa from off the public footway.

'This man makes sofas?' gasped the magistrate.

'Yes, your worship.'

There was a general shudder among the Londoners present. The understanding aliens who were following the proceedings failed to see where the alarm came in. All they knew was that their compatriot —who was a Jew from Poland—was a good workman. They quite overlooked the dirt. This man is one of those who are engaged in a great and flourishing East End industry. Cheap furniture which enables poor couples to marry young is one of the many evils for which the alien is largely responsible.

A man like this one is fined, and he pays easily enough. He has much money, but he does not easily forget. He nurses a secret grudge against that young and promising policeman. It is in the nature of things that the constable is subsequently wounded in some stabbing affray which excites very little public attention.

The alien is in frequent conflict with the police, and the use of the knife is one of his very unfortunate characteristics. Experience does not seem to teach him that it is safest to go about unarmed in London. A well-known detective who was specially drafted into the Whitechapel area at the time of the notorious Ripper murders tells me that the knife of the alien is the danger which the police fear most. Having perhaps been present at a public-house affray where there is the glitter of steel, many a young officer who would otherwise become an efficient guardian of the peace entirely loses his nerve. The horror of a stab in the back haunts him always. He knows the way of the alien horde only too well, and he wonders fearfully when his turn will come.

It is a significant fact that the alien has not kept the knifing habit entirely to himself. The young English rough has during recent years shown a marked fondness for using the blade. Quite recently there have been an extraordinary number of stabbing cases from the East End, and the alien has not been the only culprit. There remains this difference, however: the English hooligan does not stab as a matter of course. It is only in his most desperate moods that he does this horrible thing. The alien, on the other hand, does it as a matter of course. The knife is to him what the fist is to the Briton.

A fondness for violence is to be lamented in any case; but it is better that the rough should use his fists than the knife.

In dealing with the many-sided criminal alien I must not omit to mention that a very real type of alien rascality is very often a woman. It would be impossible to imagine a fiercer or a more revolting creature than the alien woman who has taken to the crooked paths of crime. She stoops to almost anything, and has no code of morals, though strangely enough she always professes to cling to some religious sentiment. The East End is full of these women, though they are to be found wherever the alien pitches his tent. The vicar of Bermondsey has recently made the alarming discovery that his parish is being overrun by the alien. The clergyman may well be alarmed; for not only does this invasion mean a cutting out of local labour, but a decline in the standard of morality.

There is one woman in Whitechapel who is known to every local police-officer. She has a terrible name, and was born at some unheard-of village in Poland. She has been charged repeatedly with disorderly conduct, with drunkenness, with assaults on the police, and with petty thefts. Many times she has been to prison, though on no occasion has her offence been of such a serious nature as to make it possible for her to be sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. She is reputed to be very wealthy, and on the occasion of her last offence a number of bank-notes were found concealed in one of her boots.

At present the law empowers the magistrates to do nothing in a case of this kind. Why cannot this woman and the many others of her class be sent away at once? Common-sense would seem to demand it, and I think it is only by some drastic action of this kind that we shall be able to free the country from a peril which is becoming more grave and serious every day. The Home Secretary, Mr Akers-Douglas, has expressed the opinion that it is quite time that legislation should be provided, and some restriction made in favour of our home dwellers.

GOLD *VERSUS* BRASS.

A SUNDAY on the veldt, whilst in pursuit of big game, comes as a welcome rest—when the larder's full—to both the hunter and his native 'boys;' for I was still old-fashioned enough to keep Sunday as a day of rest for man and beast, excepting when dire necessity drove me to use my gun. I had been away for some ten days from the gunboat which I had the honour to command; and as game had been plentiful, I was trekking back, with a generous supply of meat and trophies, to the place on the river where she lay.

The gunboat was one of the two employed on the river-service of that large East African waterway, the Besezi; and as things were at this period most pacific, I had many and frequent opportunities of indulging in my favourite sport of big-game shooting. In my numerous expeditions I was always accompanied by my faithful cook, who in his way was quite a character, as, apart from his excellent culinary qualities, he could at a pinch turn his hand to anything. But what enhanced his value was the fact that he could speak any of the many dialects which existed in the large area over which my duties called me. He had been employed in the gunboat since she first started, some ten years since, as a cook, and had been handed down from each successive commander as a trustworthy and reliable man. It was impossible to judge accurately from his general appearance his correct age, for when questioned upon that point he replied, 'I may be eighteen, sah; maybe more.' Anyhow, he was a tall, strong, powerfully built man, rather light in colour, with a typically negroid cast of countenance, redeemed from its natural heaviness by the most humorous eyes and mouth that it has been my fortune to see.

On this particular Sunday I had spent the best part of the day in slumber, and as after my dinner, when on a week-day I should have been asleep by this time, I felt no inclination to seek the comfort of my little camp-bed, I summoned Charlie to enliven my solitude with some of his reminiscences.

'Tell me what you did when you were a boy, Charlie,' I said as he squatted at the foot of my camp-chair.

'I tell you, sah,' answered Charlie, 'to-night a story of my first master, a Portuguese, and how he treated me, and how I treated him. I tell this no white man before, as even now they still talk of it at Kilijo; but I trust you, sah.'

Charlie's English was as well-nigh perfect as it is possible for a native to attain; but still, I will give the story, not as he told it, with his many gesticulations and dramatic actions which the native loves, but in the more easily understood form of an impersonal narrative.

Charlie's parents belonged to the Mongoni tribe, which inhabited a large district at the head of the river, about two days' trek from the Portuguese township of Kilijo, which has been in existence ever since the first days of the old Portuguese explorers.

His tribe had long been in subjection; and, to enable his parents to pay the heavy hut-tax which was levied upon them, he was sent when still a youth into Kilijo to take service as a house-boy to one of the merchants who resided there.

His master was rich and prosperous, and was the head of a firm which dealt largely in rubber, ivory, and gold-dust. He was a brutal man, even for a Portuguese, as poor Charlie found to his cost many a time and oft. Charlie's intelligence being somewhat above the average, he soon acquired the language, but this knowledge he carefully concealed from his master. In fact, he rather acted a part, so much so that his master would frequently discuss his most secret transactions with his partners whilst Charlie was in the room serving the many and various liquids without which no business can be entertained, commenced, or concluded, little guessing that the stolid negro lad was taking copious mental notes of all that was said for future use and reference. One thing that Charlie learned, and burned for an opportunity to use to his master's detriment—whom he by this time loathed on account of the frequent use of the sjambok for the slightest error, whether real or imaginary—was that he did not pay one quarter the market value for the gold-dust brought in by the natives.

This gold-dust could be obtained from the sandy bed of the river by washing. The quantity obtained by this method being small, it was not a sufficiently remunerative occupation for a white man, as under the most advantageous circumstances one man's work would barely keep him from day to day, the cost of living being high owing to the heavy duties on imported goods. With the natives it was otherwise. They would wash for gold until enough had been made (when vended to the merchants) to pay their hut-tax, buy cloth and beads, &c. This accomplished, they, in their usual dilatory fashion, ceased work until compelled to resume their labours.

Latterly, however, with the advent of English traders, who paid a fair price for the gold, the industry had slightly increased, and it was the one fear of Louis Gonzâles (Charlie's employer) that he would be outbid. Although the quantity purchased was of necessity small, still, at the price he paid for it, it yielded a profitable return.

Charlie had for a long time been putting a spoke in his master's wheel, for he knew that an English trader who was encamped a short distance from Kilijo was paying nearly double the price for the dust than that usually obtained from Louis Gonzâles.*

Charlie's luck was out, for one fine day, when he had been with his master some eighteen months, he had intercepted a gang of natives on their way to Gonzâles' house with a more than usually heavy supply of the precious ore. He was haranguing them to the effect that should they go a little farther down to where dwelt the Englishman they would drive a far better bargain, and might probably receive a small present as well. A heavy hand on his shoulder stopped his flow of eloquence, and the sjambok which was always found in the hand of Louis Gonzâles descended on all parts of his body in a shower of blows laid on indiscriminately.

The natives fled, and Charlie, after being flogged until his master's arm wearied, was left lying in an unconscious condition on the ground. From that day he led the life of a dog; but his mind was made up. Revenge was all he lived for, and from which purpose he never flinched. Revenge to a native, in the only form which could give him satisfaction—namely, physical force—was well-nigh impossible. Had a native dared to raise his hand against his master, either the mines for life, the West Coast of Africa, or imprisonment locally, accompanied by excessive work, with severe sjambokings until death released him, would have been his fate. So this was out of the question. To run away, as he was bound for a two years' contract, would lead, if caught, to some considerable time in prison; but as this seemed the only way to escape from his misery, he determined to trek for British territory, where, he had heard from the servants of the Englishmen who sometimes passed through Kilijo, natives were treated with justice and humanity.

So he trekked.

A miserable object, in sore plight, was Charlie, when, after ten days of living like a wild beast on the veldt, he presented himself at the mission station of Kolo, just inside the border-line.

What a change for the poor, ill-used wretch to be tended upon and fed by kind, compassionate hands! How he marvelled at the English women, who talked his language, sympathised with his woes, and promised him fair wages and a humane master! The latter he found in the person of the commander of the gunboat, who had just then made his maiden trip up-river to British territory, and was all the kind sisters had promised. In justice to Charlie I must say that his most prized possession is an old photograph of his first English master, surrounded by a group of the occupants of the mission-house.

He rapidly rose from his first position of cook's mate to the proud post of captain's cook, and in this capacity he several times visited Kilijo, where the gunboat sometimes called to exchange international courtesies. Charlie on these occasions did not go ashore; for although he soon discovered that, once under the white ensign, no man, not even the Portuguese, whom he had once regarded as all-powerful, dared touch him, he had not lost his scheme of revenge (despite the teachings of the missionaries) which remained unformulated in his mind's eye, and which prompted him to conceal himself. English he soon mastered, and by his unfailing good spirits and utility became the general favourite of each successive captain and crew which from time to time relieved each other. It was whilst the gunboat was under some temporary repairs that Charlie first saw his way clear to get even with Gonzâles. Brass-filings and gold-dust are somewhat similar in

* From Charlie's description of this man, I think he is one of the Englishmen who tried, though unsuccessfully, to locate the lode whence the alluvial deposit came.

appearance. From that day he collected brass-filings, and whenever there was a job on the feed-pumps or anything that was connected with brass, Charlie was there, with a little quill which he carefully filled and closed, as do the natives with the gold-dust at Kilijo.

Three years had passed since Charlie's advent on the gunboat, when it so chanced that she lay some twenty-five miles below Kilijo, at a small village where her commander had left her to go on a shooting expedition.

No one would have recognised in the tall, stalwart man who presented himself at his captain's door to ask for a few days' leave of absence the miserable, unhappy boy who had fled so precipitately from his master's house in Kilijo.

'You must be back in seven days,' was the captain's answer, 'for I am leaving early on that morning to meet the mail, and I can't get on without you.'

'No fear,' thought the cook as he turned away. 'I'd never leave a good home like this.'

. . . . . .

The gold-washers at Kilijo were reinforced one morning by the arrival of a stranger. He seemed a bit of a swell, as he had his own canoe, and did not appear anxious about working, but contented himself with purchasing a small quantity, for which he paid a very fair rate. The natives laughed as they saw him depart with it to the abode of Louis Gonzâles. 'What a fool,' they said to each other, 'to buy gold from us to sell to the *mzungo* [the Portuguese], who will only give him half what he paid us!'

They were right. It was all he got, and glad was the heart of Louis Gonzâles as he paid over the small sum, after having tested, as was his custom, the contents of a quill or two; for business had not been flourishing with him lately, owing to English commercial enterprise.

'I can obtain plenty more, master,' said the stranger; adding mysteriously, 'I have found a new place.'

'Don't tell anybody. Bring it to me,' returned Gonzâles, thinking he had a very simple individual to deal with.

The native gold-washers still thought the stranger mad, as for each successive day he made purchases, which he again retailed to Gonzâles.

On the morning of the sixth day the Portuguese, whose cupidity was by this time thoroughly excited and aroused, and whose naturally suspicious nature was satisfied by the frequent testings of the contents of the quills, was impatiently awaiting the coming of the gold-finder.

'This is a very small quantity,' he said. 'Why don't you bring more, if, as you say, you know where there is plenty? I'll pay you for as much as you can get.'

'Master,' came the reply, 'I'm afraid to bring in too much; but if you will meet me to-night at the big tree some two miles down-river below the town, I will bring you as many quills as I have already filled. After that I will fill more. I cannot bring it before ten, as I have a long way to go to get it.' Seeing a faint look of hesitation on the face of the trader, he added, 'But I shall try the English after to-night, as I am told they are arriving to-morrow, and pay a better price.'

This settled the Portuguese's mind for him.

'I'll be there. Don't you believe these stories about the English. They will cheat you. D—— them!'

. . . . . .

At ten that night Gonzâles was at the rendezvous. All was silent, and nothing could be heard except the hoarse croaks of the frogs on the river-banks and the humming of the innumerable cicadas, which filled the air with their weird twitterings.

He was all impatience; but he had not to wait long, for from up-river he soon heard the sound of a paddle, and in a few moments a canoe was made fast to the tree and the man he so eagerly awaited stood before him.

'Here you are, master,' said the native, holding out a handful of quills. 'I have a few more in the boat.'

As he went to fetch them his quick eye saw the hand of the Portuguese nervously finger the button which secured the holster of his revolver.

'I must promise to bring more,' he thought as he returned.

'Now, my friend,' said the trader, 'have you any more?'

'Yes, master,' answered the man. 'I will bring more to-morrow, as what you tell me about the English makes me afraid to trade with them.'

The quick wit which prompted the ready lie saved his life.

'Here's the money,' said Gonzâles as he placed the quills in his capacious pockets. 'I'll be here at the same hour to-morrow. Good-night.'

He had not taken many steps in the direction of the township before his revolver was whisked from him and thrown with a splash into the water. Turning hurriedly, he received a sjambok wielded by no uncertain hand full across the face. Half-stunned, he raised his hands to ward off the blows which fell thick and fast upon his head and body, whilst a voice rang out in his own language: 'You'd have shot me, you dog of a Portuguese! with the same brutality that you thrashed me as a boy. Take that, that, and that.'

. . . . . .

The captain's morning coffee was served him by his cook at an early hour on the seventh day. About the same time a sore and dejected trader was picking out of his pocket the remains of many quills of brass-filings, which in the scuffle had burst open, and it had just dawned upon him 'that all is not gold that glitters.'

POMPEII TO-DAY.

By T. P. Armstrong.

AFTER about an hour's railway journey from Naples along the shores of the world-famed bay we heard the musical voice of the guard as he called out 'Pompei,' and emerging from the station, we passed up a narrow road, beset with clamorous natives, till at length we reached two hotels, behind which there is a house where we bought a ticket of admission to the ruins. Thereupon we were admitted to a garden-walk, where a guide in official uniform appeared, and in a quiet, unobtrusive fashion began to march along at our side. Another turn, and we were climbing a steep road between two walls, till through an opening in one of them we caught a glimpse of columns, which caused us to ask the guide if we were missing anything. 'You are,' he said, and he pointed out some stepping-stones in the middle of the street, on which in days of old the ladies of Pompeii would set their dainty feet when they were crossing the road after a shower of rain. Then going on in front, he led us to the Forum.

It was a wide, open space, rectangular in form, with a double row of more or less injured columns on either side of it, and at one end a mound, beyond which Vesuvius in the distance, dark and menacing, sent up a cloud of smoke. The ground was dotted with slabs of marble, and fragments of stone here and there indicated the site of an altar or the base of a vanished statue. Here, in former times, were the law-courts, the Bourse, temples, the Senate House, and other buildings; in fact, it was no doubt one of the most animated quarters of the town. The guide told us that after Pompeii had been partially destroyed by the volcano, the Emperor Trajan had endeavoured to restore the Forum, but a second eruption had compelled him to desist. At the time of our visit some excavations were going on; buckets were lowered to a considerable depth by means of a windlass, and returned to the surface filled with earth. Passing these, we reached the Temple of Mercury, where there is an elevation on which the image of the god was placed, and in front of it a beautiful white marble altar, perfectly preserved, and adorned with bas-reliefs. On one of them a placid bull is sculptured, and men and women standing near make ready for the sacrifice; on another side are the priest's vestments, a box, and an instrument for extracting entrails. Outside the temple is a long street spanned by arches; we proceeded down it till we reached the baths.

We now began to realise what Pompeii is like. Imagine a number of tiny houses, separated by narrow streets, and just so far destroyed that floors and ceilings have collapsed and nothing remains but a portion of the lower walls. Imagine a number of open spaces, where little is visible but broken fragments of pavement, the bases of columns, and perhaps a mound. Imagine streets so narrow that no vehicle, as we understand the term, could have passed along them, so that in the ancient city there were only to be seen in them people on foot, or rich men borne in litters, or cattle or horses wending their slow way, perhaps from the port, laden with goods. And if all this seems insufficient to justify the immense interest which has been taken in Pompeii, then remember that Vesuvius did not so much destroy as cover up the town, so that when the volcanic ash was removed walls started into life, with paintings on them fresh and vivid as in the days when the sight of them gladdened the eyes of their owners; that here is a pillar marked with an inscription, there a wall bearing a notice about a coming election; to say nothing of the frescoes and images, kitchen utensils, lamps, and other articles of furniture, which, unfortunately in some ways perhaps, have not been allowed to remain where they were, but have been carried off to Naples, where they fill shelves upon shelves of the halls of a great museum.

But at last we reached the baths, where our guide, a really learned antiquary, who smiled when we feebly attempted to show off our classical learning, began to explain to us all their mysteries. The ancient Roman frequented the baths to an extent that astonishes us; there he whiled away the time at gymnastics, tennis, or other games; there he listened to poetry, gossiped, or engaged in political intrigue. But apart from pleasures of this sort, frequent bathing was more or less of a necessity in a land where the people loved cleanliness, where the climate was warm, and linen dear. We saw the hot bath, with its subterranean passages and stove of bronze, and the cold bath, a circular tank on which the light fell from two openings in the roof. Around either tank were niches in the wall, where the bathers could lounge and talk when they were tired of sitting in the water. There was a fountain, too, that was used for washing the face and hands, and four stone balls are still preserved with which the bather exercised himself. Most curious of all, perhaps, was a statue of the god Terminus, which was set to mark the place beyond which men were forbidden to go, as on the other side there was a bath for women. This marble deity, with its poetic associations, was an immense improvement on our commonplace notice-boards.

How many unfortunate English schoolboys in the sixth form have consumed their time and energies in a more or less vain endeavour to understand the arrangements of a Roman house by the

study of plans that are generally bewildering or in trying to commit to memory the meaning of the unfamiliar names that are applied to the several parts! But in Pompeii all this becomes clear at once. Through a porch, where perhaps there was a mosaic of a barking dog, we reached the open tank, surrounded by an arcade, in the shade of which the inmates passed the hours of heat, listening to the gentle plashing of the waters of the fountain or feasting their eyes on foliage that was in so marked a contrast with the white marble walls and pavement, while overhead they caught glimpses of red tiles against the blue of the Italian sky. Doors in the walls gave access to the rooms, for the most part small, as the Roman lived outside; raised masonry marks the place for the bed, and where it was laid the marble ended and stucco, being less cold, began. On the walls were painted mythological figures, one of the great attractions of Pompeii—Dirce and the bull, Ariadne and Theseus, or Bacchants engaged in their revels—all well-developed, healthy forms, representing the ordinary attitudes of everyday existence. Many of the smaller pictures were very pleasing. There were *amoretti* as flower-sellers, or hunters, or even as washers of clothes; birds pecking at fruit, fish, and lobsters, and cocks about to fight—all of them painted in lively colours and with an entertaining fancy. Many of these frescoes are of the highest value, as they initiate us into the minutest details connected with the life in classic times.

The house of Vettius is the best preserved, and it has been to some extent restored. Flowers bloom in the garden as in the days of yore; the chest that contained the treasures of the family may be seen near the entrance. A pan is on a tripod; the kitchen utensils and the fireplace still exist; at the back of the house is the flight of steps that led to the upper story, which was used mainly by the slaves. The house of Vettius is a rendezvous for visitors to Pompeii; and as we sat there we heard German and Italian spoken, though French appeared to be the favourite language. We were noticing the absence of English, when suddenly loud laughter in the distance startled us, and four Americans appeared upon the scene, regretting with the most unmistakable twang and loud enough for all the world to hear that their knowledge of French was so limited that they could not understand the guide. That unfortunate individual was obliged to make what use he could of an extremely small stock of English words and phrases, which seemed to contribute much to the gaiety of our transatlantic cousins. The guides at Pompeii, however, are worthy of all praise; they do not obtrude themselves unnecessarily, and are versed in all kinds of classical and antiquarian lore. Numerous notices inform visitors that if the guide accepts a 'tip' he will be dismissed at once, as the right to a guide is purchased by the two francs paid at the turnstile. We tempted our man, however, with some filthy lucre—which, by the way, is appreciated in Italy to quite a remarkable extent—and he took it fearlessly in the spirit of an ancient Roman, in spite of all the notices.

We lingered at the head of the staircase which leads down to the gladiatorial school. Before us were the remains of the temple of Hercules, one of the oldest and most substantial structures in Pompeii, but now almost all has vanished. Behind it are the ancient walls of the town and the moat—cacti grow on the former; the latter is choked with strange vegetable forms—and on the other side is a bank of pumice-stone ejected by the volcano, and beyond this again dark mountains with smiling villages upon their slopes. The rays of the setting sun streamed over the gray ruined houses of this city of the dead; the mountain summits were wreathed with orange-and-purple cloud. We descended the staircase. Round a grass-grown square there were perhaps sixty cannellated pillars, yellow, gray, or red; and parallel with these were the cells where many dead bodies of gladiators were discovered by the excavators. The cells of these darlings of the populace were small and gloomy; to-day ferns grow in them, and lizards glide across the stone that forms the threshold. A dark-eyed Italian boy standing at one of the entries put his finger to his mouth and laughingly made signs to us to give him a cigarette. We obliged him, and then he asked for money to buy some maccaroni.

These gladiatorial shows were the great blot on Roman civilisation, and it is not difficult to recall the scene that took place so frequently in the amphitheatre at Pompeii, which was, of course, a small one and far inferior to the Colosseum. Twenty thousand spectators gathered at dawn upon the thirty-four rows of seats; the pictures that have been unearthed show us the nature of the entertainment in which they took delight. In one a panther tied to a bull is attacked by a warrior with two darts; a man armed with a lance goads on the bull to the onset. In another a lion and a tiger flee in opposite directions; in a third a combatant has sent his lance right through a wolf, but a wild-boar leaps upon him from behind. Sometimes when the arena was full of 'big game,' which might include elephants and hippopotami, two rabbits were let in; it made the Romans laugh to see the terror-stricken little creatures racing to and fro. But these were humane proceedings if we compare them with the duels that took place between trained fighters—the equestrian combat, for instance, or the contest for life between the man who was allowed a net and a javelin and the man who was armed with a sword. Familiar to all is that scene of death—the wounded gladiator, the victor standing over him and looking to the sovereign people, who turn up their thumbs as a sign that the vanquished one must die; and he, if he be a good gladiator, bares his breast to the adversary, and thinks only how he may fall becomingly. Then a slave arrives with a red-hot iron, which he applies to the prostrate form, and if it does not stir a second

slave drags it away with a hook across the blood-stained sand.

But one day when the populace were assembled in the amphitheatre sudden shocks of earthquake shook the ground and clouds of smoke began to drift across the ill-fated city. There was a hurried exit; many of the young escaped, but scores of people perished because they wished to secure some valuables before they took to flight. In the Street of the Tombs heart-rending scenes occurred, for the peasants from the country, hastening to take refuge in the town, met the stream of citizens. A woman with a baby sought for shelter in one of the monuments, and was buried there. A soldier on sentry-duty died like a Roman at his post; one hand held a lance; with the other he was covering his mouth. A rich man and his slave, loaded with treasure, perished at the gate of the garden; seventeen members of his household died in the cellar, and were promptly buried in fine ash, which hardened over them. The priest of Isis, armed with a hatchet, broke through two walls, but was suffocated before he reached the third. In one of the shops a young man was found with a girl tightly locked in his embrace. The prisoners, whose feet were in irons, perished in convulsions; a child of fifteen has been unearthed with its dress turned over its head. Some of the dead are calm in appearance; others show signs of cruel suffering.

But somehow we lost our way (for the guide had left us) and wandered from the ruins till we found ourselves in a wide road that led to a village, where there was a church. Though it was a week-day evening, people were streaming in; vespers had begun. The church was modern and respectable, but somehow not inspiring; the walls were covered with marbles that gave an impression of wealth and perhaps of pretentious decoration. The front seats were filled with girls wearing white veils; behind them were peasant-women in black-lace caps or head-dresses of every colour and combination of colour, with white kerchiefs tied round the neck and fastened over the breast crosswise, and with earrings of astonishing dimensions. The devotion of this enormous congregation was unmistakable; amid a blaze of lights the priest lifted on high the glittering monstrance. But it was already dark, and we hurried back to the hotel.

Before *table-d'hôte* the landlord came and told me that he had arranged for me to sit next to an Italian marquis, which filled me with some trepidation. My neighbour proved to be a middle-aged man with a decidedly Teutonic aspect, and he told me that though he was German by birth, yet he was now a naturalised Italian. There were nineteen professors at the table, some of them bearded and bespectacled, under the presidency of the head of the German Archæological Society established at Rome. My companion had the greatest contempt for them all; he said the Germans could only measure or finger a statue, but were quite incapable of appreciating it. He informed me that some frescoes of immense value had been discovered a few miles from Pompeii, and that he had been appointed by the Government to write a detailed account of them.

Dinner over, the professors took to singing an eight-line song, in honour of *Deutschland* and *das Vaterland*, to a tune that brought back to the mind memories of Moody and Sankey's evangelical services. Solos and speeches followed till a late hour of the night, with clinking of glasses and cheers. Of the other guests, we conjectured that two were Swiss and three Alsatians. Thus, with the solitary exception of myself, there was probably no one at the table to whom German was not as a mother-tongue. This, however, cannot represent the true proportion of the Germans among the foreigners that come to Pompeii, for of thirty-three names on the last page of the visitors' book at the hotel, no less than twenty were American.

DRIFTING DOWN THE RIVER.

A SONG.

Down the silent river, you and I together,
Drifted through the flag and the water-lilies' bloom;
Bright and clear as ever was the summer weather,
And on banks of river bloomed the yellow broom.
Floating down the stream,
In love's golden dream,
Memory of those hours will never fade away.
Floating down the stream,
'Neath the willows' gleam,
Drifting like a cloud upon a summer's day.

Drifting down the river: sweet it was, and ever
Butterflies and bees fled past in busy way.
Happy was the gift, happier the giver,
Pity there was ending to the summer day.
Drifting down the stream,
In love's golden dream,
Like a floating flower on its way to sea.
Drifting down the stream,
Faith and Hope abeam,
'Neath the willow bending from the flowery lea

Down the stream for ever: *shall* we still together
Float along serenely ever through life's day;
Storm or calm, whatever be the fickle weather,
Rough or smooth the water, swift or slow its way?
Floating down the stream,
In love's golden dream,
Memory of those hours will never pass away.
Floating down the stream,
'Neath the willows' gleam,
Through the coming twilight, till the close of day.

WALTER SMYTH.

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SIXTH SERIES.

TALKS WITH GIRLS.

By KATHARINE BURRILL.

OF MANY BOOKS.

LORD ROSEBERY tells us 'you may not have a room to sit in; but if you have a book to read you have something which may remove you from this life to something better.' The chances are, if you were so very careless of your surroundings as not to mind whether you had a roof over you or not, you would be removed (book and all) to the nearest workhouse. Reading a book at a street corner, even studying Shakespeare gracefully reclining on the curbstone, would not be considered a visible means of support. Though the book-lover may value his books above all other earthly possessions, he must still buy beef and mutton (or 'Grape nuts' and lentils), pay the milkman and the water-rate, and, if he is not mean, give the lamplighter a Christmas-box. Here comes in the advantage of much desultory reading. You part with your two shillings or half-a-crown with infinitely more pleasure because you have made the acquaintance of 'Leerie.'

For we are very lucky, with a lamp before the door,
And Leerie stops to light it as he lights so many more.
And, oh, before you hurry by with ladder and with light,
Oh, Leerie, see a little child and nod to him to-night!

Even if I did not know R. L. Stevenson's Lamplighter I should certainly tip *our* man, for he sends in a printed calling-card with 'Your Lamplighter' on it, and wishing you the compliments of the season in large letters. Think of it! Your Lamplighter—not the lamplighter of the street, of the next-door neighbour, or the people opposite, but your very own—how could you refuse to press half-a-crown, nay, five shillings into his hand and wish him a Merry Christmas?

To people who never read, a blue paper water-rate is a tax-paper, 'only that and nothing more'—a dull thing and in many towns a dear thing—a thing to grumble over and to pay drearily and of necessity when it falls due. How different the aspect of a water-rate when you think of Mr Lillyvick! In the glow of enthusiasm that results from happy recollections of Henrietta Petowker (of the Theatre-Royal, Drury Lane) reciting 'The Blood Drinker's Burial,' with her back-hair down, we rush off and write a cheque for the water-rate as if we positively thought Morleena's uncle was our collector, and if we did *not* pay 'the plug of life' would be dry and 'but the mud left.' If reading can even brighten up our taxes and induce people to pay them promptly, how necessary it is that we should all read! People buy books, certainly—booksellers' statistics show us that; but conversational statistics do not prove that they read them. Perhaps the dull people only read the dull books. Dull persons never seem to grow any cheerier or more interesting however much they read. On the other hand, you meet brilliantly amusing people with original views on every subject who never open a book at all; but then they have used their eyes and their ears. I am not at all sure that, like Poets and Cooks, the real Lover of Reading is not made but born. If you are born without a love of books I question very much if you will ever acquire it. After many years you will still have a tendency to lay an open book flat on its face, turn down the corners of the leaves, and stand a wet cup of tea on the cover.

It is a curious fact that great readers can never tell you what it was like to be taught to read; they remember nothing about it; there is no time in their memory when they could not read to themselves. Try to track them back to the earliest lairs of childhood by mentioning various governesses. All you will receive in answer to your question is, 'Oh, I read to myself long before *she* came.' Now, the non-readers, who are only driven to a book by illness or a very wet day, can give you an accurate description of every reading-lesson. They remember every

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tear, every time they ornamented the corner for inattention, every time they were kept in. They can tell you the very date when they finally left B, A, 'Ba' and D, A, 'Da' for the glories of 'The cat sat on the mat' and 'Ned is a bad lad' (why such an aspersion on Ned?), and truly as far as their literary attainments go they are still sharing the mat with the cat.

Girls should be encouraged to read. The wife and mother gives the tone to the whole house, and it will sound pretty 'tinny' if it comes from a vacant mind. If children naturally love reading they should neither be shown off to the company as embryo Macaulays nor laughed at because they prefer sitting still with a book to banging round the room making a hideous noise. Sometimes a mother does not read herself, totally forgets the child may have inherited the taste for literature from some far-away ancestor, and rather resents the absorbed attitude of the small, quiet person. If she does not understand it, and the child is perfectly healthy and quite happy reading her books, let the mother hold her tongue. There is no need to tell the passing visitor, 'Janey *is* such a curious child; she would rather have a book than a doll or a toy for her Christmas present.' The amiable visitor, whose reading probably consists of a magazine now and then, says, 'What a funny little girl you are! I loved dolls when I was your age.' Naturally Janey is covered with confusion, begins to think there is something to be ashamed of in wanting a book; probably 'hedges' over her present, and accepts a doll which she loathes or a mechanical toy that makes her head ache.

I am told that nowadays children do not care for Fairy stories; the loss is theirs, and I can only hope that with advancing years they will gain more sense. Fancy going through life without knowing 'Alice,' or 'The Steadfast Tin Soldier,' or all the delightful people and animals, especially the animals —think of 'Henny-Penny'—in Grimm's *Fairy Tales*. If it is the want of strict truth, and the fact that they *never* lived nor could live, that prevents the modern child from caring for Fairies, what about Titania and Oberon and Puck? Don't tell me there is any child who would not love Puck. I once saw a horrid, stodgy little boy in a book-shop, who, when offered *Bonnie Prince Charlie* by his fond mother, said, 'Is it really true—all true?' and on the wearied bookseller replying, 'Well, it is founded on historical fact,' remarked, 'I don't think I care for a book that is only founded on fact; it must be all true.' Think of his end! A real 'Bully Bottom's Babe;' but he would probably grow very rich and prosperous, and find plenty of unimaginative souls to be dull with him. You do not build bridges with wreaths of flowers, but neither do you leave your iron girders and cantilevers without a coat of paint. Let us build our lives firm and solid, but bedeck and bedizen them with even a little of the pleasant paint of imagination.

It is very difficult quite to know what books are the best to recommend to girls to read, for it seems to me that your real reader will hunt about and find the best books for herself. In elaborate lists either of the Hundred Best Books, or books to have always by you, there are generally a great many that you personally could very well do without, while others that are your dearest treasures are entirely left out. The book-lover will find her own happiness, and the ordinary one-novel-a-week-from-the-Library-girl is hardly worth bothering about. Only, I would like to advise the latter not to waste her time over some of the modern books. It would be far more to her advantage not to read at all than to read the kind of trash that she often indulges in—books that give false ideas of life and that put false values on things. A book may be perfectly harmless, with a high moral tone, and yet be worthless rubbish, put together anyhow, with no style nor motive either to edify or amuse. The Beautiful Heroine, generally of humble origin and immaculate manners, who carries all before her, shows Beauty in a false light; we know perfectly well that a lovely face does not ensure perfect happiness, a gorgeous marriage, and untold wealth. To go to the other extreme (this is calculated to do greater harm, as there are more plain girls than pretty ones), the remarkably plain young woman is not of necessity endowed with such charms of manner and conversation that she captures every one from the curate to the neighbouring duke, and leaves the beautiful maidens languishing in despair, possibly wishing they too had nondescript complexions, straight hair, and sketchy features. Pretty people can be, often are, extremely dull and uninteresting, but then ugly people are just as dull, with this disadvantage—they are not good to look at. They are merely like Miss Jemima Jane, who 'tho' much more good was much more plain.'

It is quite hopeless to give people any advice about what to read; ten chances to one the books you like they will find stupid or tiresome, and they will not hesitate to blame *you* for recommending them. Then, again, can anything be more depressing than to be told '*Miss* Marion Crawford's books are so nice;' to be asked, 'What did Stevenson write?' worst of all, to have a book described as 'a pretty book to lie about the drawing-room'? When you are very young you try to correct the errors of the cheerful ignorant—a fatal mistake; with age comes wisdom. You merely giggle to yourself in your tub and politely ask them to step out of *your* sunshine. Since telling several people to read *The House with the Green Shutters*, and being much reviled for so doing, I am rather chary of saying anything about a modern novel. The *Green Shutters* was a piece of brilliant work, and did not aspire to be 'nice' or 'a pretty book for the drawing-room.' If you take a man from Barbie and another from Drumtochty, and shake them up together in a bag, you will get a compound fairly

resembling the average Scotchman. Many people were indignant over the description of the Barbie 'bodies.' I know plenty 'bodies,' 'nesty bodies' too, and not a thousand miles away from Edinburgh either. Another intensely interesting and well-written novel was Zangwill's *The Mantle of Elijah*, yet several people told me they did not care for it, or that it was beyond them. We have recently lost a writer whose books were always well worth reading and well worth buying. I do not think any one could read *With Edged Tools* or *The Slave of the Lamp* too often. Seton Merriman is a great loss; it is difficult to know who will take his place. His books were never namby-pamby nor written for the Young Person; they are full of life—life in the best sense, not slush and mud. We have in Edinburgh an institution known as the 'ash-backet.' (Now, please, it is *not* a bucket!) Before each householder's door late at night is placed the 'backet' to be removed by the Dustman in the early morning. It contains the ashes, the refuse, and the rubbish that collects, even in the best-regulated families, during each day. Would it be much use spending our days groping in the 'backets' on the off-chance of discovering that a careless servant has flung away a silver spoon? I think not. There *have* been stars found in dust-heaps, but you may choke yourself with dust before you discover your star. All this is a roundabout way of asking girls not to read books whose chief merits (?) are unconventionality, strong writing, and daring disregard of decency. If you shout loud enough you will undoubtedly make yourself heard. And a good many of the present-day-writers, chiefly women, do a deal of shouting. They say what they have got to say 'very loud and clear;' they come and 'shout it in your ear.' The best thing you can do is to be 'very stiff and proud,' and say 'You needn't shout so loud.' The particular shouters I am thinking of are not by any means in the Front Rank, but they command a certain public, and it is a great pity they do. After five-and-twenty, girls could, I think, read any book in the world that they want to without it doing them any harm; but I am not sure that in their teens a little supervision is not required. Far better let a girl read great masterpieces—*Tom Jones*, *Tristram Shandy*, or *Humphrey Clinker*, coarse and plain-spoken though they be—than books full of suggestion and innuendo like —— 'The task of filling up the blanks I'd rather leave to you.'

When you see women vacantly grubbing about a circulating library, armed with a catalogue, looking for what they are pleased to call 'something to read,' ask them if they have even a bowing acquaintance with *Harry Esmond*, *Guy Mannering*, or *David Copperfield*. You would be surprised how many people there are of apparent sanity and fair intelligence who have never read *Vanity Fair* nor *The Antiquary*. They may possess a prunesy and prismy appearance, but they could tell you nothing of Mrs General and Little Dorrit. If they know Catriona and Maggie Tulliver, it is doubtful whether they have ever heard of Clara Middleton, Lucy Feveral, or that peerless beauty the Countess de Saldar. I hope every one has been to a tea-party at the Honourable Mrs Jamieson's, danced reels at Glenfearn with 'the girlies,' gone for a walk with Elizabeth Bennet, and not forgotten the splendours of Maple Grove. It is a sad fact, but I fear a stage-play acquaintance is all some people have with Miladi and D'Artagnan, Don Quixote and Olivia Primrose. But that is better than nothing. It is something after all to know Dante was an Italian poet and that Cyrano de Bergerac had a very large nose.

Your reading-girl will not need to be told of Lamb, Hazlitt, and Leigh Hunt, nor that their essays, well bound and clearly printed, can be purchased for a shilling or two. For a cab-fare you can buy Jerrold's *Fireside Saints* in the most attractive form, and I mean your cab-fare to be a modest eighteenpence. Every girl might well expend her one-and-sixpence and become acquainted with St Phillis of fragrant memory, with St Phœbe, whose door-mat not only wiped her husband's feet, but merely treading on it put him in a good temper. What girl would not be the better for knowing St Sally, who was not ashamed of owning to five-and-thirty, and sweet St Norah, whom 'Saint Patrick, out of his own head, taught how to boil a potato—a sad thing, and to be lamented, that the secret has come down to so few'?

In our juvenile days we were wisely told to 'store our minds when young,' and made to learn much poetry. The latter task—only it was so delightfully taught that it was *not* a task—is the one people will be most thankful for when they are older. It is comparatively easy to learn verse by heart when quite young, and very difficult to manage even four lines when old. There is a great charm about what I think I may call an untidy mind, full of scraps of verse, odds and ends of poetry, old sayings, and old stories. The one absolutely perfect and ideal untidy mind must have been Sir Walter Scott's, just stuffed full to overflowing with bits of everything; what a joy to have listened to his old tales and 'ballants'! But most people can, in a small and a long way after Sir Walter's way, store their minds when young with what will be an immense pleasure to them in later years. Are Leith and its docks quite the same to the man who never heard of Burns as they appear to the man who murmurs to himself:

> **Go, fetch to me a pint o' wine,**
> **And fill it in a silver tassie,**
> **That I may drink before I go**
> **A service to my bonnie lassie.**
>
> **The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith,**
> **Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the Ferry,**
> **The ship rides by the Berwick Law,**
> **And I maun leave my bonnie Mary.**

Yarrow is but a loch, a burn, and rather dump-

ling-like green hills to people who never read Wordsworth, who never heard of the 'Dowie Dens,' and to whom Christopher North, the Ettrick Shepherd, and Tibbie Shiels are unknown quantities. Why, I have even known a dreary, weary wait at an Italian railway station in the small hours of the morning rendered fairly endurable by memories of 'Lars Porsena of Clusium, by the nine Gods he swore,' though we were very sick of the sight of Cortona's 'diadem of towers' before the train moved on. Read all you can when you are young, keep your ears open for stray scraps of knowledge, and do not be afraid of asking questions. If you do not know a thing, do not pretend you do; own up, and you *may* learn something of the subject.

People are so untruthful about what they like and dislike! Have the courage of your opinions. 'To know what you prefer, instead of humbly saying Amen to what the world tells you you ought to prefer, is to have kept your soul alive.' It is better to keep your soul alive and own to a decided bias in favour of Pinero as a dramatist than to swear you adore Shakespeare and sit out *Richard II.*, pinching yourself to keep awake, and with a soul inside you like a shrivelled nut. There is such a lot of tall talk about books. A girl sits up and tells you she reads nothing but Maeterlinck and Matthew Arnold; another that she reads only French, and 'for the style'! They rather remind me of the old picture in *Punch* of the Cimabue-Brown children when their poor old uncle wanted to take them to the pantomime. Of course, if you honestly prefer the British Museum to Drury Lane it is quite right and proper to say so; but be quite sure you are honest and not merely talking for effect.

The most charming book that any girl, old or young, can read was published a couple of months ago, and it says a good deal for the book-buying public that *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* cannot be printed fast enough. It is full of freshness, simplicity, and happiness. Let us be happy, and leave the Cimabue-Browns to be æsthetic and morbid. It has style, which the book for the *jeune fille* (poor dear!) is generally without; and I cannot pay 'Rebecca' a greater compliment than to say that I think 'Pet Marjorie' would have liked to have played with her and would have loved her.

Some people tell you they only read 'to pass the time.' What a terrible state of mind to be in! Unless really ill or in great sorrow, can any one want to get rid of such a precious gift as time—the hours, jewel-studded or tear-stained, that make up our little life? To pass the time! Not to fill it full, not to work in it, not to play in it, but merely to hurry through it as quickly as possible, and with as little trouble to ourselves. When you say you 'read to pass the time' you are insulting Literature, using books as a means to an end—and what an end!—the hastening of the hours that have been given to us as a great, a wonderful, and a priceless treasure.

> O gentlemen, the time of life is short!
> To spend that shortness basely were too long
> If Life did ride upon a dial's point,
> Still ending at the arrival of an hour.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER XVI.—CONTINUES THE RECORD.

PAUSING in my work, I rose and looked out across the sunlit sea; then, eager to gain further knowledge, returned and continued the deciphering, as follows:

'OF THE YEARS I REMAINED at Croylande, growing old in years, and often visiting with my friend Malcolm Maxwell the beadsman Petre of Castor, beyond the town of Peterborough, I speak not, save to say that much happened in London of the king's marriages and of our lord-Cardynall Wolsey's disfavour with his majesty.

'BUT NOW, READER, another thing did happen in the year 1537 that unquieted our abbot and all of us—namely, that the king intended to suppress and seize our abbey, as his majesty had seized the houses of Romburgh, Fyneshed, Walsinghame, and Bury St Edmonds. Whereupon our abbot, John Welles, a holy and well-beloved man, wrote unto Thomas Cromwell, chief secretary to the king's highness, this letter:

'"With due reverence I commend me unto your honourable lordship, humbly asserteing the same that I send your lordship by this bearer part of our fen fish, right meekly beseeching your lordship favorably to accept the same fish, and to be good and favorable, lord, unto me and my poor house, in such cause as I hereafter shall have cause to serve unto your good lordship, and I with my bretheren shall daily pray to our Lord God for the long continuance of your lordship in health.—At Croylande the XXV. day of March, by your daily orator, JOHN, ABBOT THERE."

'BUT IT PLEASED NOT THE KING'S SECRETARY that our splendid abbey should be spared, and the gift of our fish was unavailing. The king's highness recognized not the good and true service done to his grace, and gave not his favour unto us. Because of its isolation our abbey became a place of refuge in those black days of the king's wrath against us. Through those years I had lived a quiet life in the cloister, mostly employed in prayer and meditation, for of a veritie I was penitent, and prayed for the

repose of the soul of my lady Lucrezia. Alas! the secular spirit prevailed in our land, and we received worde at the first daybreak in December 1538 that the commissioners, William Parre, Robert Southwell, and Thomas Myldemay, who had seized the monastery of St Androse in Northampton for the king's use, intended to seize likewise our house and lands. Therefore did our good abbot John take me aside with Malcolm Maxwell and held counsel with us how best to conceal owr altar plate and jewels, of the which we held a goodly quantitie. Secretly, knowing how safe a place was the fish-ponde, wherein I had already hidden the Borgia treasure, I suggested it, and that night, leaving sufficient silver to satisfy his majesty's commissioners, the three of us took the great silver altar and a goodlie number of the Abbey treasures, and, placing the latter in three chests bound with iron, sank them deep in the mud in the centre of the pond. Only Maxwell and myself were privy to the secret that we had taken from the abbey treasury the things that follow.'

In Old English the list read:

'i. greate altar of sylver, mayde by the Abbat Richard in 1281.
i. great chalyce of golde gyven by Thomas de Bernack in the yeere 1356.
iiij. large chalyces of sylver.
iiij. patens.
i. alms bason.
viij. cuppes of sylver.
iii. cuppes of golde.
ii. Golde candelsticks.
iiij. golde crucifixes.
i. ymage of Oure Ladie in sylver.
ii. sylver boxes full of the precious stones tayken from the altars and robes. Some of great syze.
iii. small boxes of other jewells.'

Continuing, the record stated:

'OF THE REST, WE LEFT two chalices and other things for the king's highness, the Abbot knowing well that our house must be destroyed and desecrated, and that we must be scattered. The night was dark, with thicke fen-mist, when we carried forth the heavy chests and let them down noiselesslie into the water at a spotte at the opposite end to where through many years my own treasure lay well concealed. The ponde was deepe, and dried not in summer, beinge fed by many springs, and well fylled wyth good carp for Fridays. Malcolm kept watch by the south door while I, wyth the Abbot, sank owr treasure in the deepest parte of the lake. Then, when we returned in silence, we all three went into the Abbot's chamber and there swore to Almighty God to ever preserve the secret, tayking oath that neither should seeke to recover the hidden treasure withoute the consent of the other two. We knew that our glorious abbey was doomed, and wished to save what we could for the Church's benefit. And we were not mistaken, for three dayes later the Commissioners came with Thomas Cromwell himself, and our good Abbot was forced to surrender unto them everything. Thus we monks, to the number of one hundred and sixty and four, were dispersed; and the king's men stripped our great church, seized all that was of value, sold the bells and the lead, and then broke and battered down the walls. Seeing their ill-intentions, some of us still remayned in refuge in houses of the people in the neighbourhood, I finding hospitality at an inn called The Oak Branch at Eye, while Malcolm was at Thorney, owr abbot having departed to London.

'THROUGH A FULL MONTH WE WATCHED the destruction of owr magnificent Abbey, how that Southwell's men did break owr statues and tore down the very tower, I lingering there because of my own treasure concealed and unable to recover it lest my action should be noted. Once I heard rumour that Southwell intended to pump out the lakes, and surely the pump was sette up. Then did I tremble, well knowinge that all that we had hidden must be discovered. Cromwell, however, considered that they had seized all of which we were possessed, and luckily gave orders for the work of pumping to be stopped, an order which pleased me mightily, for every other hole and corner was well searched for anything hidden, especially for books and proclamations against the king's actions.

'ON THE FIFTH OF FEBRUARY 1539, my friend Malcolm Maxwell, who like miself had been compelled by the king's commissioners to discard his habit, came to me, saying that he had decided to return to Scotland, his own country, and offered me asylum in his brother's house, the castel of Treyf, in Galloway. His invitation accepted, I managed one night by the light of the moon to drag the fish-pond, and after many attempts succeeded in recovering the casket of wood and iron that I had brought from Italie, no one knowinge of my actions. To Malcolm, who was older than myself, I declared that my casket contained my Booke of Hours and a relic of Saint Peter—the which I had brought from Rome—for he knew not that it really contained my dead lady's jewels and her secrete phials. As touching our journey north by the great roade through Stamford and York to Carlisle I will not speak, save to say that we hadde manie adventures, and more than once I was in imminent peril of losing mi precious casket. On the borderlandes all was in disorder, and the moss-troopers were ever ready to steal and kill. While passing by the high-road through Dumfries and Dalbeatie we went into the great Abbey of Dundrennan, and prayed before the silver image of Our Lady there; and also we made a pilgrimage to St Ninian's shrine, afterwards passing across the hills and glens by Auchencairn and over Bengairn, and thence to the river Dee, where, upon an island, stood the greate grim castle of Treyf, once the impregnable fortalice of the Black Douglas, but now in the possession of my Lorde Maxwell of Terregles, an ancient baron of great landes, and brother of Friar Malcolm.

'In this, the wildest part of Galloway, we were received warmly by my lord of Treyf, who on the nighte of our arrival was entertaining in the great banquetting-hall John Gordon of Lochinvar, who had juste been to France with the Scottish King incognito in search of a wife; Gylbert Earl of Cassilis; David Vaus, abbot of Soulseat; his brother John Vaus of Barnbarrock; with the lairds of Garlies and Sorby. The talk as we ate our venison with wheat bread was of how the two Galloway lairds the Macdowalls of Freuch and of Mindork were invadinge Arran with fire and sword, and how they had burned the castle of Brodick to the ground. By their conversation I knewe well that although my lord Maxwell was steward of Kilcudbricht [Kirkcudbright] and keeper of Treyf, which the kinge had wrested from the Douglas, he was, however, not truly loyal, and that there was conspiracy against the king just as there had been in that same stronghold in the days of the Black Douglas.

'Still far from it that I, a houseless fryar, should utter complaints, for mi lord, not havynge seen his brother for fifteen years, treated us both with greatest courtesy, and gave us asylum for as long as we wished, assigninge to us rooms in the tower that commanded the sweep of the river lookynge up towards Greenlaw. Through a full year I remained with my lorde Maxwell, riding often against the Gordons of Kenmuir, the Douglases of Drumlanrig, and the Agnews of Locknaw, having well concealed my treasure-casket in a safe spot upon the island. Old in yeares, yet much fierce warfare did I see across the hills and treacherous mosses of Galloway, often ridinge over the border against the English with Malcolm, who, like myself, had readilie doffed the habit for the breast-plate. We besieged the castle of Kenmuir, and took its lord prisoner to Stirling, as also we did the lord of Orchardton, Willyam Cairns.

'At this time our King Henry of England had shaken off the Holy Father's authority, and the doctrines of the reformed religion were widelie spreading among the people. In Scotland, too, a greate national change was unavoidably approachinge; for religious reformation had been long advancing, and doctrines in opposition to the Romish Faith had been propagated in Galloway by the Gordons of Airds. The Bible, which had been locked up from the laity by the clergy, was now procured in numbers, and secret meetings were beinge held in the woods to read it, for even possession of a copie of the sacred book was a penal offence. Of a verity the persecution was terrible, for many were imprisoned or committed to the flames.

'Treyf was a goodly stronghold, square, surrounded by a barbican and flanked at each angle by a circular tower, secured in front by a deep fosse and vallum, while the island itself was surrounded by the rapid waters of the Dee; and my lord Maxwell, with the kinge's authority behind him, was the most powerful of the lords of Galloway. One night, however, we returned from ridyng against the English from Lochmaben. Our Galloway troopers, with Lochinvar at their head, had utterly routed a large body of Somerset's men, and as in the sundown my charger's heels clattered on the drawbridge of Treyf, Malcolm, who had remained, came forward to greet me with pale face, and took me up into my chamber where we could speak privately. He told me that the conspiracy against the kinge, formed by his brother, had been discovered, and that a mounted messenger had arrived from Helen Lady of Torhouse, who was with the Court in Edinburgh, to warn him that his majesty had sent an armed force on his way to us. My lord Maxwell's intentions regarding an alliance with Somerset to the detriment of the Scottish king had been betrayed by one of the conspirators, Johnston of Lockwood, and the messenger alleged that five thousande men were already at Dumfries wyth orders to storm and take Treyf, with my lord Maxwell, his brother Malcolm, and myself, who, cominge from England as we dyd, were beleeved to have been in the plot, and to also arrest young Gordon of Lochinvar, Abbot Vaus of Soulseat, and Gylbert Earl of Cassilis, at their various houses. My lord Maxwell was absent wyth James Earle of Bothwell at Earlston, but a messenger was sent in hot haste to him, while Malcolm and myself tooke counsel as to how we should act. My lord's fair daughter Margaret was in the castle, and we saw that to save her and ourselves we must all three flie. They were hastily preparinge while I had gone in secret to secure my precious casket, when the guard suddenly announced that the advance guard of the kinge's army was already at Treyf Mains. Not an instant was to be lost; therefore, compelled to leave my ladie Lucrezia's jewels in their safe hiding-place, I sprang into the saddle of a fresh charger, which one of the troopers led to me, and, following Malcolm and the fair Margaret, dashed across the drawbridge and along the frail wooden brydge that connected the island wyth the opposite banke. Scarce had my horse's hoofs touched the road than the weak supports of the bridge were knocked away, fell in peices in the river, and were swept down the stream, while at the same instant the portcullis fell, and the rattling of chains told that the drawbridge was drawn up and the stronghold isolated and rendered impregnable.

'The fair daughter of Maxwell proved a good horsewoman, and through the long dark night we all three rode our hardest, well knowinge that capture meant either death or imprisonment in the dungeons of Edinburgh. Indeed, our departure was noted, and for some hours we were hotly pursued; but Margaret Maxwell knew the countrie as well as any moss-trooper, and she led us safely through the Glenkens into the giant solitudes of Carsphairn; then, after a rest, taking a circular route, we rode along the wild shore of Loch Doon, over the Rhinns of Kells, and across to Auchenmalg

Bay, where we arrived in sadde plight and exhausted on the second night. Through the whole of Galloway the kinge's men were searchinge for us, and we heard that my lord Maxwell had already fallen into their hands near Loch Ken, while Treyf was holding out against the besiegers. To remain in Scotland longer was impossible, although I grieved in secrete that I had no means by which to recover my precious casket. Ours was truly a position of gravest peril.'

BRITISH TRADE WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

By a Resident in Brazil.

THE attention of the British public has been called for some time past, and latterly with very great persistence, to the question of the maintenance or attainment of British supremacy in the trade with foreign markets, and it is hoped that the following may be of interest to your readers, and especially of assistance to the export merchant and manufacturer. The object of this article is not to deal with specified classes of merchandise; for it is an undoubted fact that no country in the world can expect to monopolise the world's trade in every marketable article, and, to be fair, we must admit that certain countries lead in certain specialities, and will continue to do so, no matter what we may attempt to the contrary. It may be, in those cases, a question of the economic conditions of such countries, some special facility they have in the way of crude material on the spot, &c. Our object at present is to ascertain how we can improve our trade in a general way, and our relations with our customers in particular.

Let us get to the root of the matter at once by studying, as is our obvious duty, the needs of our present customers and of those whose custom we go into fresh fields to seek.

A very potent factor in the question of the general principles of trade is the facility with which the buyer can obtain information and understand that which is offered to him; and I claim that it is the duty of the manufacturer and export and import merchants to suit themselves to their customers, and this the British as a rule do not do. It is a well-known fact that the most general system of weights and measures and money throughout the civilised world is the decimal. Here arises the question of the possibility of adopting in our empire and colonies the decimal system in lieu of our present one. What countries use the decimal system? Practically all but our own!

Please, therefore, consider carefully the following: A customer (he may be a consumer, retailer, or importer) in one of the South American republics wants to buy, let us say, linseed-oil. He was taught in school the decimal system, the currency of his own and neighbouring countries being on that basis, as well as the weights and measures used by them; probably he learned no other system, but for argument's sake let us suppose that he also learned English weights and measures and currency. He asks for quotations from his correspondents in London and Hamburg. From London he receives the reply, '20s. 3d. per cwt.;' from Hamburg, 'Mks. 41·50 per 100 kos.' All being equal, to which will he give the preference? Certainly to the one who quotes in decimals in nine cases out of ten. Again, a Mexican customer wants, say, some flannel. One Manchester firm, an old-established English house, quotes 1s. 5½d. per yard, 30 inches wide; another firm, also in Manchester, but German, quotes 17·9d. per metre, 76·5 cm. wide. The latter quotation our customer can understand at a glance, but the former requires careful study if our Mexican knows anything about £ *s.* *d.* and yards and inches, and may frequently even be thrown on one side as unintelligible by some of the less well-educated traders.

Even amongst the better educated, no reasonable person can expect that a foreign merchant will be bothered with £ *s.* *d.*, tons, cwts., qrs., and lbs., and yds., ft., and in., if he can get German, French, and other correspondents to quote for the same articles in the decimals to which he and all his employés are accustomed.

The question of the decimal system is one the importance of which can best be appreciated and understood by those who have actually had experience of trade in one or other of the many foreign markets of the world. I have met merchants who have confessed to me that they never realised the necessity of paying close attention to such detail until they had come abroad.

Only a few days ago I was conversing with a customer on this special topic, and he assured me that he would not do business with any one who would not quote in francs and kilogrammes (*not* tons, cwts., qrs., lbs.); and he is a man at the head of his trade, and one who takes a great pride in his business, studying all new ideas connected with it as they come out.

Nor is this the only or the most important point. We must seek to study the needs of our customers, continuing to keep pace with them. When we go to a tailor, how often does he fit us and how often do we point out some mistake to him, until we are satisfied, accept our suit, and pay up? The tailor who does not try to please his customers will lose any business he may have had; so with us as a nation. Napoleon called us 'a nation of shopkeepers;' but surely a shopkeeper who drives away

customers by lack of attention will be condemned by every one! It will be agreed, therefore, that we must study the needs of our customers. How best can we do this? It is by beginning with the consumer—not, please note, with the manufacturer, as so many people seem to think.

Let us take any special line—say hardware. A., a poor man with very limited means, wants a common door-lock. The British manufacturer offers his cheapest article, a good one, at say 2s. The French maker offers a similar line, also good, at 1s. 10d. A. cannot afford either, and must fasten his door with a cheap latch; but here comes a German, who asks, 'How much can you pay for a lock?' A. replies, '1s. 4d.' 'Done,' says the German, and he produces a lock which will serve the purpose, though, of course, not so good as those offered by the French or British makers.

We have as a rule five interests which we ought to consider: first and most important, the consumer's; second, that of the retailer (who supplies the consumer); third, the importer's in the foreign country (who supplies the retailer); fourth, the merchants in Europe who are to carry out the instructions as to buying for the importer; and, fifth, the manufacturer of the merchandise.

In my opinion the importer in the foreign country has the key of the position. To know his business he must know exactly what the customer wants and *why* he wants it. He must cater for these wants in such a manner as to facilitate the retailer in the supplying of them. Furthermore, he must anticipate wants, find new things and methods for the consumer; in short, he must be always thoroughly well informed of the latest improvements, newest articles, &c., to be had in the manufacturing centres. In this it is the duty of the merchant and manufacturer, through him, to keep his client well posted while *he* also seeks information from every possible source.

Too often the export merchant in Europe or elsewhere forgets (if he ever knew) his functions, and, instead of seeking to supply those goods which his client asks for in the manner he indicates, tries to teach him his business, and sends him a similar article maybe, or one packed a little differently from what is ordered, telling him that it is practically the same or that the manufacturer does not make what he wants, &c. The following is an instance of what actually happened to a merchant of my acquaintance (he is an importer in a foreign country). He sent home an order for tea, to be shipped in small boxes of from sixteen pounds to twenty pounds each. Why? Because he knew by experience that he could sell twenty of them where he could sell only five of fifty to sixty pounds. What does his agent, the exporter, do but write out saying that the small cases cost more, and therefore he sends the large (fifty-pound) ones. On another occasion a customer came to him and gave him a repeat order for an article which he had been buying regularly from him, of a special make and brand. He forwarded the order to his correspondents, also specifying the original maker; but they, with the best of intentions but showing great lack of perception, placed the order for a similar article of another brand from a maker whom they had since discovered to be cheaper! What was the result? The goods arrived and did not prove to be so good as those formerly received, bearing a different mark, and my friend's customer refused them, and thought that he was at fault!

In all markets the conditions of trade vary from time to time, now plenty of money with all branches of trade and industry booming, then a period (and in proportion to the boom often a very protracted one) of depression, great scarcity of money, and very limited demand for goods. In the time of plenty there are very few people so ignorant as not to prefer, and to have, a good article, even at a high price, rather than a rubbishy, showy, cheap one, and then it is that the British merchandise is to the fore *and keeps there*, for every one admits that in the main an article 'made in England' is more worth its price than any other—really good value for the money. In bad times, the lean years, the same people, although they know that the British-made article is worth the extra price, buy a cheaper, maybe a German one, for the very simple and good reason that they have not the money to pay for the better article.

Whether it is within the reach of our British manufacturer to compete with the Germans and others in these cheaper goods I am not competent to judge. Here the questions of cheap labour, material, &c. come in; though I have been told by some Sheffield manufacturers that they have their hands full with the better-class trade and prefer to leave the other alone. Then why complain if the Germans take it? Do we expect to do *all* the world's trade? If not, do not let us grumble because we *only* get the cream of it!

In conclusion, I must not let the reader go away with the idea that there are none of our merchants and manufacturers who are progressive, even to 'carrying the war into the enemy's camp'—nay, rather, I believe they are increasing in number; but I fear that the greater proportion are not yet thoroughly awakened to the needs of the time, and require to realise more completely that the advance of civilisation is going on at a much more rapid pace now than even a quarter of a century ago, and they must increase their activity and vigilance accordingly. If they will only believe that a man knows what he wants, wants what he asks for, and will buy from those who will supply it to him, they will still be leaders of the world's trade; and to the question, 'Who has the supremacy in this or that market?' the answer will more frequently be 'Great Britain.'

A COMEDY OF LIEUTENANTS.

PART II.

THE morning of the 22nd August broke fair and calm. At nine o'clock the lookout at Castle Cornet signalled an English sloop-of-war running up the Russel before a light wind. By ten a little group of people at the harbour lighthouse saw the sloop shorten sail, heard the clatter of her capstan as she dropped anchor off the Castle, and almost at the same instant saw a boat put off for the harbour. There are few sights prettier than that of a man-of-war's boat pulling inshore. The perfect rhythm of the rising and dipping oars flashing in the sunshine, the sense of power in the force with which each stroke drives the nose of the boat through the water, the swing of the rowers' arms and shoulders, the white duck suits, with the gold crown-and-anchor badges of the petty-officer—all these are things which fill the landsman's soul with admiration, and help to foster the curious delusion that a sea-life is a perennially happy one and a sailor the most enviable creature in creation. As the boat neared the harbour the little group gathered at the steps. The Governor himself, in his undress uniform as a lieutenant-general, had come down to speed Pengelly. There were also Ensign Charles Grey, His Excellency's nephew and aide-de-camp, with Mr Roubilliard the harbour-master, and a sprinkling of Pengelly's civil and military acquaintance.

As the rowers tossed their oars at the steps there leapt ashore a stoutly built officer with a most unmistakable Hibernian face. His hair was grizzled, and his skin tanned to that rich, deep shade of walnut which only years and years of watch-keeping in brine-laden gales and driving sou'-westers can induce. His years might have been fifty, or even more; but years had not robbed him of the merry eye or the boyish step; and when Pengelly stepped forward with his interrogative, 'Mr O'Flanagan?' it was with the brightest smile that the other answered, 'That's the bhoy,' and shook Pengelly's hand like a pump-handle. Pengelly presented him to the Governor, whose hand he wrung in like fashion, saying, 'Proud to make your acquaintance, Gineral. By the way, have you heard the last news?'

'We've no advices of any importance since the 10th,' said the Governor. 'What is it? Anything from Nelson?'

'No, sir; Nelson's still at Toulon, trying to tempt the French out, and he says that when he does, he'll follow them if it's to the Antipodes. No; it's a thing which happened in these waters only the other day. No doubt you've heard of a countryman of my own in the French service by the name of Sheridan? Yes? Well, he's been at it again, by your leave; it appears he's here, there, and everywhere of late; and the last news is that he has tricked one of our revenue cutters into Cherbourg—tricked her, sir, without a blow struck or a shot fired!'

'But how?' said the Governor. 'Did he have a quartette of tame sirens on board to lure them off their course?'

'No, sir—no; it was like this. Ye see, it was a revenue cutter, as I say—just the little *Gwendolen*, that I've no doubt you've seen in here often enough Well, you may perhaps remember her skipper, a lean Galway chap called M'Carthy. Now, M'Carthy's one of the smartest sailors you could meet—one of the fellows who'll find land for you in open ocean by the smell of the air or the colour of the water hours before ever the lookout-man picks it up. I'd sooner take M'Carthy's word for a ship's position than the best dead-reckoning ever made. But he has got one vice—he's too fond of a dram. Well, it appears he was on his mettle this time, for he was carrying a bag of despatches for these islands, and then he was to run on to Brest with mails for Cornwallis. It seems the Port Admiral sent for him before he left, and said, "See here, M'Carthy, you'll need your wits, so keep off the liquor. If you run this trip smartly I'll see if I can find a seventy-four in want of a master." Now, you must know that's always been M'Carthy's ambition—to get aboard a line-of-battle ship. So he stuck out his chest, and says he, "Never fear, sir. I'm a cowld-water man till I get this side of Point again." He goes aboard steady as a church. They'd but little wind, and it took him nearly all day tacking and tacking across. They'd got Alderney bearing low down on their port bow when down comes a white fog. Now, it's an odd thing; but, tough sailor as he is, the one weather M'Carthy hates is a white fog. It's just some plaguy west of Ireland superstition or other about it, I don't know what. Anyway, the long and short was that M'Carthy goes below and takes a dram, and then another and another. He doesn't get drunk, but he gets maudlin. The boatswain says he was drivelling about wakes and banshees, and all the rest of his misbegotten, superstitious trash, when suddenly up goes the fog, out comes the sun, and there, so near that you might have flung a biscuit on her deck, was a small craft of a nondescript kind—sort of cutter with a jigger-mast and lugsail, dandy fashion. Up stumbles M'Carthy, and bawls out, "What ship's that?' although they could plainly read her name, *Kathleen, Bantry*. There wasn't a creature in sight upon her deck; but after a third or a fourth hail a cadaverous face slowly raises itself over the taffrail, and calls out faintly, "'Av' ye sich a thing as a praste aboard ye?"

'"A praste, is it?" said M'Carthy. "And what will ye be wantin' a praste for?" "Oh, for the love o' the saints," says the face, "come aboard an' see why for yerself. An' if ye 've a dhrop o' brandy, or a keg o' fresh wather, put ut in the boat wid ye, as ye wish for salvation."

'At this M'Carthy was keen to see what was going forward. So he made up his mind just to go himself; but his nerves were still shaky, so he takes no less than six men in the boat with him. They put brandy and food in the boat, and left the boatswain with the other man on the *Gwendolen*. The boatswain saw the seven tumble over the *Kathleen's* side, and saw them disappear below. Hardly had they done so before down comes the fog again. A couple of hours passed. The boatswain hailed the *Kathleen* again and again, without a word of answer; but he didn't trouble for that, for he knew she'd no more wind than himself, and could only have drifted a bit in the currents. He's a man with a good bass voice of his own, is the boatswain, and he was singing to himself the old "Leather Bottel" as he leaned over the binnacle, when suddenly a hand was laid on his arm. He whipped round, to see the cadaverous face grinning over his shoulder, with a couple of French sailors behind it, and more clambering over the side. He dashed at a handspike, but the cadaverous one tripped him up, and made two of his men sit on the boatswain's chest while other two trussed him. With that the cadaverous chap put his hand to his own chin, and, behold! his cadaverous face was just a mask, and behind it was an ordinary Irish phiz such as you might meet by the dozen in any Connemara village of a market-day. Says he, "Now, Mr Bo's'in, if ye please, we'll just have a trifle of quiet talk, as between gentlemen. Ye may perhaps have noticed that I'm not exactly what I seemed to be?" "Blast ye for a lying thief, then," said the boatswain. "Tut, tut, me friend!" said the other, "let's discuss this affair quietly and without heat. Me name's Sheridan. Your skipper and his six men are lying in me cabin at this present moment of time," says he, "as drunk as seven pigs, and snoring loud enough to raise the roof of Tuam Cathedral. I've every confidence, Mr Bo's'in," says he, "in your capacity as a navigator; but I can't take ut on me conscience to leave you here with all these bags of valuable despatches at the mercy of the chops of the Channel. There's a nasty current or two running round Alderney, and really the port of Cherbourg is so handy," says he, "that ut seems as if the very finger of Providence was pointing to ut. So, Mr Bo's'in, I'm just proposing to take these two dear little girls, *Gwennie* and *Katie*, into Cherbourg, as soon as ever I get the wind. But ut just crossed my mind that perhaps you and your helmsman might have no stomach for a sojourn as the guests of the First Consul; so I thought ut would be no more than polite of me to say this: you can have one of the *Gwennie's* boats, into which me men'll put plenty to eat and drink, and you can take your chance of pulling over to St Anne Port, or getting picked up by a Guernsey noddy, or going your own way. So say the word, Mr Bo's'in, for my time's short."

'Well, the boatswain cursed all round the compass, but at last decided for the boat. So he and the helmsman were put in and shoved off. They tried to pull for Alderney; but the tide carried them out nearly into mid-Channel, where they were picked up in a few hours by a frigate homeward bound from Jamaica. Directly he got to Portsmouth the boatswain took his tale to the Port Admiral, and that's how I heard it. Poor M'Carthy and his men, I suppose, are now in a French prison, and the Admiralty despatches are no doubt being translated for M. Decrès to lay them before Boney.'

'Well,' said Pengelly, 'doesn't that bear out every word I said the other day, sir?—I was telling the Governor, Mr O'Flanagan, that our people lack brains, and are fair game for any sharp-witted scoundrel who'll trick them.'

'Me bhoy, you're perfectly right. I've remarked the same thing myself times without number. But it's a pity for poor M'Carthy, all the same, isn't it?'

'Pity!' said Pengelly. 'It's a thousand pities such goats should wear the king's uniform. A fellow who lets himself be tricked is only fit to plant cabbages. I wish to heaven it may be my fortune to knock against this Sheridan! If he tricks me I'll give him leave to eat me.'

'Well, me bhoy, and from all I've heard of you, I've no doubt it will be a cold day for Sheridan if he *does* catch you. But I'm taking up your precious time. I see they've got your chest and your portmanteau into the boat, and I know Captain Manson'll be glad to weigh and get round the Casquets, for the glass is falling, and I'm thinking we shall have a dirty night. No doubt you've got the bits of details about the anchorages and the rest of it?'

'Yes,' said Pengelly; 'here are the keys. This is the key of the strong-box, in which you'll find all the confidential papers, fair copy of the log, and six months' weather observations. That's the petty officer in charge yonder.—Pugsley, just come here a moment, will you? Mr O'Flanagan takes over everything, you know, and you'll be able to give him all the help he wants.'

'How do, Pugsley?' said O'Flanagan. 'Remember a chap of your name in the old *Agamemnon*—one of the smartest maintop-men I ever met.'

'My brother, sir,' said Pugsley, a handsome and rather bulky Devonshire man, out of Brixham. 'I was gunner's mate in the *Belleisle* same time.'

'Why, then, come to think of it, you must have been the volunteer fellow who ran the fire-ship at Aboukir?'

'That was me, sir.'

'Gad! that was a smart piece of work. And what did you get out of it?'

'Two bullets in my head, sir, one in my neck, three months in Malta hospital, and a penny a day.'

The whole group laughed at Pugsley's concise summary of a grateful country's lavish appreciation. Pengelly, who had been making his farewells, now shook hands heartily with the Governor. The jolly old General had become deeply attached to the lieutenant during the two years of their acquaintance. Trustful, direct, and unsuspicious himself, the acuteness and penetration of Pengelly —a man of proved integrity—seemed to the Governor to mark him out as a genius of the greatest promise.

'Good-bye, Pengelly, my lad, and God bless ye. You'll write and let us know your station before you hoist your blue-peter?'

Pengelly gave his promise, and took his seat in the stern. The boat shoved off, while the little group hastened to the harbour-mouth to see the last of him. Hardly had the boat been hauled up the ship's side when they caught on the breeze the musical chant of the sailors getting up anchor:

Merrily round the capstan
Heave a pull, heave a pull.

The little sloop, with all her canvas set, caught the wind, and rapidly drew away down the Russel; and before the twelve o'clock gun boomed from Castle Cornet, H.M. sloop *Fanny* was a mere speck of white on the northern horizon.

'A fine fellow, sir,' said the harbour-master as they strolled back towards the town church.

'He *is* a fine fellow, Mr Roubilliard,' said the Governor—'as fine a fellow as holds the king's commission. Gad! I'd give half a year's pay to see a duel of wits between him and that scoundrelly Sheridan.'

At the town church the party separated. O'Flanagan elected to walk out to St Martin's; so, after putting him on his road and engaging him to dinner on the morrow, the Governor and his nephew bent their steps towards Government House.

THE FRISKINES.

THIS is the record of a group of men and women who, two hundred and thirty years ago, in an unknown corner of the universe, lived out their lives under the eye of the Church, holding themselves in an obedient restraint, stumbling along the paths of dreary duty, deeply human in their efforts towards submission, but more deeply human when they miss the path, when their piteous backslidings appear—the sins that were so natural and were so sternly visited. None of these men and women ever wrote their name on any page of history, however humble; like their indistinguishable graves, the remembrance of them has long been trodden down by hungry generations; they lived, strove, sinned, and died as countless others have done, without one deed that deserved immortality, without one thought to bequeath to posterity. The place of their birth had been once, in the great times of Wallace, the scene of wild adventure; it was destined again to be a centre of poetry and romance. But at the time with which these records deal only the traditions of Wallace survived, a dim legend, and Prince Charlie had not yet come to inspire the songs which keep for ever fresh the memories of Gask. The sons of her soil were obscure peasants. The document which unveils something of those simple lives is the *Kirk Session Records of Gask*, the first series including the years 1669 to 1679, the second extending from 1721 to 1733. Throughout these records the light beats fiercely on the Friskines —on the Friskines as a family, and on those individual Friskines who stand out here and there for an instant of unenviable notoriety—the heroes of a parish event, the illustration of some long-departed custom or some forgotten law. We gather that they formed an independent, an enterprising, a resourceful group, foremost in every dispute, a power to be reckoned with in parish matters; not a kettle of fish that was not set boiling by a Friskine, not a pie but had a Friskine finger to its making.

Some were respected elders of the Church, others were in receipt of parish relief; here appears a wastrel, there a libertine. From the other side of two hundred and thirty years they touch us with the feeling of human sympathy.

The earliest mention of a Friskine is on August 8, 1669. In that year Androe Friskine was admitted an elder of the Kirk. So far good. It is a distinguished beginning, and fancy dwells on Androe, one of a select band of unctuous respectability, sitting in judgment on his co-parishioners, raised to a height that in those days meant real power. Thus a Friskine is beheld on an eminence, and one that was maintained; for in October 1670 we find a 'testimonielle givine to Andro Friskine.'

But ill-doing relatives were to dim the glory of his career, and the next mention of a member of the family is a deplorable one. On July 23, 1671, is found the record, 'Apointis the Kirk Officer to summond William Friskine to compeir before the Presbytrie on Wednesday come eight days for stryking his wife unchristianly.' Misfortune fell heavily upon the pious Androe, for only seven days after this family disgrace the affair of the plaid came before the session: a confused tale as it reaches us, but doubtless an

incident that stirred the parish to its remotest quarter.

The parish clerk probably understood the matter thoroughly, and did not trouble to make clear in the records various details which at this distance of time it would be interesting to know. Why the plaid should be the centre of a rancorous family quarrel will never be known; but out of the chaos of words one solid fact emerges: 'John Blak deponit that he did find the Plaid bi the hie-way, and that it was not conveyed to him by a freind.' It is the only clear statement to be found in the affair. The minister 'intreated the thrie women to be reconciled.' The three women were Margaret Friskine and Janet and Elspet Friskine. Margaret considered herself the injured party, and bursts upon history on July 16, 1671: 'This day Margaret Friskine shewis that Elspeth and Janet Friskine slandered her by saying she surreptiously and unjustly intrometted and detained a Plaid fra Janet.' On the 30th the two defendants being called, they compeared, and Margaret had 'her foirnamit bill red in thair audience;' then follows their denial, and the calling of Margaret's witnesses: John Harlo, James Young, and Thomas Cuthbert. So far the injured Margaret had led the battle, but Janet was minded to strike a return blow; she 'gave in a clame' against Margaret, 'bearand that she slandered the said Janet' and had called her names that are not either polite, pretty, or even customary, it seems, among Friskines of the seventeenth century. Janet had her witnesses too—the Friskines evidently washed their linen in public—Thomas Cuthbert, being one, must have found himself in an unenviable position between the three infuriated relatives; the others were William Imbrie and Janet Oswald. John Blak was an important witness called by neither side, but cited by the session to appear 'that he might shew quhat he knew concerning the foresaid Plaide.' On August 6 the parties met again, and one pictures Androe seated among the elect at the table of the elders, warm with anxiety for the credit of his name, and deprived of the smug complacency that belonged by right to his office. Possibly Janet and Elspet were his sisters; Margaret was a Friskine by marriage only. At all events, any relationship would seem unpleasantly near under the circumstances.

Thomas Cuthbert and Janet Oswald were examined after the belligerent Friskines had been removed, and stuck by their story of Margaret's indecorous language. William Imbrie seems to have ratted; the eye of the Friskines being temporarily removed, he declared he knew nothing of the affair. John Blak made the one clear statement before mentioned, 'and the Minister intreated the foirnamit thrie women to be reconciled.' Decidedly the matter was not cleared up, nor was any decision given; but Janet and Elspet obediently held out the olive-branch. It may be supposed they had possession of the plaid, and could afford to be generous. Besides, William Imbrie had failed them; they seized a chance of retiring with colours flying. With poor Margaret the sense of injustice and the lust of battle remained strong. It required a high courage in those days to defy the Church; but, minister or no minister, she scorned the flag of truce. There must have been a deadly pause in that assembly, when she had hurled forth her refusal, before the minister turned to Thomas Friskine and charged him to 'deal with Margaret, and to move thaim to reconciliatioun.' It is Thomas's first appearance on the scroll of fame. His was an anxious task, in view of the fact that immediately after this scene notice was given of the celebration of the Sacrament within fifteen days.

Thomas laboured to effect peace for one week with poor result; for on August 20 he reports that he had dealt with Margaret Friskine, and that 'she would not grant to be reconciled with Janet and Elspet Friskine, altho' they offered thaim selfis willing.' Apparently the elders recommended Thomas to try again to deal with her, and gave her till Saturday to be reconciled. 'The Minister again recommendis to the Elderis willand thaim to joyn with him that all variances may be reconciled betwix and Saturday, if it be possible.'

From this it would appear as if not only the efforts of Thomas but of the whole battery of elders and minister were to be directed for the space of six days upon Margaret. It is scarcely a matter of wonder that she remained 'thrawn.'

When Saturday came there is no mention of her appearance before the session; but the Friskines were not unrepresented on the occasion. William Friskine, the same who beat his wife unchristianly, 'owned his sin in debating with one William Harlo, and ordained the morrow morning to satisfie.' Thus Elder Androe was kept upon the rack, nor did the events of Sacrament Sunday reinstate the family in the good graces of the session.

There is no list in the records of those who communicated; only one thing is plain from the proceedings at the thanksgiving service held on Monday: 'Note that Margaret Friskine, under scandall and debate, and not compeirand to give satisfactioun and to be reconciled, communicated not.'

It was not until September 11 that the wrath of the Church fell, and disclosed the names of all those who had failed to attend the Sacrament. Alas for Elder Androe! in that disclosure the name of his family figured prominently, and the chief offender was one of his own name, another Androe Friskine, who, with Gilbert and his wife Margaret, was cited to 'compeir before the Session at thair nixt meitting.'

The Sacrament Sunday was on August 26. Not till September 18 did the culprits appear before the assembled elders, 'and being severaly interrogat why they did not communicate, they answered as

follows: vizt., Andro Friskine, he was at a Play lately befoir the communion, and thairfor could not come. Gilbert Friskine sayd he was not examined, not being at home, and thairfor could not come, and that his wife was not summondit. Margaret Friskine answered that she gott not a token, and that she had gotten such wrong from Janet and Elspet Friskine she could not be reconciled to thaim.'

Of the three, Androe's excuse is the most interesting—the plea of having been to a play rouses a keen curiosity to know what play. Perth is eight miles away; but plays may have been given there, and Androe in the fervour of youth may have thought a sixteen-mile walk a reasonable price to pay for the experience. It can never be known what the play was like; all that we do know is, that to have witnessed it precluded, in Androe's mind, the possibility of attending the Sacrament. We can but draw our own conclusions from the fact.

Gilbert Friskine appeals to our sympathies. There is a lovableness in his excuse; we feel intuitively that he was loyal, that in some way he wanted to stand by his wife, the outcast from Church privileges, poor stormy Margaret, who could not be reconciled, and 'gott not a token.' This last was the little metal ticket of admission to the sacred rite.

This matter of not communicating dragged on for weeks. October was nearly over when the culprits duly appeared before the session: 'They were seriously exhorted to take to heart their slighting of the blessed Sacraments, and apointed to appear at the next meitting.' However, we hear no more of it; the affair died out after two months of talking.

Whether Margaret ever forgave Janet and Elspeth will never be known.

Thomas Friskine was counted among the 'honest men' of the parish—this much can be gathered. On March 24, 1672, 'the Minister regrating that the Kirk was not well planted with seattis or pewis, he and the Elders were desirous to take advisement how the samen might be effectuated.' The result of the council was that a week later 'thay resolved to goe on anent the planting of the Kirk with pewis or daskis, . . . the rather in regard the elderis reported that the people were willing.'

The willingness of the people meant more than mere consent or even an increased donation at the Sunday service. 'Diverss of the honest men at desyre from the Minister and Elderis compeirit befoir thaim, and shew thaimselfis willing to send horss and boyes with thaim with John Oliphant to Perth the morne, to bring timber to plant the Kirk.' The boys, we find, were supplied with 'aill' at the cost of the Church on the occasion: 'The Minister and Elderis mett with John Oliphant and pactioned to give him 24 shillings scots for ilk pew . . . with ane pynt aillis pryce dayly, or the Sunday's collection, for his workmanship *and to buy drink to him*.' Plainly the temperance movement was either unknown here or received no Church support. 'Thair being now elevin pewis up-put in the Kirk' on May 19, we find a list of 'honest men,' headed by Thomas Friskine, who were called upon to choose 'pewis or daskis.'

Meanwhile many and weighty had been the conferences respecting the 'furnishing' of the church. John Oliphant's accounts were rendered piecemeal—now for 'lyme, stones, and sand,' now for 'naillis and deallis,' and each item involved discussion. So serious, indeed, was the whole undertaking that the elders 'deemed it expedient that the Laird of Gask, younger, should be apointed to be present. The Minister having gone to him and desyred the same, reported that the said Laird "was resolvit quhatever the Minister and Session did conclude, either as to the farming or fewing of the pewis belonging either to him or his father, he should rest satisfied thairwith."' We can fancy that the young Laurence Oliphant would be glad to escape the weariness of the long conferences.

Meanwhile the doings of John the joiner formed the centre of interest. Nothing since the affair of the plaid had so stirred the parish, and it must have been felt that a great work had been accomplished when, at the meeting of the 'honest men,' the business in hand was the apportioning of the pews. Thomas Friskine's pew was chosen in the 'Eist,' at the south side. Walter and another Thomas—possibly the unsuccessful peacemaker of three years ago—had a shorter pew; presumably they were not family-men. William Friskine the wife-beater and Androe the frequenter of plays had another in the same aisle, 'and each of them engaged to pay the proportion of the pewis choisit.' Walter, we find, was elected an elder in 1673. Altogether, the family was acquiring a pious distinction; for on March 2, 1673, when all 'honest men' should have appeared to pay the rent for their pews, Androe Friskine stands alone in virtue. He was the only one that appeared and 'producit four markis . . . none more compeirit for pewis paying, altho' warnit and callit.'

Some of the recalcitrant worshippers, as late as January 1674, received 'earnest exhortations to pay the pewis betwixt and the next Sabbath, or they to be perseued thairfor be law.'

Two of the elders died late in 1675. Thomas Friskine was one; and his son of Clathymore was invited to reign in his stead, but seems to have raised difficulties about accepting the honour. The session meetings show traces of his indecision from December until late in March, when the minister 'shew to the Session that seeing Thomas Friskine would not be elder, he had dealt earnestly with Ninian Friskine to be Elder, quhom he persuadit thairto, and asked the votes of the Elders, who wer well satisfied thairwith, judging him, altho' young, yet to be as fitt as they who refused.' This was a snub for Thomas, who had made humility his

excuse. But in 1678 we find Thomas collecting as an elder as well as Ninian. In this year an alliance strengthened the Friskine clan, and William and Jean were married, and we find the elders 'apointing a testificat' to be given to a young boy Friskine, 'and in respect he had nothing to pay, they ordered the tresaurer to give the clerk payment.'

This is the last that is known of the Friskines for forty-two years; for here occurs the long gap in the records. When the Registration Act was passed in 1854, the volumes of the Gask Session Records had to be sent to Edinburgh; and as the births and deaths were mixed up with the session minutes, out of four volumes that had been sent only one mutilated book returned from the Register Office. This accounts for the darkness in which the history of the Friskines is involved; but when the light again breaks we find them much the same as of old, except that they had altered the spelling of the name.

These forty years formed a period of extraordinary advance throughout Scotland; but traces of advance are hard to find in the parish of Gask. The case of John Allan is worthy of the earlier records, and it is mentioned here because it leads to the reappearance of a Friskine.

John Allan was an elder, and should have met with his brethren on July 19, 1724. But the session 'desyned to take note of an affair wherein he was concerned,' and instead of seating himself complacently among them he 'did of his own accord remove.' The session called him back in order to 'interogate whether he would acknowledge his scandalus behaviour in beating Jean Atkin with a rod.' He did judicially confess that he did beat the said Jean Atkin, his neighbour, with a rod. We could wish he had set up a defence, so that at least the provocation might be made known, for the story as it stands raises a curiosity which no research will ever gratify. No more is known save that 'he being called in, was rebooked, admonished, and the sentence of suspension intimated unto him.' The gap in the ranks must be filled. 'The Minister desyning to have moe Elders added to the rest, by consent of the Session pitched on Andrew Firskin in Westmuir, who condescended to that honourable office.' So the name was then spelt. In May 1725 it had changed to Fiscan; but it was a temporary aberration, which reverts to Friskine on the next page.

The original Elder Androe of forty-five years ago must, it may fairly be supposed, have been gathered to his fathers; it was left to an Andrew of another generation to carry on the traditions of his house. The elders of the Church had need of a discriminating member, with an instinct for the rooting out of parish scandals, and Andrew Friskine was made one of the 'privey censurs gone abowt to unearth scandals.' Week by week must Andrew have sought for parochial sinners and brought them in triumph within range of the great guns of the assembled session. He nosed out the case of Donald Stewart and Jean Buchan, of Thomas Cook and Jean Barnet, of James Taylor and Lylias McWilliam. He it was who discovered that Margaret Reid was 'guilty of scandal in ffeighting and ffleeting and praying for imprecations upon Elizabeth McLearin her neighbour.'

When, after the visits of the 'privey censurs' about the parish, no damaging facts were forthcoming at the session meeting, 'the Minister exhorted diligence and faithfulness in their office.' Whether or not rebuke was intended, the 'privey censurs' redoubled their efforts, and kept the stool of repentance occupied Sunday after Sunday.

It is to be supposed that Andrew would scarcely relish, however, the unearthing of a certain 'scandall' which comes up in 1731. Lylias McWilliam is again the heroine, but her name is objectionably linked with no other than that of Ninian Firskin. We remember there was an Elder Ninian who was young in 1679, but it is not credible that he could have pursued a downward career for fifty-two years; this must have been a later and degenerate Ninian.

Lylias occupied the 'pillar' for three successive Sundays, and to these, in view of a former fall, a fourth was added. She must have been used to the experience, as she had 'compeared in the place of public repentance' in April 1727. It appears that Ninian Firskin stood in the same unenviable position on May 2 and two following Sundays. There is then a gap in the records, and we are astonished to find in April in the next year Ninian again summoned before the session and sentenced to compear next Lord's Day in the place of repentance. His offence is not mentioned; but its nature may be guessed from the fact that on May 23 poor Lylias 'compeard for the fourth time, after recovering from sickness.' Certainly in her case the methods of the Church had been a dead failure. On June 20 we have a pathetic entry regarding her: 'Lylias McWilliam was absolved, and is so poore has nothing to pay the penalty;' and then in the year following comes the last mention of her name among a list of the very poor and destitute who received money after the Communion. There was, or had been, a child, and we cannot feel that Ninian comes creditably out of the affair—a regrettable circumstance, as this is the very last we know of his family.

Thus the Friskines quit the scene ingloriously enough, and we leave the last scion of the race definitely among the goats. The blood of elders and supporters of the Church ran in his veins; but his nature threw back to the gay and irresponsible forefathers whose doings are here chronicled. So it happens that at the end of the story we leave the Friskines upon the pillar of repentance.

Now the race of Friskines, Fiscans, and Firskins at Gask is at an end, and the place knows them no more. The oldest inhabitant fifty years ago had never heard the name. It must be a hundred years

since the Friskines migrated to enliven other parishes. Utterly forgotten out of mind, but for the power of the Church that held them, these records are their only monuments. We only know that many generations lived out their lives in this quiet corner of the earth. Thick about the spot where their little Church once stood, in a green and ancient solitude, lie their nameless graves.

MY WEAPONS.

By REGINALD WYON, Author of *The Land of the Black Mountain*, &c.

UPON my walls hang a quaint assortment of weapons. It is a hobby of mine, and one I am to a certain extent proud of, because each specimen—be it pistol, knife, or assagai—has been added to my collection on the spot where it was used. When I draw back my chair and contemplate them between the whiffs of my pipe, old, half-forgotten scenes come back to my turgid memory, and a longing to exchange my present surroundings of prosaic bricks and mortar for waving palm-trees, for blue cloudless skies, for rugged mountains, steals over me.

There is a pistol, of which I am very fond—it is of wood mounted with quaint brass ornaments—that snaps fire still when I pull the trigger. It calls back memories of its athletic owner, a Montenegrin who once formed one of my escort when I was travelling on the Albanian borders. The recollections of that day are very vivid, for we saved the life of a fugitive from the pitiless vendetta and very nearly lost our own. It was touch-and-go when his pursuers came up, outnumbering us by ten to one, savage-looking Albanians, and we refused to yield or give him up. The man, a handsome young fellow, hung panting at my stirrup, and never shall I forget his look of gratitude as the avenging band drew off, afraid of the consequences should they have shot us Europeans. Probably he is killed by now; but at any rate we saved him for a few more months of pleasant life. That night the owner of the pistol drew it from his belt and gave it to me, telling me its history. It had, to his certain knowledge, slain twenty-eight men, and had been carried by him for years, and by his father before him. Probably the number is far greater, for border warfare is part of the daily life of these frontier men. Then we fired the charge with befitting solemnity—for was it not its own death-charge? And now it hangs rusting on a wall, and a modern revolver graces its place in the gay-coloured sash of its Montenegrin owner.

Beside it hangs a silver-mounted pistol of equal antiquity. A gambling Montenegrin brought it one evening and sold it to me that he might continue playing. 'My father took it from a Turk whom he had slain,' he said, 'in the last war, here, before the walls of the town.'

But he insisted on selling it, knowing that I loved such things, and went back hurriedly to his fellow-gamblers. To this end had his father risked his life and won a trophy!

A Japanese knife close by was the present of a little Jap coffee-house-keeper in sweltering Zanzibar. Why he gave it to me I never knew, yet there it is to remind me of his odd coffee-house and his little staff of geishas, as much out of their element in those evil-smelling alleys and reeking heat as I, the Englishman, was. I close my eyes and conjure up that bare room, its bamboo furniture, and deft attendant maidens. Half in the door stands a one-armed beggar moaning piteously for charity, and the tiny Jap drives him away with much cursing. Then the tramp of bare feet and shouts of men take me to the open window, and a chair bearing a veiled woman swings by borne by gigantic eunuchs, the curtains wave, and a roguish face peers out, veilless, and gives me a ravishing glance. A more sedate friend pulls me back, adjuring me to caution as I value my life, for the enchantress is one of the royal harem, whom to gaze upon is death. That worthy gentleman the deceased Sultan of Zanzibar rivalled even Solomon in all his glory in one respect. And then a stately old Arab comes in, with jewelled daggers and pistol-butt in his gorgeous sash, and greets me in broken French, for many are the chats that we have had together. It is the famous Tippoo Tib, the one-time notorious slave-merchant, of whom Stanley often wrote.

Above the knives hang an array of bows, poisoned arrows, and spears which a Dutchman gave me on his deathbed. Poor fellow, after a sojourn of many years in the fever-stricken swamps of South-East Africa, saving money the while with which to return to his beloved Holland, he succumbed to malaria on the very ship that was bearing him homewards. We buried him in the glassy Indian Ocean, and to us, his friends, he distributed many of the gifts that he was taking to his loved ones at home, a few hours before he died.

Yes, some of my weapons have sad stories too.

There is the solid-looking English hunting-knife that a merry young Scotsman gave me as he lay rapidly dying from a bite of the black *mamba*, which means death within the hour. He was fresh from bonny Scotland but a few weeks before.

That is the assagai which a Zulu threw at me, and which cut my finger to the bone as I hastily warded it off with a riding-cane. He was stabbed to the heart by our 'friendlies' a moment later. Those were lively times in the Mounted Police, and many were the unofficial brushes that we had, and which we never reported to headquarters.

Another scar on my hand causes me to take down an ugly knife cased in a rude Arabian sheath. Its blade is four inches broad, of thin flexible steel—a nasty width between one's ribs.

That was in Dar-es-Salaam. Three of us (an Englishman, the Dutchman who died two or three weeks afterwards, and myself) had dined not wisely but enthusiastically with the German officers of the garrison. On our way back to the ship an Arab jostled the Dutchman, and he knocked him down. He was a hot-headed man even in his sober moments. In a twinkling a dozen Arabs were round us with such knives as this, and a scuffle ensued. One rascal stabbed at me, and I caught him an undercut and sent him sprawling, but not before he had gashed my hand. A revolver-shot scattered them as quickly as they had come; but the knife had been dropped, and I bore it off in triumph.

That knobkerrie I saw thrown by a Kaffir policeman after a fugitive. With beautiful precision it caught the runaway in the bend of the knee, and a second later his pursuer was neatly handcuffing him. The policeman was so elated with his capture that he forgot the brass-studded 'kerrie.'

For a modern 'six-shooter' I became the possessor of that pair of Turkish matchlocks. That was in Scutari, and the Albanian who exchanged them plainly intimated that he thought I was a fool—after concluding the bargain, with the revolver safe in his belt.

'What canst thou do with those guns that have not fired a bullet this last generation? With *this* I can slay six men with careful shooting.' And he shook his head as he proudly walked away, a hand on the butt of his new revolver.

Near them hangs my Mannlicher carbine and trusty companion on my tours in Montenegro and Albania. How it excited the envy of the clansmen armed with old Martinis, and how they shouted when I shot against them in improvised matches, 'out-marksmaning' them all with my lighter weapon, but that carried farther and straighter! I remember a young chieftain who rode three days to overtake me, on a splendid horse, literally frantic to exchange his steed for the carbine. Broken-hearted he left, not believing my promise to secure him another similar. 'Such rifles are not to be had every day,' he said sorrowfully. 'I, who have lived my life amongst armed men, have never seen the like.

Beside it hangs my revolver that custom ordains shall be carried everywhere in the Black Mountains of Montenegro by the sons of that brave race.

'A man without weapons is a man without honour,' they say.

Yet amongst them it was never drawn in anger or defence, but often have its shots rang out, echoing in their mountain fastnesses, when I have bade farewell to my generous hosts. It is the 'good-bye' of the Montenegrin as he turns in his saddle or pauses in his lithe stride to empty his revolver into the air.

Ah! they are pleasant and sad companions, my weapons; but chiefly, I think, the former. They are links with my past life more eloquent than anything I possess; for have they not, many of them, been the keys of the mystery of life and death?

If they could speak, how poor this description would be! But perhaps it is better so. It is not good to know too much, and so I am well content to have them there, silent but so full of eloquence.

THE DREAMER.

The Dreamer sits beside the fire, the wind is whistling shrill,
The winter sun has dreed its weird and sinks below the hill;
But where the shadows lengthen, and it's Blind Man's Holiday,
The waiting ghosts come forth, and, lo! the Dreamer has his will.

The happy, happy Dreamer! far in the frozen North
He faces death with Gilbert, with Franklin fares he forth;
Or if the fancy take him, he rides the world with Drake,
Till the Inquisition draws him, a martyr, to the stake.

Oh, never were such escapades, such tales of derring-do,
All crowded in the twilight hour, a thousand lives lived through!
Wiser than Rip Van Winkle, the Dreamer scorns to wake,
He's loyal to the kingdom where the fairy tales come true.

Oh, happy, happy Dreamer! In the greening of the year
Who is it rides beside you, whose voice is at your ear?
Who lays her spell upon your heart, and all your being charms?
'Tis La Belle Dame sans Merci—and her captive knight-at-arms!

And when the stars come out at night, the Dreamer looks above,
And claims from all the far-off worlds his flickering lights o' love.
For love is true above the blue, and fairy tales are real,
Where wolves couch near the herded sheep and the hawk homes with the dove.

Thrice happy, happy Dreamer! when the corn is harvested,
And the Scytheman stays for gleanings, pray you be gathered.
For Earth is all men's mother, and on her quiet breast
The Dreamers wake to life, perchance, when workers take their rest.

B. M. Danby.

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THE COUNTRY DOCTOR IN FRANCE.

TWO country doctors of France, I doubt not, are familiar to most folks. Who has not read Balzac's moving apotheosis of a humble practitioner, the story of the good Monsieur Benassis, 'our father,' as the villagers called him?

And who has not read Flaubert's *roman nécessaire*, the necessary novel some critic has misnamed it, a picture of life equalling in ugliness the beauty of the other? Charles Bovary, the heavy, plodding, matter-of-fact country doctor, interests us from a single point of view: the misfortunes brought upon him by his union with a middle-class *Messaline*. Balzac's hero is perhaps a rare type in any country; Charbovari, as in youth Flaubert's doctor called himself, must be set down as an uncommon specimen in France. Frenchmen, like others, may dazzle us with their shining qualities or put humanity to the blush by their vices; stupidity is not a Gallic foible.

Another thing we may also take for granted: whether a Benassis or a Charbovari, no man works harder than the French country or provincial doctor. When Balzac put the colophon to *Le Médecin de Campagne* in 1833, and twenty-seven years later Flaubert brought out *Madame Bovary*, country doctors in France were few and far between. The rural practitioner was most often the nun. Even where qualified medical skill was available the peasants preferred to go to the *bonnes sœurs*. I well remember, when staying with friends in Anjou many years ago, a visit we paid to a village convent. One of the sisters, a rough-and-ready but capable-looking woman, began speaking of her medical rounds. 'Good heavens, how busy I am!' she said. 'Just now every soul in the place wants putting to rights.'* And she evidently put them to rights with a vengeance. There were drugs enough in her little parlour to stock an apothecary's shop; and as many of the nuns are excellent herbalists, for ordinary ailments I have no doubt they prove efficient.

If at any time you visit village folks, the first thing they do is to introduce you to the *bonnes sœurs*. I remember, when I was staying at the charming little village of Nant in the Aveyron, how the mistress of our comfortable inn carried me off to the convent! The mother-superior was evidently a medical authority in the place, and in order to supply her pharmacopœia, had yearly collections made of all the medicinal plants growing round about. Here on the floor of a chamber, exposed to sun and air, were stores of wild lavender for sweetening the linen-presses, mallows, gentian, elder-flowers, poppies, leaves of the red vine and limes, with vast heaps of the *Veronica officinalis*, or *thé des Alpes*, as it is called in France, and many others. That excellent little work Dr Saffray's *Remèdes des Champs* had apparently been got by heart.

But it was not only the peasants who resorted, and still resort, to the convent instead of the surgery, as the following story will show. A few years ago I was staying with rich *vignerons* in Burgundy, when their cook was severely bitten by a sporting dog. Several of these dogs were allowed to run loose in a yard adjoining the kitchen; and one day, thinking that they wanted no more of the food set down for them, poor Justine imprudently lifted a half-emptied bowl. In a second the animal in question, a very handsome and powerful creature, had pinned her to the ground. The housemaid, hearing her fellow-servant's cries, rushed out with a broomstick and beat off the assailant, not before he had fearfully lacerated the woman's arm. Was a doctor sent for? Not a bit of it. The nuns took my old friend Justine in hand, and, being sound in body and mind, she was soon at work again no whit worse for the misadventure. It did seem to me astonishing that the matter should not have been taken more seriously, all the more so as M. Pasteur's name just then was in everybody's mouth. What I quite expected was that Justine, under care of a nun, would have been despatched to Paris, there to undergo Pasteurian treatment. Very likely she fared better

* Her words were these: '*Mon Dieu, que je suis affairée! Dans ce moment-ci tout le monde a besoin d'être purgé.*'

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at home. And as things fell out in Goldsmith's poem, 'the dog it was that died.' Poor Figaro showed no signs of madness; but it was deemed unwise to keep so fierce-tempered a creature about the place.

When more than a quarter of a century ago I spent a year in Brittany and Anjou, I constantly heard it asserted that the nuns starved out the country doctors. Where the choice lay between nun and doctor, the peasants, alike the well-to-do and the needy, would prefer to go to the former, as often the handier and always the cheaper. Provided with a bishop's *lettre d'obédience*, the *bonnes sœurs* were much in the position of our own bone-setters, barber-surgeons, and unqualified medical assistants long since prohibited by law. Legislation in France and progressive ideas have now changed all this, and made the profession of country doctor fairly remunerative. But not till July 1893 was a law passed assuring gratuitous medical services to the indigent poor, the doctors being paid respectively by the State, the department, and the communes. The term indigent poor must be understood as an equivalent to our own poor in receipt of poor-relief.

Oddly enough doctors' fees in provincial France are no higher than they were thirty years ago. So far back as 1875, whilst passing through Brest, the maritime capital of Brittany, I needed treatment for passing indisposition. To my amazement, the doctor's fee was two francs only. On my mentioning the matter to the French friend who was with me, she replied that two francs a visit was the usual charge in the provincial towns and in the country. And quite enough, too, she said. And a year ago I was taken ill at a little town of Champagne. Here, as at Brest, the usual medical fee was two francs a visit, not a centime higher than it had been more than a quarter of a century before. Yet the price of living has greatly risen throughout France since the Franco-Prussian war. How, then, do country doctors contrive to make ends meet? 'Oh,' retorted my hostess, 'we have three doctors here; they have as much as they can do, and are all rich.'

There are two explanations of this speech. In the first place, the town contains three thousand inhabitants, thus allotting a thousand to each practitioner;* in the second place, the word rich is susceptible of divers interpretations. A French lady, widow of an officer, once said to me that she always travelled first-class because she was rich, afterwards explaining that her income was exactly two hundred pounds a year. But she was rich, because most likely she never spent more than a hundred and seventy; and the same explanation, I dare say, applies to the three medical men in this little country town. They were rich, in all probability, on three or four hundred a year—rich just because they made much more than they spent.

In order to comprehend French life and character we must bear one fact in mind. Appearance is not a fetich in France as in England; outside show is not sacrificed to; Mrs Grundy is no twentieth-century Baal. On the other hand, good repute is sedulously nursed; personal dignity and family honour are hedged round with respect. We must not take the so-called realistic novelist's standard to be the true one. Frenchmen, I should say, as a rule spend a third less upon dress than Englishmen. It does not follow that the individual is held in slight esteem, personality discounted. These provincial and country doctors do not outwardly resemble their spick-and-span English colleagues, nor do they affect what is called style in their equipages—in most cases the conveyance is a bicycle—and manner of living. How can they, upon an income derived from one-and-eightpenny fees? But many are doubtless rich in the logical acceptation of the word—that is, they live considerably below their income and save money. Unostentatious as is their manner of living, the status of country doctor is greatly changed since Flaubert wrote his odious *roman nécessaire*.

There is one highly suggestive scene in *Madame Bovary*. Husband and wife have arrived at the marquis's château for the ball, and whilst the ambitious Emma puts on her barège dress, Charles remarks that the straps of his trousers will be in the way whilst dancing. 'Dancing?' exclaims Emma. 'Yes.' 'You must be crazy,' retorts the little *bourgeoise;* 'everybody will make fun of you. Keep your place. Besides,' she added, 'it is more becoming in a doctor not to dance.'

Now, in the first place, you would not nowadays find among the eleven thousand and odd medical men in France a *lourdaud*, or heavy, loutish fellow after the pattern of poor Charles Bovary. Higher attainments, increased facilities of social intercourse, and progress generally in France as elsewhere have rendered certain types obsolete. In the second place, every Frenchman at the present time can dance well, and I should have said it was so when Flaubert wrote. And, thirdly, a country doctor and his wife would not in these days lose their heads at being invited to a marquis's château! Thirty years of democratic institutions have lent the social colouring of this novel the interest of history.

There is one whimsical trait in the French country doctor. He does not relish being paid for his services. The difficulty in dealing with him is the matter of remuneration, by what roundabout contrivance to transfer his two-franc fees from your pocket to his own. It is my firm belief that French doctors, if it were practicable, would infinitely prefer to attend rich patients as they do the poor, for nothing. Take the case of my last-mentioned medical attendant, for instance. On arriving at the little Champenois town I unfortunately fell ill, and Dr B.

* In M. de Foville's *La France Économie* (1900), he gives eleven thousand six hundred and forty-three as the number of medical men in France, the population being over thirty-eight millions.

was in close attendance upon me for many days. '*Ne vous tourmentez pas*' ('Do not be uneasy'), Dr B. reiterated when, as my departure drew near, I ventured to ask for his bill. A second attempt to settle the little matter only evoked the same, '*Ne vous tourmentez pas;*' and when the morning for setting out came it really seemed as if I must leave my debt behind me. At the last moment, however, just as I was about to start for the station, up came the doctor's maid-of-all-work, or rather working-housekeeper, breathless and flustered, with the anxiously expected account. On my hostess handing her the sum, just five-and-twenty shillings, the good woman turned it over in her palm, exclaiming, 'My! How these doctors make money, to be sure!' Upon another occasion the same reluctance was even more divertingly manifested. I was staying with French friends in Germanised France, and had called in a young French doctor. My hostesses begged me on no account to proffer money; he would be much hurt by such a proceeding, they said. So before I left one of the ladies wrote a note at my request, enclosing the customary fee and making a quite apologetic demand for his acceptance of the same.

Half-a-dozen provincial doctors I have known in France, and if not guardian angels of humanity, veritable apostles of the healing art like Balzac's hero, one and all might serve as worthy types. Small is the number lifted by chance or ambition into more exalted spheres, laborious the round of duty, modest the guerdon. Yet no class does more honour to France. The country doctor, moreover, forms a link between peasant and *bourgeois*, an intermediary bridging over social distinctions, linking two classes not always sympathetic. A distinctive feature of French rural life, it is a pity that the *médecin de campagne* is so persistently ignored by contemporary novelists over the water.

THE CLOSED BOOK.

CHAPTER XVII.—CONTAINS FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE.

HAD read almost to the end of old Godfrey's record, and paused for a cigarette. I had written so much that my hand was tired; but it was certainly a highly interesting story, and threw a new light upon Lucrezia Borgia and her crimes, as well as presenting us with a secret chapter in the history of the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. From an antiquarian point of view the record was, therefore, a most valuable find.

Eager to learn the whole, I flung away my cigarette when only half-consumed, and again turned to, penning each word as I puzzled it out, and as I now copy it out for you:

'WYTH A SUM OF GOLD did I bribe a fisherman to take us in his boat to Maryport, in England, where the wrath of Kyng James could not reache us. In company we travelled to York, where I left Malcolm and his niece with their kinsmen who lived close by the city, and continued my way to London, filled with regret that I had been compelled to leave my treasure in hiding on account of a false suspicion against me, and yet not daring to return to Treyf, now that it was in the possession of the hateful king's men. What towardness or intowardness I saw while at that castle on the Dee I need not inform you, or what adventures occurred to me in London, except to say that I soon became seized by a desire to return to Italy, the which I did, journeying to Florence, and there reassumynge the religious habyt and enteringe the monastery of Certosa, and am now ending my dayes within the cloister there.

'PLEASE IT YOU TO UNDERSTAND, my reader, that on enteringe this monastery aforesaid I became so troubled with the past that I have penned in brief, this ninth day of Februaryj 1542, all that happened to me, in order to leave on recorde the fiendish crimes of the Borgia; to show how my Lady Lucrezia was but the unwilling agent of His Holiness and the Duke Cesare; to affirm that my connection wyth the secret envenoming was in my poor lady's interests and for her protection; and, lastly, to leave on record the exact place within Treyf's grim walls where lie concealed my lady's jewels, together with the secret phials, the small casket that contains emeralds, the worth of which be sufficient to found the fortune of a great house. As touching the family of Borgia, the evil they have done is herein written in this Closed Book, just as it is written in the solemn booke above the which no man can observe.

'A CURSE RESTETH UPON ALL THE BORGIA, save my lady Lucrezia, so also there resteth a curse upon him who shall attempt to take my lady's jewells for his own uses. Already the knowledge gained by you from my record must prove fatal, as I have by preface forewarned you, inquisitive reader; therefore it were best if you sought no further to understand the spot where the treasure lieth hidden. Still, as I perceive that it is my bounden duty to place on record the spot where the casket lieth concealed now that my life is so short a span, in order that the jewels may not be lost for ever, I write these instructions which, before actinge upon, you must note very carefully, otherwise the secret place of concealment can never be discovered. And further, be it recollected that the jewels have upon them the blood of innocent victims, and that a curse will fall upon the finder providing they are not sold and half the proceeds given to the poor. Heed ye this!

'ITEM: DIRECTIONS FOR RECOVERING THE CASKET:

'Go unto the castle at half-past three of the clocke when the sun shines on September the seventeenth, and followe the shadow of the east angle of the keep forty and three paces from the edge of the inner moat, then, with the face turned straight towardes Bengairn, walk fifty and six paces. Seek there, for my lady Lucrezia's treasure is hidden at a playce no man knoweth save Malcolm Maxwell; but the secret of whych thou mayest discover if thou wilt again face death.

'But heed thys my warning, ye who hast gayned this knowledge. Evil be upon ye and eternal purgatory if ye dare take my lady's treasure for your own uses without devoting one-half to actes of charity.

'Seek both at Treyf and in the lake at Croylande, and thy diligence shall be well rewarded.

'ITEM: HOW TO DISCOVER THE PLACE AT TREYF:

'First find a piece of ruined wall of greate stones, one bearinge a circle cut upon it as large as a manne's hande. Then, measuring five paces towards the barbican, find'——

The next page contained the quaint ending which I have already reproduced.

A page of The Closed Book was missing—the most important page of all!

The folios containing the secret record were not numbered like the rest of the volume; but on closely examining the place I found that the important folio of vellum had been torn out.

By whom? I wondered.

Was it possible that Selby had read the book just as I had done, and having gained the secret, had abstracted the leaf whereon minute directions for the recovery of the treasure had been written? I recollected that he had been seized by symptoms of poisoning—a clear proof that he had been examining the envenomed pages.

Suddenly recollecting, I turned back to the two roughly drawn plans in the centre of the record, wondering if either would give a clue to the whereabouts of the treasure. The reason of the word 'treyf' that was scrawled in the margin of one of them, and had so puzzled me, was now rendered plain. The plan no doubt concerned the ancient castle of Treyf, and it seemed more than likely that by its aid I might succeed in discovering the hiding-place of the Borgia emeralds and the vial of Lucrezia's secret poison.

The other plan, bearing no name and no distinguishing mark, told me nothing.

I rose, and, standing at the open window, looked out upon the sun-lit sea. It was different from the blue, tideless Mediterranean, in sight of which I had passed those seven years of my life, but the breeze from it was more invigorating and the surf whiter and heavier than the watery highway of southern Europe. I stood there lost in thought.

The secret of the hidden treasure was what old Godfrey Lovel, soldier, courtier, and monk, had written and yet endeavoured to hide, first by his terrible warnings, and secondly by poisoning the pages of the record with that deadly secret substance of the Borgias. Malcolm Maxwell had died; and he, being the only person aware of the place of concealment of the casket and its priceless contents, had conceived it to be his duty to leave that record, yet so to guard it that any one who sought to open The Closed Book would die mysteriously.

I recollected the very narrow escape I had had. The very gloves now upon my hands were, in all probability, poisoned.

Turning again to the table, I reread the directions given as far as the missing folio, carefully comparing it with the transcript I had made, and finding no error. Then, closing the precious book and packing it away in the stout paper, I took it to the hotel-manager to be placed in his safe.

Certainly the story therein written was a remarkable and interesting one. Treasures were apparently concealed both at Crowland Abbey and at Treyf, as to the whereabouts of which I was at present in the dark, and it seemed to me more than likely that the two plans would show the places where they were hidden. Yet the missing folio was tantalising. Just as the minute directions for the recovery of the Borgia emeralds were commenced, they broke off, leaving me utterly confounded!

Could it be possible that those who had formed this remarkable plot to obtain the book actually knew of its contents? To me it seemed very much as though they did, and, further, that the man Selby had abstracted the missing folio. If he had, then he was in possession of the actual secret of where the casket was concealed!

What I had read of the great treasures of the once magnificent Abbey of Crowland and of the emeralds of the notorious Lucrezia Borgia whetted my curiosity and aroused my eagerness to commence a real treasure-hunt in earnest. You, my reader, know quite well how stories of buried treasure always interest you, especially when you recollect that gold, silver, and gems do not perish, and that in the times when there were no banks, safe-deposits, vaults, or even fireproof safes, people were compelled to hide their wealth in cavities in walls or bury it in the ground, the secret of its hiding-place being often carried to the grave by the concealer. Again, in the troublous times in England during the dissolution of the monasteries and the civil wars, every one hid his wealth for fear of seizure. A glance at the correspondence from King Henry VIII.'s Commissioners to Thomas Cromwell, now preserved in the British Museum, and reporting the dissolution of the various monasteries, shows quite plainly that the abbots and monks hid greater part of their treasures before the arrival of the king's men, and that the search made for them was usually in vain, so ingeniously did they contrive their places of concealment. It must also be recollected that the monasteries were the richest institutions in England, and that the altars and images of the abbeys were for the most part

adorned with gold and gems. Many of the images of Our Lady are known to have been of solid silver and life-size. Little of this enormous wealth of hidden treasure has yet been discovered. Where, therefore, is it, unless buried in the earth? The treasure of the abbot of Crowland was, according to old Godfrey's chronicle, hidden in the fish-pond or in that vicinity—a treasure the very list of which caused one to marvel, including as it did the great altar of silver which dated from the thirteenth century; the great chalice of gold, the gift of Thomas of Barnack; four chalices of silver; five patens, an alms-basin, eight cups, and an image of Our Lady—all of silver; with two candlesticks, three cups, and five crucifixes in gold, as well as two silver boxes filled with precious stones. Surely, even with the law of treasure-trove as bogey before us, such a valuable collection was worth searching for!

But somehow, as I strolled along the small promenade towards the old village where the bronzed fishermen were just landing their crab-pots and packing their catch for the London market, I could not help being more attracted by the treasure at Treyf. The crafty old Godfrey had written that record so that the treasure he had concealed in Scotland should not become altogether lost. The Borgia emeralds were historic, and the Borgia poison also.

I felt impelled to write to Walter Wyman, explaining what I had discovered, and urge him to aid me in my search. Now that I had discovered the secret contained in The Closed Book I could remain in uncertainty no longer.

That afternoon I took train to Cromer, and in a Gazetteer which I found in the library there I discovered that the place called Treyf was really Threave Castle, a very historic pile of ruins situated on an island in the river Dee in the vicinity of the town of Castle-Douglas, district of Galloway, in the south-west of Scotland, on the line from Carlisle to Stranraer. This information was most gratifying, for it so happened that my old friend Major Fenwicke and his wife had a fine shooting with a splendid old mansion called Crailloch only fifteen miles or so away, and I knew that I should be warmly welcomed in that merriest of circles if I wished to make it my headquarters, for Fred Fenwicke kept open house, and his place was full of visitors year in and year out. A trifle older than myself, he was one of my very best and most trusted friends; therefore I was eager to pay him the visit I had so long promised, and, by reason of living abroad, had been compelled to postpone.

Then, on my return to Sheringham, I wrote a letter to Wyman, telling him briefly of the interesting discovery I had made, and by the same post wrote to Fred Fenwicke, announcing that I was eager to pay him a visit as soon as he could put up both of us. I explained nothing of my object, for if one starts to search for buried treasure one is apt to be met with considerable sarcasm and ridicule.

Here, however, I had in my possession facts that could not be disputed—facts which had resulted in a curious and apparently well-organised conspiracy.

Those poisoned pages held me terrified, now that I knew how fatal was their contact.

A VISIT TO THIBET.

By Captain A. H. Baldwin.

T the present time we learn from the newspapers that our relations with the people of Thibet are 'strained;' or, in other words, that we have fallen out with them, and that an expedition has started in the direction of Lhassa to bring them to their senses and compel them to carry out their obligations towards us. Many years ago I visited Thibet on a hunting excursion, and saw much of the country and its inhabitants. I kept a strict diary of all I saw; and a brief account of my travels and the sport I met with across the Himalayas may prove of interest at the present time.

Early in 1863, when a young subaltern in the Bengal army, I was invalided from Central India to Nynee Tal, one of the most beautiful of our hill-stations. I arrived weak and ill at this sanatorium; but the pure air and bracing climate of these glorious mountains soon brought new life into me. I cared little for the gaiety and pleasures of Nynee Tal, but longed to get away with rifle and gun into the wilds. My ambition had been fired by a sporting work recently written by an officer in the Bengal Civil Service, who had crossed the snowy range into Thibet, and there shot the *bunchour*, or wild yak, the *Ovis ammon*, or wild sheep, and other big game. The 'spirit of the chase' was strong in me, and I longed to do likewise, and at once began making my preparations for a journey due north. I joined forces with an officer in a cavalry regiment who had obtained long leave of absence like myself, and we had agreed to travel and shoot together. No time was to be lost for making a start. It was of the utmost importance to enter Thibet—also spelt Tibet or Tübet—so soon as ever the melting of the snow on the higher ranges would permit of a passage through the passes.

We obtained a good map of the district through which we proposed journeying, and having most carefully studied the different routes through British territory, determined on making for a pass through the snowy range called the Neti. The height of this pass was over sixteen thousand feet,

considerably higher than the loftiest peak in Europe. From the information we were able to obtain, it appeared that this particular pass presented fewer difficulties than the Neillum, Chor-Hoti, or other narrow clefts through the upper ranges of mountains. We journeyed in one day thirty miles to Almorah, a military station above Nynee Tal, where a Goorkha regiment was stationed. Here we bought two small tents of light weight for ourselves, and a third made out of coarse blankets for the two servants we proposed taking with us. We also purchased a number of baskets covered with leather, called *kiltas*, to be each filled with supplies to a weight of forty pounds, a load easily carried by a native on his shoulders. Camp-beds, a small table for each tent, folding-chairs, supplies of tinned soups, bacon, tea, sugar, and other necessaries of a like kind had to be provided. Gunpowder and lead was another most important consideration. Those were the days of muzzle-loaders; it was important that our *kilta* baskets should weigh as light as possible, and we finally decided that two hundred rounds for our rifles and the same quantity for our shot-guns must suffice, though it seemed little enough. I may here mention, however, that the above proved more than we required; for often, in spite of great toil and exertion, we did not fire a dozen rifle-shots in a week. Having carefully thought over everything, and obtained advice from some of the old residents of Almorah what to take with us and what to leave behind, we finally obtained a Government servant called a *chuprassie*, furnished with a *perwanna* or order to the head-men of villages to supply us with carriers. Early one morning we made a start, descending from Almorah into a deep, winding valley, following the upward course of a small river, and marching on an average ten miles a day. Later we crossed over a range of hills to a well-known camping-ground named Rammee, and thence by an up-and-down march to a village called Tappobeen. We found the heat of the low valley excessive; but as we gradually ascended higher and higher, the beauty of the wild scenery becoming more and more attractive as we proceeded, with the magnificent snow mountains, lovely beyond description, as a background, our longing to view the land beyond increased.

We were fortunate to meet the Deputy-Commissioner of the province encamped at Tappobeen. He was a well-known sportsman, who had several times visited Thibet. He asked us to dine with him on the evening of our arrival, and we found ourselves sitting at table in a sumptuous tent, and a dinner provided the like of which we had not enjoyed for many a day. Our host entertained us with *shikar* stories: how he had hunted and shot the wild yak and *Ovis ammon* of Thibet. Not only this; he advised us as to the best route we should take after crossing the snowy range; and what was of greater importance, he furnished us with the name and address of a well-known guide and shikaree who would pilot us to the best shooting-ground. Moreover, this same guide and leader, a Bhōtia named Dhun Singh, knew the Thibetans and their language, and with our knowledge of Hindustani, which he also understood, would act as interpreter to our expedition. We were to inquire for Dhun Singh at a village called Bompa, two marches on the British side of the Neti Pass. Having wished our kind host farewell, the following morning we made a fresh start, following the valley of the river Dhowlna, in places a narrow cleft cut through the mountains, with snow covering the hills on either side and a roaring torrent below. The bridges over this mountain torrent were of the most primitive, not to say dangerous, character, composed of two or three long pine-trees, wet and slippery, and often coated with ice, reaching from bank to bank, with small pieces of plank fastened across to give a precarious footing to the traveller. Often these dangerous bridges were forty or fifty feet above the bed of the stream, and the foaming torrent below was enough to try the nerves and head of any man attempting the passage across. I may here mention that when journeying through these narrow valleys, with great snowdrifts above the roadways, it is of great importance to make your march, during the spring and early summer, *as soon after daylight as possible*, for when once the power of the sun begins to affect the great masses of snow, avalanches become common about midday. I have often seen a great mass of snow suddenly give way, and with a roar like thunder come gliding down the mountain-side, bringing with it huge rocks and hundreds of spinning stones, gaining greater velocity each moment, and bounding with irresistible force down the steep sides till they eventually found a resting-place in the bed of the valley far below.

But to return to our 'voyage of discovery.' By steady marches we pushed on, till we finally reached the village of Bompa, two or three days' journey from the Neti Pass. Here we learned, to our chagrin, that none of the snow-passes were yet open. This was bad luck, for in ordinary seasons the snow melts sufficiently by the middle of spring—the time of year I allude to—to admit of travellers crossing to Thibet through the passes. However, we had much to think of and to employ our time before proceeding farther. We were fortunate in finding Dhun Singh, the man recommended to us by the Deputy-Commissioner, at home, and he readily consented to accompany us into Thibet, and to act as guide, interpreter, and shikaree of the expedition. He brought with him a young fellow named Daboo, to act as a gun-bearer and general servant. We were relieved to find that the two men readily fell in with our wishes, stipulating only for their food being supplied to them in addition to moderate wages. They also naturally wished that all supplies, beasts of burden, and three men to look after the latter should be obtained from their own village of Bompa. We consented to this, as also to many

other useful suggestions of the kind. The next thing was to discharge and pay up the Government *peon* or *chuprassie*, together with the gang of natives who had with much toil carried our worldly goods up those steep, rugged valleys.

Dhun Singh and his young comrade were both fine-looking, stalwart men, of good manners and address, and evidently accustomed to English sportsmen. Both men were Bhōtias, a people inhabiting certain villages below the snow-passes, and under the English Government. I may mention that these Bhōtias should not be confounded with the Bhutanese, or inhabitants of Bhutan proper—a people I know well from having served against them in the war of 1865, and who much resemble the Hunniahs, or inhabitants of Thibet, in appearance. Our stay at Bompa was rather prolonged, for the reasons I have already given; but, although we grudged the waste of time, there was still plenty of work and preparation to be made before our 'invasion of Thibet' commenced. Our guide informed us that it was absolutely necessary for us to take everything in the way of food with us, both for man and beast; that we should derive no assistance whatever from the Thibetans; but, on the contrary, that these people most assuredly would throw every hindrance in our way to prevent our penetrating their country. Accordingly we hired eight *jooboos*, a cross-bred animal between the yak and hill-cattle, extensively used for draught purposes, and accustomed to carry pack-loads up to one hundred and fifty pounds' weight. These animals are thick-set, sturdy creatures, accustomed to hill-climbing, and seldom give trouble to those in charge of them. Three extra men were necessary to look after and feed the *jooboos*, collect fuel, help to pitch the tents, light the fires, &c. We found by weighing our *kiltas* and other impedimenta that four *jooboos* were sufficient to carry everything we possessed, including our servants' clothing, pots and kettles, &c.; while the remaining four were to be loaded up with sacks of flour, bags of rice, a supply of ghee or clarified butter, some coarse tobacco, sugar, and the like. It was arranged, moreover, that so soon as half of our supplies was expended one of the extra men, with two *jooboos*, was to return to the village of Bompa by the shortest route, obtain fresh supplies, and rejoin us at some particular spot agreed upon beforehand.

On the evening of our seventh day's halt at Bompa we were delighted to hear that the Neti Ghât, as the natives termed this pass, was at last open, the snow having melted sufficiently to enable a party of Thibetans, with one hundred and fifty goats each bearing a small leather pack containing borax, to pass through the narrows and descend the precipitous pathway leading up to the pass. We determined to get under way with as little delay as possible, and the following morning saw us moving up the valley to the village of Neti, where we again came to a halt. In the afternoon I went out with Dhun Singh after *burhel* (*Ovis natura*), the blue wild sheep of the Himalayas and Thibet, a splendid animal, standing three feet at the shoulder, and grazing in flocks on the fresh grass watered by the melting snow. We found a small flock; but, as is the case with all wild sheep, the animals proved wary in the extreme, and baffled all our endeavours to creep within rifle-shot; and we returned after dark empty-handed and tired.

Crossing these Himalayan snow-passes in the spring of the year, especially when they first open, is always a trying ordeal to Europeans. The Neti Pass is well known to be one of the easiest to overcome, having an altitude of only sixteen thousand six hundred feet, which, though considerably higher than the loftiest peak in Europe, is of a lower elevation than the Chor-Hoti, hard by, or many of the great passes farther away. Nevertheless, we had a hard struggle to gain the summit of the Neti, often sinking up to our knees in snow, slipping and tumbling at every step, and compelled to halt again and again owing to the rarefied atmosphere. At last, however, we gained the crest of the pass and obtained a first look at Thibet. I well remember a feeling of disappointment stealing over me at that dreary view. I thought that I had never seen anything more desolate or sterile in my life. Perhaps a dark, gloomy day made the outlook appear at its worst. A waste of low, brown-coloured hills, mingled with drifts of snow, lay below us, stretching far away till a chain of snow-clad mountains shut out the distance. Not a tree or even a green bush was to be seen, not a living creature on the move anywhere around, nor a sound except that of the bitter north wind singing in our ears. But it was time to push on. Our guide had expected a guard of Tartars, or Hoonyahs, as they are locally called, at the top of the pass, where they generally await, and endeavour to stop all Europeans journeying to Thibet. Probably we had arrived earlier than they had expected. At any rate, we determined to move on at once before these gentry put in an appearance. A 'palaver' to settle our future movements would, we thought, be far better held round the camp-fire than on the bleak summit of the Neti Pass.

We found the descent on the northern side even worse than what we had already gone through; but, after many a slip and tumble, we at length reached our camping-ground before nightfall. The spot chosen for the purpose was well sheltered from the keen blast, with water close at hand. We all set to work unloading the *jooboos* and pitching the tents; fires were soon lighted, and a cup of hot tea in a measure restored the circulation to our half-frozen bodies. We congratulated ourselves on the good start we had made, and further flattered ourselves that by making an early march the following morning we would elude altogether the troublesome Hoonyah guard, having already given them the slip; but we were quickly undeceived. Our tracks in the snow and the curling smoke from many fires had betrayed us. A clattering of hoofs

on the mountain-side made us look up, and we saw a party of some ten or twelve Hoonyahs, mounted on ponies, coming down on us; and by the way they lashed their steeds and hurried the pace it was evident that they were not in the best of humour. Then ensued an angry altercation between our guide and these people. We guessed pretty well what it was all about—namely, that we had dared to enter their country without first obtaining permission. Gradually, however, things improved, and the angry voices moderated. Dhun Singh, accustomed to the Hoonyahs and their ways, proved himself to be an excellent diplomatist, took things very quietly, and presently came to tell us that he had succeeded in making an agreement with our troublesome visitors, subject to the approval of the chief officer of the district, by which we were permitted to travel and hunt for a few weeks in a certain direction, but only over a limited extent of country, and that an escort of four mounted men would be sent to accompany us. Shortly afterwards we were pleased to see the Hoonyahs walk up to their ponies, fling themselves on to their miserable-looking steeds, and quickly disappear in the darkness. The following morning our escort put in an appearance. They were young-looking men, dressed in the ordinary way of the country: no covering to the head; a long sheepskin coat, with a girdle or belt round the waist, to below the knees; and high cloth boots kept up with garters completed their equipment. We knew well that these men had been sent to dog our steps and watch our every movement. They were under the control of an official called the *tumpan*, with whom we later had an interview. They evidently had received orders to keep away from our camp circle, and to render us no assistance whatever. They always kept aloof from us, picketing their ponies and taking up their quarters for the night away from our bivouac. We noticed them constantly coming and going, evidently keeping their employers informed of our whereabouts and the direction we were taking.

All this espionage and putting every possible difficulty in our way to hinder our movements was most uncalled for and unreasonable, for these same people, so soon as ever the snow-passes opened sufficiently to permit of beasts of burden in the shape of goats and sheep to pass through, freely entered British territory without let or hindrance, and did a considerable trade, at a good profit, with borax, salt, and other commodities, in exchange for flour, sugar, and the like, which they obtained from the inhabitants of large villages far down the valleys of the Himalayas. The Hoonyahs would not believe, or obstinately refused to entertain the idea, that Englishmen came solely to hunt the wild animals inhabiting their mountains and valleys, but declared that we came to 'spy into the nakedness of the land,' and later to take it from them—a truly absurd idea, for a more barren, sterile country, only habitable for a few months in the year, could hardly be imagined.

A far more likely reason for this hostile attitude towards us, and the every endeavour put in force to prevent Europeans from travelling in Thibet, is the pressure brought to bear on the people by their priests—the Lamas—who for their own purposes endeavour by every means in their power to keep the people in ignorance and in darkness as to what is going on in the world.

We were glad to strike camp and be off early the following morning, steering in the direction of a place called Tazang, where, our guide informed us, if first on the ground, we should meet with *Ovis ammon*, as also *burhel* and other game. Our usual manner of proceeding when on the move was to strike camp early, pack the tents and baggage on our beasts of burden, and start them off for some spot determined on for the next halt. Generally speaking, the men in charge of our heavily laden *jooboos* followed some one of the many winding valleys which everywhere intersect the country, to reach a new camping-ground, in preference to attempting short-cuts across the mountains over rough, dangerous ground.

After seeing the rear-guard make a start, we ourselves, under the guidance of our two Bhōtia shikarees, took to the hills in search of game, generally reaching our newly pitched camp about sundown. Almost invariably we found our tents pitched on some greensward near to a stream of pure water; and most undoubtedly one of the great advantages to the traveller in that part of Thibet beyond the Neti Pass is the abundance of good water. On the other hand, a scarcity of fuel was sometimes a difficulty. It is always well to keep up a fire throughout the night when encamped in a wild country; but often we could only provide sufficient fuel for cooking purposes. There are no trees in the part of Thibet I am speaking of. I can only remember one solitary tree worthy of the name. A thicket of scrub-jungle grows in patches on mountain-side and valley-slope, but affords nothing substantial to burn. My followers, when on the march, broke off dry sticks and pulled up the roots of bushes; but the only real stand-by was the dried dung of yaks and cattle. Our rifles, generally speaking, kept us well supplied with fresh meat—the best of mutton from the wild sheep of the mountains. We also shot sundry blue hares and a species of red-legged partridge called *chukoe;* and when the larder was empty—then and then only—we took a base advantage of the numerous flocks of beautiful snow-pigeons which frequented the cliffs of some of the rocky valleys. Moreover, the larger streams contained a species of small trout, which my camp-followers sometimes succeeded in capturing in considerable numbers by the simple process of sinking a wicker basket in some deep, narrow channel of a rivulet, and then thrashing the stream down from above with sticks towards the mouth of the trap, which, on being quickly lifted and the water allowed to run off, would often leave half-a-dozen unfortunates flapping

about at the bottom. This was doubtless the worst of poaching, but we held that the end justified the means, for these little fish afforded a welcome addition to our sometimes scanty fare. For vegetables our cook knew where to find wild onions; he also made us an excellent dish, much resembling spinach, from the fresh shoots plucked from a wild nettle.

There was an ample field of work for the botanist in this part of Thibet. I noticed many beautiful wild flowers, some new to me; also heaths and grasses. Orchids, too, are said to be common in some parts of the country.

The geologist also would discover much interesting matter. Beds of shell fossils are often come across, and ammonites may be brought to light by breaking certain round dark stones common in the dry beds of snow-washed nullahs. The climate during the early part of our visit was unsettled, sometimes stormy, the cold intense, with squalls of snow every now and again. Soon, however, a change set in, with a long spell of bright, sunny weather. The power of the sun about midday became surprisingly great, accompanied by a fierce glare, which, combined with the rarefied air, proved most trying to the eyes. The sportsman or traveller under such circumstances should always take the precaution of wearing smoke-tinted glasses, for by neglecting to do so he runs the risk of suffering from snow-blindness; but worst of all to the European visitor, and hard to bear uncomplainingly, is the bitter cold blast from the north, which blows almost continuously in those inhospitable regions, penetrating the thickest and warmest of clothing. Sometimes this terrible north wind died away at sunset, but more often prevailed throughout the night, and made itself felt through any number of piled-on blankets, even at times rendering sleep impossible.

During the first part of our visit we saw few of the inhabitants of the country; but when the snow had sufficiently melted to expose the pasture to view, large flocks and herds made their appearance, in the charge of considerable numbers of Tartars, including many women and children. The object of their coming was to graze their domestic animals during the short summer months on the fresh grass of the plain or hillside. In addition to hundreds of sheep and goats, we also saw a considerable number of yaks, also *jooboos*, and a few ponies. The yaks were mostly black-and-white in colour, or altogether black, with thick bodies and very short, sturdy legs. When they are moving, the head is carried low, thus giving the animal the appearance of having an arched back. Long hair hangs from the chest and lower part of the body, terminating with a short, thick, bunchy tail. The yak is most useful as a beast of burden in descending snow-drifts, when its short, thick legs come into play; and even when weighed down by a heavy load, provided that the snow be not too soft, its cloven feet, opening to full extent, enable the creature to gain such a hold as to descend a slope of forty-five degrees in safety.

My Bhōtia shikaree Dhun Singh, who had been present at the death of many a bull *bunchour*, assured me that the wild bull yak, or *bunchour*, was fully twice the size of the ordinary *chowr gâi*, or tame yak cow; and that the wild bull is invariably coal-black in colour, and not difficult to stalk, altogether differing in this respect from the wild sheep of Thibet, which are the most wary among all wild animals. In spite of working very hard and searching all the most likely spots for this animal, we were unsuccessful in ever coming across a *bunchour* bull. Unfortunately, our shikarees told us, the previous winter had been so mild that none of the great bulls had been driven south to their usual haunts in the Keo and Lalkh nullahs.

A COMEDY OF LIEUTENANTS.

PART III.

THE Jerbourg signal-station stood out on the heights at the south-eastern corner of the island, between the bays of Fermain and Moulin Huet. It was a simple collection of neat, whitewashed shanties, with a tiny house for the lieutenant in charge. The first commandant had been a zealous horticulturist, so the little cottages were covered with clusters of clematis, while the gardens were rich with calceolarias and wallflowers, and even standard roses. To O'Flanagan, who had not spent six weeks on dry land for five years, the tiny settlement seemed eloquent of rest and contentment. He reviewed his little garrison, and then fell-to at the papers in the strong-box, scarcely raising his eyes till the waning light warned him of the flight of time.

When he had dined he sent for Pugsley, pointed to an easy-chair, pushed the rum-decanter towards him, and produced one of those heavy slabs of 'ship's,' which, to the astonished landsman, look far more like the section of a tree with all the bark on it than anything he has ever seen in the shape of tobacco. Pugsley was one of the merriest-hearted men, whose tongue only needed confidence, tobacco, and rum to set it going like a mill.

'Well, Pugsley,' said O'Flanagan, 'you've a lonely spot up here, I'm thinking, in this outlying crow's-nest of a place?'

'It's rather dull, sir, in winter; but with the short nights we don't mind it. Plenty to do keeping a sharp lookout, sir, in these times—good deal of logging to be done.'

'Well, I suppose if the French took a look at us

we could give a good account of them. You seem to have a lot of fellows in garrison at the fort yonder—Fort George, d' ye call it?'

This gave Pugsley an opportunity which he seldom got, and never missed, of pouring out the floods of his ridicule upon red-coats in general and the garrison of Fort George in particular; and for the next hour a listener might have caught such phrases as 'give me a few mortars, and I'd knock the place to pieces in fifty minutes'—'red herrings'—'chaps just fresh from the plough-tail'—'no more notion of a gun than of a mermaid'—'good for nothing but to dig potatoes for the colonel's lady'—'colonel himself has to come up here if he wants to know anything.' But Pugsley had the observing eye and the ready tongue; and before O'Flanagan turned in that night he found himself possessed not only of a very fair notion of Guernsey society, but of a hundred and one pieces of that small information so necessary to a stranger among strangers, if he is to be spared embarrassment and awkwardness.

The little colony at Jerbourg were early afoot, but they were later by some hours than the lieutenant; for when Mrs Pugsley, fresh and shining in her print dress and 'scoop,' sallied forth at six o'clock to feed her chickens, who should come striding over the grass towards her but the lieutenant, his boots all covered with dew, and in his hand a pretty bunch of wild flowers, which he presented to her with the gayest beaming smile and bow!

'Morning, Misthress Pugsley. I've been improving the shining hour, as the poet says, by wandering among your lovely little bays and coves. I never sleep a wink my first night ashore, so I just rose with the sun and tramped out, communing with nature, as ye may say.'

'Ah, sir, Pugsley was just like that when he was first home. He'd jump up at midnight and put his clothes on, and say he must go on deck for the middle watch. And when he found there was no deck, he'd tramp up and down the garden for hours with his pipe. But I soon stopped that; for I found I wasn't sure of a night's rest. So I just took and hid his clothes when he'd gone to bed. And even then, if you'll believe me, more than once did he turn out in his night-shirt, grumbling and mumbling to himself, "'Tisn't the rig o' the day; 'tisn't the rig o' the day." But will you take a glass of milk, sir, after your early walk?'

. . . . . .

That night the dinner-party at Government House was a great success. The Governor, for a man so cheery, came to the table in low spirits. The departure of Pengelly had depressed him, and early in the meal he asked the company, in a voice touched by deep and kindly feeling, to drink to the absent officer's health and safe return. This led to a series of glowing eulogies upon Pengelly—a series to which nearly every one round the table had something to contribute. And O'Flanagan, it appeared, had heard about Pengelly more than Pengelly's own modesty had ever imparted to them. It was an easy transition from Pengelly to himself; and as he poured forth anecdote after anecdote the depression vanished from the Governor's brow, and he shook again and again with laughter. It turned out that O'Flanagan had been taken prisoner by the French shortly before the Peace of Amiens, and had been sent to Paris, where he not only had a long talk with M. de Talleyrand, but had actually been presented to the First Consul himself. When one remembers how vague and misty were the popular ideas of Napoleon during the great war, it needs no telling to picture how the company hung on O'Flanagan's words as he told what he had to tell of his interview with Boney: how the great man patted his back, pulled his ear, and said in a stage-whisper to Bourrienne that with a few score such naval officers as this fellow he'd sweep the English from the sea; and if only his ship-captains in Egypt had been men of this calibre he'd have changed the face of the world. Also, how he proposed that O'Flanagan should enter his service, pointing out that England was an Irishman's natural foe and France his natural friend; that the Irish were of the Gallican temperament; and that, altogether, an Irishman taking King George's pay was no better than a traitor to the land of his birth. Further, with what a patriotic thump of his chest O'Flanagan, while thanking the First Consul for his good opinion, told him that, having taken an oath of fidelity to King George, he could not see his way to serve General Bonaparte; that if, when the two countries were at peace, the General should still find himself in need of naval talent, the lieutenant might always be heard of at the 'Keppel's Head,' Portsea Hard. Still further, how the First Consul not only exchanged snuff-boxes with the lieutenant, but exchanged the lieutenant himself against Lieutenant Montalembert, sending him home by the very next cartel-ship, with a letter to Mr Fox in which special attention was drawn to the lieutenant as an officer of entirely remarkable abilities and worthy a ship of his own. All these details were meat and drink to the company, so long cut off from every credible source of French gossip. Many were the stirring tales, too, which O'Flanagan had to tell in the way of his profession. And he had a score of anecdotes about the renowned Sheridan, half-corsair, half-Paladin, who was beginning to share with Boney himself the magnificently mysterious fame which envelops the only half-known. And then, also, the lieutenant proved to be a man of infinite jest, and kept the table roaring till a full hour after the decorous servants at Government House were wont to be helping the guests on with their great-coats and putting the silver extinguishers on the candelabra.

OUR UNDEVELOPED RESOURCES OF PEAT.

By W. J. MILLAR.

MANY attempts have been made both in this and in other countries to utilise peat as fuel. Where coal is abundant and of easy access this mineral is looked upon as quite sufficient for our wants; but where, as in many cases, the coalfields are few or of little value, and peat-bogs are plentiful, attention is turned to the utilisation of the dried peat or turf for heating purposes. In our own country peat is pretty widely distributed, not only on the low and flat lands, but on the upper slopes and tops of our hilly districts.

Ireland has the largest development of peat-bogs in our islands, no less than one-ninth of the whole area of that island being more or less of a peaty nature.

The depth and condition of peat-mosses differ much, varying from a spongy moss to a firm, compact texture of woody fibre and earthy material.

Many of the peat-bogs reach depths of twenty feet, and it is said that in some of the Irish bogs depths to the extent of forty feet are reached. In these deep deposits the consistency varies from a light-coloured soft moss at the surface to a dense black moss at the bottom, compacted by the pressure of the material lying above. In this condition it becomes more like the allied mineral, coal. Indeed, the sequence of formation from peat to coal seems to be somewhat as follows. The figures show average percentages of constituents:

	Carbon.	Hydrogen.	Oxygen, Ash, &c.
Peat (dried)	59	6	35
Lignite	67	5	28
Brown Coal	73	5	22
Bituminous or House-hold Coal	82	5	13
Anthracite	94	3	3

In lignite the woody structure is still noticeable; in brown coal this structure has practically disappeared, and ordinary coal (so-called bituminous) is in a still further mineralised condition. In anthracite (or natural coke, as it is geologically called) we reach a still harder and more brittle substance. In all these forms, as will be seen from the above table, we have the same important chemical constituents, of which the carbon and hydrogen represent the value of the fuel.

Peat is found mostly in temperate climates. Its heating-power has been determined so that comparisons can be made as to its calorific value with that of the harder mineral. Thus the total heat of combustion of one pound of ordinary bituminous coal may be taken on an average to be about fourteen thousand thermal units, whilst that of fairly dry peat is only about seven thousand units. This is for peat dried in the ordinary way in the air, in which case it still contains about 25 per cent. of moisture. If thoroughly dried its calorific value may be raised to about nine thousand five hundred thermal units. The thermal unit is the quantity of heat required to raise one pound of water at 39° Fahrenheit through one degree of temperature.

Peat is a more bulky material for its weight than coal, unless when compressed by machinery. Thus the average specific gravity of ordinary coal may be taken as about 1·3, whilst that of peat is about 0·45. So that without special compression it will take up about three times the space of coal for the same weight, and as the evaporative power is only about one-half that of coal, it will occupy six times the space of coal for equal evaporative effect.

Peat has long been used as a fuel for domestic fires, and the right to 'cast peats' was one of the privileges attached to some old leases. It has sometimes been made into charcoal for metallurgical purposes.

Peat has a wonderful preservative power over articles embedded in it and on animal and vegetable matter, and we are indebted to this for many 'finds' of archæological value. Besides this preservative power, peat has been applied in the form of peat or mud baths at various health-resorts; baths taken in this way are said to have a recuperative action upon the health of the patient.

The rate of growth of peat seems to have varied much, depending on climatic and other conditions, and there is consequently much difference in the depth of the various deposits. The visitor to the island of Lewis will find some interesting examples of peat formation. The road from Stornoway to Loch Roag for sixteen miles leads right across the island. The peaty nature of the soil is noticeable in the moorlands, the turf-walls, and the dark-brown colour of the water, and on arriving at the Standing Stones of Callernish he will have an object-lesson on the comparative rate of growth of peaty soil. The upper parts of the great monoliths of the circle are covered with a thick growth of a gray lichen; but for a height of four or five feet above the ground there is so much less growth that the horizontal line of separation is quite marked, and calls at once for explanation. The reason is that Sir James Mathieson, the late proprietor of the island, who did so much to reclaim the waste-lands, made at one time excavation in the surface of the ground round the stones down to their foundations. This led to the removal of from four to five feet of peaty soil which had accumulated since they had been erected or disused by the prehistoric race who had raised them. Taking an average rate of growth of peat of, say, six inches in

the century, this gives about one thousand years of interval. The age of the stone circle may be much greater, as in all probability there would be some occupation of the site by the builders and their successors for a long time after their erection. Peat is interesting from its being an illustration of the earlier stages of the formation of coal, and geologists tell us that our peat-deposits date from a mild period in our earth's history succeeding the last glacial period.

On account of the great bulk of peat required to give a corresponding evaporative power to coal, inventors have turned their attention both in this and other countries to the reduction of this bulk by machinery, the process being to reduce the whole to pulp, form this into bricks by compression, and then have these finally dried. As with coal, peat offers some opportunity to chemists to recover many volatile substances which have a commercial value. The expense of the various operations has hitherto been against complete success.

In Germany a large industry has grown up in the manufacture of fuel briquettes. The material used is mainly brown coal or peat. When peat briquettes are made, in some cases the peat, after being cleaned and disintegrated, is compressed into cubes and dried by artificial means. Peat naturally contains about 80 per cent. of water, but by special drying apparatus this may be reduced to about 20 per cent. In some cases the dried peat is carbonised by passing it through hot rollers, thus forming an artificial coal, which can be moulded into briquette form.

Works have been established near Dumfries for the manufacture of peat-fuel, prepared peat for packing fruit, &c., and granulated peat for enriching garden soils. Quite recently electricity has been applied for the purpose of disintegrating the fibres. To effect this the freshly cut peat is packed into rapidly rotating cylinders by which the water is expelled. A current of electricity is made to pass through the mass, which heats and disintegrates the fibres; afterwards it is passed through rollers and moulded into briquettes. A demonstration of this process was recently given at Charlton, Kent.

Mr Edward Atkinson, 31 Milk Street, Boston, U.S.A., has issued a valuable report on bog-fuel, coke, and the secondary products of gas. It is there mentioned that the American Peat-Fuel Company has made coke for several years from salt-marsh mud taken from the sides of a tidal creek. A bog at Brookfield, Mass., has been sounded to the depth of forty-seven feet without reaching bottom. Fourteen hundred pounds' wet-weight from this pit yields eight hundred pounds of fuel bone-dry. The mud is to be artificially dried, moulded into hollow cylinders, and made into coke, at a cost of three dollars a ton—which cost may be reduced. The same report has a paper by Mr H. H. Wotherspoon, junior, on the art of making bog-fuel.

With a fairly good calorific value, combined with compactness in bulk, peat briquettes should be of commercial value in many districts where good coal is scarce.

It is to be hoped that the application of electricity as an assistant may prove advantageous. In many processes of a chemical nature the electric current has proved of great importance; it is therefore to be hoped that it may be applied successfully to deal with the great waste-products of our boglands; and if the power to drive the dynamo can be got cheaply, as from the flow of neighbouring streams, we may see new industries rising in districts whose resources have not hitherto been utilised.

THE INTERCEPTED LETTER.

By John Leys.

'YOU'LL ha'e heard the news, nae doobt, Miss Maxwell?' said Miss MacGowan as she dribbled out the precious grains of tea very carefully—tea was four shillings a pound in those days—into the small round copper scale.

'I 'm no' aware,' said her customer.

'The auld minister's son has come hame—Alec—him that ran awa' an' 'listed. Weel, he 's come hame a colonel, nae less! A braw, upstandin' man, wi' the e'e o' a hawk. The toon 'll be rale prood o' him. He 's thinkin' o' buildin' a hoose for himsel' at Blackwatter Fit—so they say. Maybe you 'll no' mind him, though. Ye would be a wee lassie when he gaed awa'.'

Miss MacGowan was so intent upon making up the half-pound of tea without the waste of a single particle that she did not notice that Miss Maxwell made no reply. Finding that the tin box that held her string was empty, she went into the back-shop to fetch a ball of twine, and with her absence a wonderful change came over the pale face of the gentle old maid who stood in front of the counter. It grew young again: a soft blush stole over the cheeks which were not yet withered; a humid light came into the sweet, brown eyes; a long, gentle sigh parted the delicate lips.

'Mind him!' She recalled the words with a wistful smile. Little did Miss MacGowan know! Little did any one at Avonholme, for the matter of that, know what the enlisting of Alec Napier had meant for her.

Miss MacGowan's wonderful memory was wrong for once. Ailie Maxwell had been a tall girl of seventeen when the handsome young scapegrace, whose

home was the old parish manse of Avonholme, had hastened over the meadows in the dewy dawn of a summer's morning to the cottage under the rowan-tree to bid his sweetheart good-bye. Of course it was only a boy and girl affair, not recognised by, and indeed wholly unknown to, the authorities, but none the less sweet on that account. The youth and maid knew nothing of the world, still less, perhaps, of their own hearts. The lad had enlisted in a fit of disgust at being engaged—much against his will—to fill the hated post of junior clerk in the office of an uncle, a manufacturer of muslin curtains; and very soon after joining his regiment it was sent to India. There the lad saw much service, and after some years of good work and patient waiting he was given a commission.

After that his success had been rapid, and he was now able to retire on half-pay with the rank of colonel—not a brilliant position exactly, yet an exalted one in the eyes of a small country town which had never since the days of Queen Mary produced so distinguished a soldier.

One or two letters had found their way from the banks of the Ganges to the little dormer-windowed cottage under the rowan-tree; but the correspondence did not last long. It was scarcely in the nature of things that it should. Alison Maxwell recognised this when she grew up; and whatever pain she may have felt at the defection of her lover passed away in the fuller light that years brought to her. Yet she had never forgotten him. It would be too much, perhaps, to say that she had remained single for his sake, but she had declined more than one good offer for no very tangible reason. She had long since lost sight completely of her old lover, for the minister died not long after his son left the country, and the family had also left the parish. And now he had come back.

He was at that moment within a few hundred yards of her! No sooner did this thought enter into Miss Maxwell's mind than she was possessed with a burning desire to be gone. The thought that they might suddenly come face to face in the market-place or one of the village streets was unendurable to her. She scarcely knew whether she desired to see him again or not. She felt as if the meeting would be too painful; but, if it took place at all, the meeting must not be in public, and he must come to her. The thought that some foolish gossip might couple their names together, as some had coupled them in the old days—that some one might even say that she had come into the town that day on the chance of meeting her old friend, was torture to her. She was impatient to be gone.

Miss MacGowan could not find a ball of string, and after long search was forced to fall back (with many apologies) upon a piece that had seen service before. It seemed to Miss Maxwell that she would never be done tying up the parcel, yet a sort of pride forbade her to hurry the old lady by so much as a look.

When the half-dozen little parcels of groceries were safely packed away in the basket—one of superior style and finish—that Miss Maxwell carried on her left arm, the amount due was with some difficulty ascertained, and the bill, duly receipted, was laid on the counter. No sooner was this done than Miss Maxwell picked it up, folded it carefully, and put it into her purse. Then she took up her basket, and saying hurriedly, 'Good-day to ye, Miss MacGowan,' prepared to depart.

Miss MacGowan stood aghast. The cash nexus—to use a once familiar phrase—had been entirely omitted! Miss MacGowan tried to speak, but no words would come. How could she frame a sentence that would not sound like an accusation? And suppose Miss Maxwell should actually be under the impression that she had paid the bill? Could anything be more dreadful? It would be easy, as she reflected with a bitter pang, to prove that the money had not been paid, for the till was there to speak for itself, and she did not dream for a moment that Miss Maxwell would think of disputing its silent testimony. It held nothing but a shilling and a few coppers. But to have opened her till would have been a confession of poverty such as Miss MacGowan had never yet made. She felt as if she would rather die than let the real state of things be known. But could she afford to lose such a sum?

Miss Maxwell was putting up her umbrella in the little narrow doorway, for a shower had come on, and the umbrella stuck fast and would not go up. Now was the time, if she could only speak! But suppose Miss Maxwell were to say she had paid the money? Her lips were moving, but no sounds came.

Miss Maxwell, still fighting with her umbrella and encumbered with her basket, noticed Miss MacGowan's expression, and came back into the shop.

'What is't, Miss MacGowan?' she inquired.

Miss MacGowan peered up the street between the glass jars of sweets in her window, then turned her head and peered down the street. Yet she said nothing.

A sudden chill crept down Miss Maxwell's spine.

'Miss MacGowan,' she said solemnly, 'as I am a livin' woman, I never paid you your account!'

'Miss Maxwell, as I'm a livin' woman, ye never did!'

Miss Maxwell set down her basket on the stone floor of the shop, and turned red as fire.

'And you saw me put the receipt in my purse, and never said a word! I can't say I think you did right. What if I had never thought of it?'

'Oh, I would have tellt ye the next time ye cam' in,' said Miss MacGowan, to whom the sudden relief came like a shock. 'I can't afford to lose seven and elevenpence like that.'

'But why didn't you tell me at the time?'

'Well, I thought something else was in your mind. You seemed a bit distractit-like,' said Miss MacGowan as she put down the change.

Miss Maxwell's feeling of annoyance was now driven out and annihilated by a real fear. Miss MacGowan had noticed her absence of mind. What if she should ascribe it to its true cause? What if it should occur to her that she was speaking of Colonel Napier at the time when she (Miss Maxwell) seemed to have lost her wits? The suggestion made her turn hot all over, and brought so strange a look to her eyes that Miss MacGowan for the first time wondered what had occurred to upset her old acquaintance.

To think that any one should imagine that she, at her time of life, was allowing her mind to run on a man! She felt as if she could never set foot in Avonholme again, she was so ashamed. She hurried through the streets, terrified lest she should meet the Colonel at some corner, and with light, rapid steps climbed the steep lane that led to Rowan-Tree Cottage.

Half-way up the brae a graceful, girlish figure came flying down the path to meet her.

'Auntie, what's the hurry, and you so loaded? Give me the basket. Why didn't you tell Miss MacGowan to send up the things? And, oh! do you know, I have had a visitor while you were away. You won't guess who? Ah, I see you know! Yes, it was Colonel Napier. I was down at the well, and he came riding by, and he stopped to give his horse a drink, and so we got talking. He said he was an old friend of yours, and I asked him to come in and wait till you came home. He did come in, and sat for a while in the parlour; but he had to go, he said. I hope I didn't do wrong, auntie?'

'Wrong, child? How?'

'Asking him in when you were out.'

'No, Ailie,' said Miss Maxwell absently. 'Of course you did quite right.'

She allowed her niece to take the basket from her arm, and went slowly up the hill. She had just realised that she was very tired.

At the top of the brae, under the large rowan-tree that gave its name to the cottage, stood Miss Maxwell's dwelling. It was but a small place, and the rooms seemed smaller than one would have expected to see them, on account of the thick stone walls. They were like rooms in a doll's house, and the little garden on which the windows looked, with its narrow walks, tall borders of bushy box, and miniature flower-beds, looked like a doll's garden. The furniture was old: some of it had been there for three generations. The chairs were spindle-legged and black as ebony. There was a square rosewood piano, a Broadwood, sweet in tone after half a century of use. The odour of preserved rose-leaves was everywhere, and mingled with the scent of the honeysuckle that clambered round the porch. When they reached the cottage Miss Maxwell was glad to sit down and untie her bonnet-strings, while she watched Ailie get the dinner ready. Ailie, her niece and namesake, was a very pretty girl, with the unusual charm of white simplicity. She actually had not the faintest idea how pretty she was. There was little wonder that Colonel Napier had waited an hour for the return of his old friend.

That night Miss Maxwell could not sleep. She blamed the weather. During these silent hours she made up her mind that if Colonel Napier should come to see her she would receive him exactly as she would have welcomed any old acquaintance. They had never really been lovers, she told herself—not rightly. It was a long, long time ago, and of course, though she remembered, he had forgotten. Somehow it never occurred to her that he might be a married man. Next day Miss Maxwell tried her best not to expect a visit from Colonel Napier, and she succeeded fairly well.

On the morning after that she awoke with an inward conviction that he would call that day. When she had finished dressing she looked at herself in the glass, and reflected that perhaps it was just as well that the Colonel had not come the day before, when she was looking tired for want of a night's sleep. The gentle influences of her life, pure air, the companionship of birds and flowers, early hours, the absence of worry and excitement, had been to her the elixir of youth. Her fair hair was still glossy and abundant; her gentle lips were still fresh; her complexion was as delicate as that of a girl. Her demeanour was staid, as became a woman of forty-three; her movements were deliberate—a certain weakness of the heart, from which she had always suffered, made her careful about exerting herself—but in face and figure she was still young and winsome. She turned away from the mirror with a blush and a little laugh that ended in a sigh.

'You are looking bonny to-day, auntie,' said Ailie the second as she looked at her aunt over the breakfast-table. Miss Maxwell said nothing, but poured a second supply of cream into her niece's cup. She was very fond of Ailie, whom she had brought up from childhood, and she often looked forward with something like dismay to the time when they would be parted, for, as all the parish knew, Ailie was engaged to marry young Dr Hamilton.

Miss Maxwell had many presentiments, most of which turned out wrong, and were no more heard of. For once, however, a premonition of hers behaved in a conscientious manner. As she was watering her mignonette that evening she was forced to press her hand suddenly to her side to check the beating of her heart, nearly dropping the watering-can, for she could see the tall figure of the Colonel moving rapidly across the strip of ground that separated the garden from the open space at the top of the brae. In another minute he came stalking across the garden, paying no attention to the twists of the baby footpaths, nor injuring the flower-beds, but striding right over them.

She dropped the watering-can. She forgot her gardening-gloves, covered with soil. She only saw

one thing—his face. The six-and-twenty years were 'a mist that rolled away.' She could not speak his name, nor, for a moment, could he utter hers. Ailie stood by, observant, much interested.

'Will you not come into the house and drink a little raspberry vinegar or red-currant wine?' asked Miss Maxwell when they had returned to earth again. Inwardly, the Colonel shuddered at the very names of those fearsome compounds; but he dissembled successfully, and avoided the ordeal without giving offence—a thing Dr Hamilton, Ailie's sweetheart, never managed to do.

'Did you leave your horse at the well?' asked Ailie; and the Colonel, glad of an excuse for looking at her, turned round to her quickly, saying:

'No; I walked over from Tweedhall, for I thought a horse might be in the way.'

Nothing Colonel Napier could have said could have impressed his listeners more than this commonplace reply, for Tweedhall was an historic mansion, the residence of one of the county members, and the finest house in the Upper Ward. Nothing could have told them more plainly that he now belonged to a world very different from theirs, and was visiting them, not because they were equals, but because Miss Maxwell and he were very old friends. Miss Maxwell thought of the raspberry vinegar—which on a hot day even the minister was glad to quaff—and blushed. She was silent for a good part of the time the Colonel sat with them on the garden-seat. She could not help it. She felt as if she were in an unreal world—a world of dreams. He was so unlike what she had remembered, so unlike any picture her fancy had formed of him, yet so clearly, so emphatically Alec Napier and no other, that it seemed to her, intimate as they had been in the old days, she had never known the true man until now.

In consequence of her silence the Colonel naturally addressed the greater part of his conversation to Ailie. Once, indeed, he ventured to call her by that sweet pet name, and Miss Maxwell gave a little start, thereby reminding him that the name was her own. How often it had fallen from his lips in days gone by!

Given two sympathetic women for listeners, and a soldier who is not too morbidly self-conscious to give a plain account of his adventures, there can be no lack of subjects for conversation. The Colonel's visit was a great success, and in a day or two it was repeated. After that Rowan-Tree Cottage welcomed him, on an average, twice a week. He treated aunt and niece very much alike, called both impartially by their Christian names, and told stories and retailed jokes with equal good-humour whether it was the old Ailie or the young Ailie that happened to be listening to him. People talked, of course. Some said that the doctor would need to look out, or he would lose his sweetheart; but Dr Hamilton went on his way and took no notice.

One night towards the end of July Miss Maxwell, who had been working in the garden in the sun all afternoon, felt rather tired, and after tea went out to the little arbour to rest. Ailie was out, having gone to take tea with a neighbour. The sun was near his setting, and the level rays made the windows of the humble dwellings on the outskirts of the town shine like so many mirrors of burnished gold. The blue smoke went up straight into the still air from a hundred hearths. The evening scent of the sweet-peas and sweet-briar, Nature's incense, rose heavenward from a thousand censers filled by angel hands. Miss Maxwell's eyes rose from the book she was reading, and her heart gave a painful throb. The tall figure of Colonel Napier could be seen coming up the brae. He went up to the cottage; the door stood open, and he went inside. Then he reappeared, looking around him. In another moment he had spied her out, and came towards her, upright, smiling, with outstretched hand, just like the Alec she had known long ago!

Almost in silence he took her hand and seated himself by her side.

For some minutes the silence continued.

'Where's Ailie?' he asked; and she told him. There was not a trace of disappointment in his face.

'Do you remember when you used to go fishing with me in the Avon?' he asked, turning towards her with a smile. 'You were the only exception to the rule that no girls were allowed to go fishing.'

She laughed a pleasant, musical laugh.

'Yes,' she said; 'and I remember you used to make me carry the bait-can and our "pieces." That was my share in the pleasuring.'

'Surely I wasn't so bad as all that!' he laughed; 'though I dare say I was a little beast. Most boys are. But do you remember the turnip-lantern I made for you one Hallowe'en, and how you frightened old Mrs Semple nearly out of her wits with it?'

Of course she remembered. What incident of those dear days had she forgotten? They went on talking of the past—of old men and women now in their quiet resting-places in the churchyard on the hill, of some who had wandered over the seas never to return, of some who had boys and lassies playing where they themselves used to play—till the sun went down, and the long gloaming faded into night. But the last memory—the memory of the morning when he came through the wet clover in the clear, fresh light of the summer sunrise to bid her farewell—was not recalled. Why did he hesitate to speak of it, she wondered? Surely not because he feared that it might cause her pain? She would mention it herself, lest any such thought should be lingering in his mind. But she could not. Could it be that to him, as to her, it was too tender a spot to be touched, ever so gently? Could it be that it was of that time he was thinking when he fell into silence—that the old feeling was returning?

The thought caused her a thrill of pleasure so

keen that it was almost pain, and she suddenly put her hand to her heart.

'You are not looking well, Ailie,' said the Colonel anxiously.

'I overtired myself a little to-day gardening in the sun. It will pass off. No, I don't want anything, thank you. It is nothing to make a fuss about.'

They sat talking some little time longer, and then the Colonel rose to go. It was now as dark as it would be till the gray dawn appeared. At parting he bent down and kissed her hand, and the tears stood in her eyes as she watched him pass out of sight.

At the foot of the brae, close to the well where he had first seen her, he met Ailie. He had been afraid that he had lingered too long—that he would miss her altogether.

'Shall you be at home to-morrow night, Ailie?' he said in a whisper. And, remembering that it was prayer-meeting night, she answered, 'Not to-morrow.'

'Then I will write,' he said hurriedly. 'There is something I must say to you, and I can't stop now, and have to go to Edinburgh to-morrow. I will write.'

He was agitated, unlike himself, and Ailie could easily guess what it was he wanted to say to her. She would gladly have spared him the pain of her answer; but he gave her no opportunity. He pressed her hand and was gone.

On the following evening she went as usual to the prayer-meeting, leaving her aunt at home. It was a little after nine when she reached the cottage on her return. The door stood wide open, according to the custom of the house. She stepped inside, and called out, 'Auntie!' but there was no answer. She knew that her aunt was in, for she had seen the glimmer of the lamp in the parlour window as she passed it, and thought that her aunt must have fallen asleep on the sofa. She opened the parlour door and looked in. Her aunt was not on the sofa; she was sitting at the table, a sheet of paper and a letter before her. Apparently she had fallen asleep as she wrote, for her head had fallen forward, and was resting on her left arm as it lay on the table.

'Auntie, hadn't you better go to bed?'

One terrified scream rang through the silent house. Then a dead silence. The gentle spirit had fled.

Ailie bent down and kissed the cold white face, and then the tears and sobs burst out.

'Oh auntie, more than a mother to me!' she cried, and hid her face in the dear dead woman's skirts.

When she was a little calmer she rose, saying to herself that she must go at once and get help. But as she was leaving the room the letter lying on the table caught her eye. It began, 'My dear Ailie,' and was very short—a confession of love and an offer of marriage. It was the letter that Colonel Napier had said he would write to her. The pen was still grasped in the dead woman's fingers. She had been in the act of answering the letter when she died. And over her shoulder the girl read:

'My own dear Alec,—You have made me very happy—so happy that I'——

There the letter ended. The fulfilment of her lifelong desire had been a weight of happiness too great for the gentle heart that would never beat again.

. . . . . .

In Scotland there are no coroners and coroners' juries to pry into the secrets of the dead and parade them before the public eye. So Miss Maxwell's secret died with her. No one but Ailie ever knew that the love she had thought her own had been given to another.

Just before the coffin was closed Ailie slipped into the thin white fingers the Colonel's letter and the unfinished reply to it. She did not herself write to the Colonel, but asked the minister, when he should see him on the day of the funeral, to let him know, as gently as he could, that she had been engaged to Dr Hamilton for two years, and would be married to him in October. And as in Scotland women do not follow their dear ones to the grave, she and the Colonel did not meet again. He left the country soon after, and went back to India, little dreaming that his love-letter lay in his old sweetheart's coffin, or that her parting words had been to him: 'You have made me very happy.'

A SONG OF EXILE.

Only a shell on the seashore lying,
  Yet it speaks with an eloquence rare to me;
For its song is an old-time song undying
  Of a misty island across the sea.

It sings of the Homeland's moors and heather;
  It sings of the Homeland's gowaned braes;
It sighs for the Homeland's sturdy weather,
  'Mid the burning heat of our summer days.

In my dear gray Homeland the autumn dieth
  A death like a grand old Viking brave;
In this baked land of the veldt she lieth,
  Unseen, unknown, to a felon's grave.

'Mid all the wealth of the sun's bright splendour,
  One touch I miss from our Northland days;
'Tis the twilight hour, when shy thoughts, tender,
  Wake in the warmth of the hearthstone's blaze.

There's mount and sea, and there's kloof and kopje,
  There's 'space' in my land of exile here;
But never a field of corn and poppy,
  Nor lilt of a burnie meets my ear.

There's a hand-grip tight for the exile lonely;
  But, Yarrow mine! when I think of you,
I have many friends, but have one love only:
  My Scottish heart is for ever true.

Mary Adamson.

Capetown.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE FIGHTING POWER OF MODERN WARSHIPS.

By ARCHIBALD S. HURD, Author of *Naval Efficiency*, *The British Fleet*, &c.

THE old three-decker on which Nelson fought and died was a less vulnerable instrument of warfare in its day than the most perfect modern battleship. Mechanics, as we use the word, entered into the construction and management of the former hardly at all, and the winds were the motive-power, uncertain and erratic; whereas the battleship of the twentieth century is a box of complicated machinery for dealing destruction, a self-contained floating battery of which it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the crew press the button and machines of one type or another do the rest. Sailors were real sailors in Nelson's time, and every single operation was done by hand; but sailors are, to a great extent, mechanics now, and it is in the light of this change that the whole system of training officers and men for the British fleet has been revolutionised.

A battleship then, as to-day, was merely a moving gun-platform. Size and many details of construction have been altered from year to year; but the governing conditions have remained the same, because Nature's laws are immutable. What progress there has been in the science of naval warfare has conspired against the great man-of-war. Her power of attack has been immensely developed, but the forces making for her destruction have advanced even more rapidly. The *Victory* carried no gun larger than the 42-pounder of smooth-bore; her armament comprised thirty 42- and 32-pounders, thirty 24-pounders, forty 12-pounders, and some carronades, all of them mere blocks of cast-iron. This ship, possibly the most famous of her period, cost complete less than one hundred thousand pounds. The British Admiralty have under construction at present eight battleships, which are known as 'the *King Edward VII.* class,' of 16,350 tons, and each will represent no less than one and a half millions sterling when ready for sea. The *King Edward VII.* will mount four 850-pounders (12-in. calibre), four 350-pounders (9·25-in.), ten 100-pounders (6-in.), and twenty-eight 12- and 3-pounders, all weapons of the greatest penetrative power, owing to high explosives and rifled bores. The largest pieces on board these newest men-of-war, costing nearly ten thousand pounds each, are wound with one hundred and twenty-two miles of wire-ribbon to give strength and elasticity, an operation which occupies three weeks, working night and day, and a single gun cannot be manufactured under twelve months, so elaborate is the process. Any one of these wonderful pieces of ordnance can perforate thirty-two inches of iron at two thousand yards, and throw a shell of 850 lb. nearly twenty miles. In every detail of the construction and fitting out of modern men-of-war the latest secrets of science are applied. The *Victory* remained in the first fighting-line of the British for over fifty years—she was, in fact, forty years old when Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar; not a single ship built as recently as the Naval Defence Act of 1889 is considered fit to be in the Empire's first war-fleet, that stationed in the Mediterranean. These contrasts are impressive, especially to the taxpayer who has to pay the bill.

The limitations of the modern man-of-war were illustrated by the events at Port Arthur and Chemulpo which marked the opening of the war between Russia and Japan. In a matter of less than thirteen hours, between midnight and one o'clock the next afternoon, Russian battleships and cruisers, among the best and newest of the world's navies, and representing no less than six million pounds, were put out of action; two were sunk, three had to be beached to escape the same fate, and the others were seriously damaged. In face of such a dramatic *coup*, can it be denied that with all its power the modern large ship-of-war is more vulnerable than the old picturesque sailing-ship in its day? The two first-class battleships which were torpedoed were capable of pumping metal at a high velocity into an enemy at the rate of nearly eighteen tons a minute when all the guns were in action at once, and yet in an instant they were pierced by torpedoes and had gaping holes in their hulls through which the water streamed. It was a midnight attack, and in

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all the story of naval warfare it will stand out as one of the most dramatic incidents ever recorded.

What effect this triumph of the torpedo will have on the policy of other navies in the construction of ships it would be hazardous to prophesy; but it drives home the truth that in these days no ship which is stationary is safe unless it laagers behind a breakwater or other defence-work. This is no fresh revelation; it is on this account that many millions sterling are now being spent in harbour-works at Dover, Portland, Malta, Gibraltar, and elsewhere. On the other hand, it is a commentary, graphic and decisive, on the vulnerable character of these marvellous creations of the shipbuilder, the gunmaker, and the armour-manufacturer. In the twinkling of an eye their work on one battleship, representing, it is calculated, one million six hundred and seventy-eight thousand days' labour, may be rendered for the time being purposeless and of no avail. Huge mastodons of war, in fact, cannot drop anchor for a night in safety even in a harbour protected by a hundred or more powerful guns of shore batteries, as at Port Arthur, but must be sheltered from harm with as much solicitude as though they were built of tinfoil. Even when they are making their furrow proudly on some sunlit sea they may receive a fatal blow. The battleship *Victoria*, controlled by some of the ablest officers in the British navy, could not withstand the firm touch of the cold-steel ram of the battleship *Camperdown*, though the latter was only steaming at the rate of six knots an hour. This is much less than half the speed at which squadrons manœuvre in peace, and about one-third the rate at which they might be required to move in war to obtain some tactical advantage representing, it may be, the difference between victory and defeat. Within less than fifteen minutes the *Victoria* sank in the depths off Tripoli, Syria, carrying with her Admiral Sir George Tryon and three hundred and fifty-eight officers and men. Such tragedies are of infrequent occurrence not because these ships, ranking among the most wonderful creations of the hand of man, are immune from danger, but because the human wills which control them are ever on their guard, day and night, in sunshine and in fog, and fortunately the seas are broad.

The modern warship is one of the greatest triumphs of science. The weight of guns and armour (representing roughly half the cost of the whole ship) which can be carried is limited. The progress of scientific investigation has rendered the fifty-ton wire-wound gun more powerful than the famous 'Woolwich infant' in the force of the blow delivered, and the hardening process of armour manufacture has given the latest type two and a half times the resistance of wrought-iron with which the *Warrior* and other early battleships were clad for protection. In spite of these facts, which should make for increased power with less weight, the size and the cost of men-of-war have continued to advance. In the period immediately preceding the Naval Defence Act we were proud of the might of ships of from 6000 to 10,000 tons, representing each about three-quarters of a million sterling. To-day no nation is satisfied with less than 13,000 or 14,000 tons; and Great Britain, Russia, and the United States are building twelve vessels displacing between 16,000 and 16,500 tons of water, and there is every reason to believe that before many months are past ships of 18,000 tons will be under construction in England. In the race for sea-power, every nation is watching rivals; and since the larger the ship the more numerous the guns and the greater the power, they all move along the same line, and more and more the policy expressed in the phrase 'putting all your eggs in one basket' is becoming the policy of the world. Man is an imitative creature, and whether this tendency to great size is right or wrong matters not one jot. Even navies suffer from vagaries of fashion; 'A' has acted on some innovation, and therefore 'B,' 'C,' and 'D' follow, with the result that no one is the better off in the long-run of those which can afford to keep pace in the contest. It is not every nation, however, which can afford to invest a million and a half sterling in a single moving gun-platform, and to go on year after year adding to the number of these leviathans of war. Many of the poorer countries—notably Italy and Spain, and even France to some extent—are dropping out in the race for sea-power. Armadas of war in these days are only for peoples who have deep purses, high technique, and either great over-sea possessions and commerce like Great Britain, or vaunting ambitions like Germany and Russia. Even Japan, with her limited financial resources, has ordered in England lately two ships of 16,400 tons. Why, it may be asked, should these people of the Pacific, who need to husband their means, indulge in such luxuries? The answer may be found in the Russian shipbuilding yards in the Baltic, where two men-of-war of the same immense size and unparalleled power are being built.

Thus is the competition in men-of-war proceeding. Huge ships are being completed and sent to sea which can hurtle through space anything up to nine, ten, or eleven tons of metal from their guns each minute, and possess complete belts of Krupp armour from nine to eleven inches thick; their hulls are divided and subdivided into hundreds of cellular compartments as a partial safeguard against sinking in case of injury; they have propelling machinery representing the strength of ninety thousand men—a small army corps; with seventy or eighty auxiliary engines for supplying ammunition, training the guns, raising and lowering boats, steering, ventilating, and heating the ships; equipment for discharging torpedoes and mining a harbour, and capacity for carrying some two thousand tons of coal and quantities of food and stores sufficient to enable them to go half round the world.

In addition to these men-of-war of the first-class, we have other ships—armoured cruisers—costing from three-quarters of a million to one million sterling apiece, which have armoured belts of less thick-

ness, and heavy but less powerful guns, which are also mounted with armour protection. The balance in the compromise between gun-power, armour, and engines in their case has been in the direction of speed. They are battleships to all intents and purposes, the largest more powerful in attack and defence than battleships of twelve years ago, such as those of 'the *Royal Sovereign* class,' with the tactical advantage of great speed. Swift steaming powers are recognised in these days as a fighting asset. If two ships meet, the faster man-of-war will decide if it will fight—will fix not only the range at which the action shall take place, but also determine very largely the tactical formation. It may have very long-range guns, which will enable it to keep outside the zone of fire of its antagonist while it is itself planting shots in rapid succession on its opponent; and the latter in such circumstances is in the position of a pugilist with his hands tied behind his back. Since Great Britain is specially open to commerce destruction, the naval authorities have built thirty-three armoured cruisers in the past six years. The swiftest of them, displacing 14,100 tons of water, have obtained a speed of over twenty-four knots, equivalent to twenty-seven and a half land-miles an hour. These are the modern corsairs of the sea, the fastest steaming men-of-war of the great classes in the world, battleships in all but name, with the tactical benefit of immense speed, which has so impressed Colonel Cuniberti, the naval constructor of the Italian navy, that he has set himself the task of producing battleships of standard fighting power and the speed of armoured cruisers—the *Victor Emanuele* and her sister-ships, veritable battleships with two 12-inch (850-lb. projectile) and twelve 8-inch guns (250-lb. projectile), and a speed of twenty-two knots an hour, or three knots more than the fastest existing battleship in any fleet.

The heavy ships of the world's fleets are built for the use of the gun, but of late years the antagonism of the torpedo has become more pronounced, and the success of the mosquito-craft of the Japanese in their midnight attack upon the Russian ships at Port Arthur will once more encourage those who hold that this wonderful arm, the most scientific weapon ever constructed, will eventually drive the great ships off the seas. At present, opinion has crystallised to this extent. It is admitted that battleships and cruisers cannot safely lie in an open harbour; but it is generally held that, at least during daylight, their light guns discharging a shower of projectiles, and the fact that they can keep moving, will render torpedo attack in the open sea most difficult. On the other hand, those who are best qualified to speak of the power of the torpedo, officers of the fleet who have made this weapon their special study, demur to this qualification. Their view is that the torpedo is a menace by day and by night: by day through the medium of the submarine navigated below the surface, out of sight; and at night by reason of the comparative invisibility of the surface torpedo-craft, which can launch their automobile weapon when still two thousand or three thousand yards from the foe, according to the type of torpedo used. Repeatedly the submarine in peace manœuvres with the French fleet has succeeded in torpedoing battleships in open daylight without being observed by the lookouts of big ships. In our own fleet in the Mediterranean, torpedo craft, ordinary boats and 'destroyers,' have had notable successes.

As long ago as 1897 the late Vice-Admiral P. H. Colomb, a most distinguished authority, expressed the view that torpedo-boat destroyers, probably of an armoured type, would supersede battleships. Torpedo-boats, he said, had means of escape open to no other vessel, and were capable of facing, when in sufficient numbers, any type of existing battleships. The safety of the battleship used to be her speed. Now, in smooth water, the torpedo-boat destroyer beats her by about ten knots an hour. England, which had occupied the highest place in asserting the stability of the position in war to be taken by battleships of vast dimensions, heavily gunned and armoured, had become the foremost nation in denying that stability: first, by declaring provision of shelter in harbours an absolute necessity; secondly, by declaring that battleships at sea required the protection of torpedo vessels; and, thirdly, by producing a type of torpedo vessel which must be more completely master of the battleship than anything ever heard of before. Twenty-five destroyers could be put afloat at the cost of one battleship. What, then, asked the Admiral, is the whole position? He answered the question for himself: 'It seems to be either of two things—(1) that the whole theory of battleships, being a something which can only be matched at the same cost by her equal, is an idle dream; (2) that the destroyer is at present the battleship.' It was plain that fifteen destroyers acting together could not now be matched at the same cost by anything afloat. Might they not, he added, reasonably expect shortly the perfectly armoured torpedo vessel, sea-going, comfortable to live in, and with seven or eight knots more speed than any possible armoured ship of the present type?

It must be admitted that the views of Admiral Colomb have not yet found wide acceptance; but now that the newest torpedo is an accurate weapon up to three thousand yards, an increase of one thousand yards in range since he wrote, and the submarine has taken its place in the fleets of Great Britain and of France, Admiral Colomb's views, if expressed to-day, would not be regarded as so revolutionary as they were seven years ago.

The weakness of the armoured ship to torpedo attack arises from the fact that the protection afforded by the belt, adopted as protection against the gun, stops just where the sphere of action of the torpedo, travelling beneath the water, begins. Vessels, it is true, are given double bottoms; but all experience shows that a torpedo which strikes a

ship, exploding its charge of two hundred pounds of gun-cotton, makes short work of all such cellular arrangements. Already the torpedo has radically altered many accepted notions as to the methods of waging war. Owing to the menace of this instrument, ships will no longer be able to carry out a close blockade of a port in which torpedo craft are known to be, and no harbour will be safe to large ships which has not a properly devised boom to close at night the entrances where the permanent harbour enclosure stops. If the battleship is not doomed—and it has not come to that yet—its freedom of action has been considerably restricted in consequence of the development of this weapon which sneaks swiftly and all-unseen below the water at a speed of thirty miles an hour, and with sure purpose, owing to a gyroscopic mechanism, delivers a deadly blow. It is sometimes urged that in only one case in ten will the weapon strike. Even on this hypothesis, torpedo attack will be worth the risk of some failures. Torpedoes costing only about five hundred pounds each are cheap in comparison with the huge battleships and cruisers of to-day. In narrow waters such as the English Channel, where France is marshalling this year no fewer than twenty-four submarines, in addition to about one hundred surface torpedo craft, the torpedo will prove a most serious menace; and even if it should disappoint its most enthusiastic adherents, it will undoubtedly exert a most potent moral influence on the nerves of the crews of large ships. The power of battleships and cruisers is immense. But they stand disarmed to a great extent at night; and by day, in narrow waters, their most important defence is their mobility, their ability to keep moving and altering course, so that they may never be in the same position two minutes together.

No doubt the torpedo's claim to the mastery of the seas will not be admitted or finally dismissed until some great opportunity has put it to a veritable test under the grim conditions of war. In the meantime the gun will continue to be regarded as the primary arm of large men-of-war. So long as these views hold, it is, therefore, of the greatest importance that gunnery should be the first object of naval training. At Port Arthur the fight on the day following the midnight attack was carried out at a range of three miles. At such a distance even the best guns will be ineffective unless behind them are men who are as perfect in their use as continual hard practice can make them. It is the best gunners who will win in a fight in the open sea, which it is certain will begin while the fleets are three or four miles apart. At such a range the gun is the only weapon. When opposing battleships have come within about five thousand yards of one another each will be able—if the men are quick—to deliver from the four 12-inch guns each minute six or seven 850-lb. projectiles—not solid shot as in former days, but steel shells which will penetrate at this distance six inches of Krupp, and then explode, spreading destruction far and wide; and in addition from one broadside will issue from thirty to thirty-six 100-lb. projectiles which will do untold damage to the superstructure of an enemy, besides carrying desolation into the portions of the vessel unprotected by armour. It is difficult to picture in the mind's eye the result of such a deadly cannonade by many ships on each side even for ten minutes, during which the opposing warships will probably be drawing closer and the aim becoming more certain. In these few minutes the balance of victory will be turned to one side or the other. Then, as the distance lessens, if the attendant torpedo craft creep forward from the main fleets to provide a diversion, it is the small guns, the 12- and 3-pounders, with a perfect storm of projectiles and their mobility, which will be the only defence of the big ships.

Despite the opinions of believers in the coming apotheosis of the torpedo, it is a reassuring fact that most of the Great Powers continue to build battleships and huge cruisers. There is no indication of any slackening. At the same time, we may be at the turn of the wheel. There was never a time when more study was being applied to the perfection of craft specially fitted to carry on mosquito warfare, or when more money was being spent upon the construction of torpedo vessels of various types. Over a thousand little ships relying for attack upon the torpedo instead of the gun are now included in the fleets of the sea-nations. Their rôle in war-time will be to destroy the great ships on which the supremacy of Great Britain mainly depends. On the extent of the fulfilment of their mission will depend the future evolution of the older and larger types of men-of-war.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XVIII.—LADY JUDITH SPEAKS.

THE *table-d'hôte* at Sheringham that evening differed little from that at any other seaside hotel. The majority of the guests were holiday-makers from London in smart City-built 'lounge-suits,' the womenfolk being dressed by the providers of Westbourne Grove or Kensington High Street—some of the men in evening-clothes and others not; the majority of the women affecting that most handy makeshift, the blouse. A few were sturdy middle-aged men of means, who had come there for golf and not for lounging in beach-tents or promenading on the asphalt: these formed a clique apart.

There was a time—when I was a homeless wanderer—when hotel-life appealed to me by reason

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of its gaiety, its chatter, and its continual change; but after years of it, drifting hither and thither over two continents, I hated it all, from the gold-braided hall-porter who turns up his nose at a half-crown tip to the frock-coated, hand-chafing manager who, for some reason unaccountable, often affects to be thought a foreigner. You may be fond of the airy, changeful existence of food and friends which you obtain in hotels; but I am confident that your opinion would coincide with mine if you had had such a long and varied experience of gilded discomfort combined with elastic bills as had been my lot. Try a modern hotel 'of the first order' in Cairo, on the Riviera, or at any other place that is the mode to-day, in England or out of it, and I think you will agree with my contention.

Many a time for the purposes of my books I had studied the phantasmagoria of life as seen at the *table-d'hôte*, especially in the gambling-centres of Aix, Ostend, and the patchouli-perfumed 'Monte,' where one often meets strange types and with strange stories; but the crowd of the seaside resorts, whether at aristocratic Arcachon or popular Margate, are never any more interesting than the bustle of the London streets.

Therefore, on this night I left the table quickly, refusing to be drawn into a long scientific discussion by a neighbour on my right, who was probably a very worthy lawyer's clerk on holiday, and evidently knew but a smattering of his subject, and went forth to stroll up over the golf-links in the direction of Weybourne.

I wondered what Wyman had discovered regarding the disappearance of the Earl of Glenelg and his connection with The Closed Book. Those strange words of the terrified, white-faced girl, his daughter, still rang in my ears—her face still haunted me. Student of human character as I was, I had never seen terror and despair in a woman's face before. But one is a student always.

Noyes, too, had continued a careful watch upon the house in Harpur Street, where, I had no doubt, the book had been regained by some professional thief. Selby evidently believed that a burglary had been committed, yet feared to inform the police because the only thing taken chanced to be a piece of stolen property. Hence he could only sit down and abuse his ill-luck. Noyes had certainly very neatly checkmated the conspirators, whoever they were or whatever their object—the latter apparently being the recovery of the hidden gold.

For the present, eager as I was to commence investigations, I could only wait.

The sun had set away across the sea facing me, and as I walked over the cliffs a welcome breeze sprang up, refreshing after the heat of the hotel dining-room. The way was lonely and well suited to my train of thought. It led over a place known by the gruesome designation of Dead Man's Hill, and then straight across to the Weybourne coastguard station, standing as it does high and alone on that wind-swept coast. From the coastguard on duty I inquired my way to Kelling Hard, whence, I had been told, there was a road inland to Kelling Street, which led on over Muckleburgh Hill through Weybourne village and back to Sheringham. The bearded old sailor standing before the row of low whitewashed cottages pointed out a path down the hill, telling me that I should find the road a mile farther on, at a place called the Quag; then, as it was growing dark, I wished him good-night and swung along the footpath he had indicated.

I am a good walker, and wanted exercise after that long transcription I had made earlier in the day.

Having gone about three-quarters of a mile on that unfrequented path, I ascended again to the top of the cliff, where a hedgerow with a gate separated one pasture from another, yet so occupied was I with my own thoughts that I did not at first notice this gate.

When, however, I raised my head suddenly I was close upon it, and saw standing beyond a woman's figure darkly outlined against the clear afterglow.

I looked again as I came quickly along the path in her direction, and my heart for a moment stood still.

Surely my eyes deceived me! She was looking straight at me, as though hesitating to come through the gate until after I had passed; and beside her, also regarding my approach with suspicion, stood a big black collie dog.

I drew nearer, and had placed my hand upon the latch when our eyes met again.

No; I was not mistaken! She was the white-faced girl I had seen pass along Harpur Street, the woman from whose lips had come that exclamation of blank despair, the woman to whom the sign of the bear was the sign of death.

For a few seconds I believed that my constant thoughts of her had caused my vision to play some sorry trick; but, fumbling clumsily with the gate while she stood aside modestly to allow me to pass, I again reassured myself that it was actually Lord Glenelg's daughter.

Why had she followed me there? That was the first question that arose to my mind, for all these strange occurrences connected with The Closed Book had aroused my suspicion.

She glanced at me once, then dropped her eyes, and held the collie by his collar for want of something else to do. Her face was still pale and slightly drawn, and her eyes betrayed a deep, all-consuming anxiety; but her countenance was, I saw, really more beautiful than it had appeared to me on that wet night in the dismal London streets.

All these details I took in at a single glance. The all-important question was whether it were wisdom to speak to her.

We were strangers. Perhaps she had not noticed me on that night in London—in all probability she had not. Yet, if she were unaware of my existence, why should she follow me to Norfolk?

To speak might not be a very diplomatic move; but I suddenly recollected her despair at seeing the

mysterious sign of the bear, and her father's apparent disregard of her future.

Such being the case, ought we not to be acquainted?

This argument decided me, and with some hesitation I raised my hat after I had passed through the gate to where she stood, and in faltering tones begged to be allowed to introduce myself.

She frowned with displeasure, and next moment I saw I had made a false move.

'I really have not the pleasure of your acquaintance, sir,' she answered in a musical voice, but with a natural chilly hauteur. 'I am not in the habit of accepting self-introductions from strangers,' she added.

Her reply, if a trifle superior in tone, was nevertheless the only one that could be expected of a modest, high-minded woman.

'I have the honour of knowing you only by sight, I admit,' I went on quickly, eager to remove her false impression, my hat still in my hand. 'My name is Allan Kennedy, by profession a novelist'——

'You!' she gasped, interrupting me. 'You are Mr Kennedy?' and her face blanched in an instant.

'That is my name,' I answered, much surprised at its effect upon her. But taking up the cue quickly, I said, 'Perhaps I need say nothing further, save that our interests are identical.'

She looked puzzled, and declared that she did not understand.

'Then forgive me if I mention a matter that must be distasteful to you, for I only do so in order to show how desirous I am of becoming your friend if, after inquiries about me, you will allow me,' I said. 'Do you recollect the other night dressing in clothes that were not your own, and, accompanied by your father the Earl, paying a secret visit to a certain street in Bloomsbury?'

Her face fell. She held her breath, wondering how much I knew.

'Do you recollect, too, how heavily the rain fell, and how you turned from Theobald's Road into Harpur Street in search of something? You saw the sign—the stuffed bear-cub in the window—the fatal sign.'

She was silent. Her lips twitched, but for a few moments no sound came from them. She was dumfounded, and unable to speak. At last she stammered:

'I know, I know! But why do you torture me like this,' she cried, 'you who evidently know the truth?'

'Unfortunately I do not know the truth,' I declared. 'I may as well tell you, however, that I overheard your exclamation when your eyes fell upon the sign in that dingy upper room, and I followed you both home to Grosvenor Street, determined that if you would allow me I would stand your friend. Because of that I have ventured to introduce myself to you this evening.'

'My friend!' she echoed. 'Ah! it is all very well to offer me your assistance, Mr Kennedy; but I fear it can be of no avail. My enemies are stronger than you are. They have crushed all the life out of me. My future is hopeless—utterly hopeless,' she sighed.

The collie, escaping from her hand, sniffed me suspiciously, and then settled near his mistress.

'Ah, no! there is always hope. Besides, I am utterly in the dark as to the meaning of your words. My surmise, based simply upon logical conclusions, is that our interests are, as I have already suggested, identical. You have heard of me, have you not?'

'I have read your books,' was her answer, 'and my father has spoken of you.'

'He has spoken of me in connection with the sign placed in that window in Bloomsbury?' I suggested.

She nodded. Her splendid eyes met mine mysteriously.

'He is a friend of Mr Selby's?' I ventured.

'I believe so.'

'Do you not, then, see the truth of my suggestion that, our interests being in common, we should establish friendly relations whereby we may defeat our enemies?' I asked.

'I admit the truth of the argument entirely,' was her response after a few moments' consideration; 'and although I recognise your kindness in offering to stand my friend, I cannot see how either of us can benefit. I must suffer—till my death.'

'Your death!' I cried reproachfully. 'Don't speak like that. Trust in me to assist you in every way in my power, for I assure you of my honesty of purpose. Be frank with me, and tell me everything; then we will form some plan to combat this plot—for plot it seems to be.'

'Be frank with you?' she cried in a tone of dismay, but quickly recovered herself. 'With *you*—of all men?'

'Why not with me?' I asked in great surprise at her manner. 'Surely I am not your enemy?'

'If you are not at this moment, you have been in the past.'

'How so?' I asked, amazed.

'You would have brought death upon me if you could,' she cried huskily. 'I was only saved by the protection of Providence.'

'I really don't know what you mean!' I cried. 'I have only seen you once before on that wet night in London. Yet you actually accuse me of being your enemy!'

'No,' she said in a hard voice. 'My words are not an accusation. The fault, I feel certain, was not your own; but you might easily have encompassed my death without ever knowing it.'

'I really don't understand,' I exclaimed. 'Will you not speak more plainly? To think that I have ever been your enemy, consciously or unconsciously, for a single moment pains me, for such a thing is farthest from my thoughts. I am only desirous of being your good and devoted friend. We both have enemies—you and I. Therefore, if we join forces in

perfect confidence, we may succeed in combating them.'

'Then I can only presume you have followed me here in order to put this proposal to me?' she said in a tone of indignation.

'I have certainly not followed you,' I said. 'Indeed, I believed that it was you who had followed me. I am staying at Sheringham, and had not the least idea you were in the neighbourhood.'

'The same with me,' she replied. 'My father and I are staying with my uncle Lord Aldborough, at Saxlingham, and I strolled over here this evening as far as the sea. Then our meeting must have been quite accidental.'

'When did you arrive?'

'Yesterday.'

'And your father may have come down here in order to be able to watch me?' I suggested.

She did not reply, although her troubled breast heaved and fell quickly in agitation.

'I know that you hesitate to accept me as your friend,' I went on earnestly. 'But before your final decision I would urge you to seek some information about me, for I can only repeat what I have already said, that our interests are the same, and that we should defend ourselves.'

'From what?'

'From the evil which you fear may fall upon you,' I answered, recollecting her words in Harpur Street.

'Ah, no!' she cried bitterly, as her fine eyes filled with tears. 'It is useless for you to tell me this—perfectly useless. I, alas! know the truth. Before to-morrow,' she added in a hoarse voice, 'I shall have ceased to trouble you.'

(To be continued.)

'MR SPEAKER, STRANGERS, SIR!'

By T. H. S. Escott.

'THE whole British nation personified by its representatives, assembled in a mean-looking building like a chapel, nothing particular in their dress;' such is the first authentic record by a stranger to the country, as well as to the assembly, of the impression conveyed to a foreigner by the Westminster manufactory of statute law. That visitor of 1782, a Russian cleric named Moritz, also writes to a friend how some members, wrapped up in their greatcoats, with jack-boots and spurs on, lie stretched on the benches, some snoring, some eating nuts or oranges. Rather later in the eighteenth century another and a far more illustrious alien might often be seen in the part of St Stephen's Chapel then allotted to diplomatic spectators. Chateaubriand did not, indeed, come to England as French ambassador till in 1822 he represented the restoration of the French monarchy. Just twenty-nine years earlier he had, as a refugee from the Revolution, supported himself by his pen in London. He then seldom missed hearing the chief speeches of Fox and Pitt; he became personally known to both. There are few better accounts of the oratory of the two than those penned by their French acquaintance; he heard Pitt's masterpiece on the renewal of the war (1803): a half-hour's triumph of declamation, delivered in a voice that was not lowered for a single moment. Of that effort Fox himself said to Chateaubriand, 'If Demosthenes had been present he must have admired and might have envied.' To the same listener Pitt justified the number of his speeches on the ground of its being preferable to the iterations of Fox, and because without either redundancy or repetition a speaker cannot strongly impress his views on a popular assembly. To Chateaubriand also was it that Lord Holland remarked, 'Those who have witnessed the debates of Pitt and Fox have heard the art of unpremeditated speaking in perfection as great as human faculties can attain.' In the next generation the French critic revisited the English Parliament as a diplomatic guest. Canning and Grey were then the chief figures in debate. In a home-letter, afterwards incorporated in the essay on English literature, the envoy observes the oratorical decadence: 'The most eloquent of the new men, when at their best,' he adds, 'are on an entirely lower plane than their great predecessors whom I heard when last here.'

The author of the *Monks of the West* was the earliest stranger who saw the English Chamber from a point of view so purely literary and intellectual as to exclude the trivial touches of personal detail. For these one must go to the accounts given to his mother by a strikingly handsome and brilliant-looking boy who, early in the nineteenth century, when on an exeat from Eton, was often brought by his famous cousin, George Canning, to hear the debates. This was the future Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, Kinglake's Great Eltchi of the Crimean epoch. Sitting sometimes under the Clock Gallery, sometimes with a friend in the pen that used to contain the Westminster boys, he had been struck by the contrast between the waddling figure of the swarthy and obese Charles Fox and the chivalrous, kindling presence of his great rival. Pitt's protest against interruption particularly impressed young Stratford Canning: the haughty tone, the contemptuous look, the withering question, 'Am I, then, Mr Speaker, to be put down by clamour?' As regards Fox, the impressions of the foreign Moritz may be corrected by those of the English stranger Stratford Canning. Instead of being generally badly dressed, the famous Whig usually glittered in the dandy's costume. That aspect of the man had been duly noted by another foreign

spectator of the debates. Count Woronzow had first come to England as ambassador of the Russian Empress Catharine. Long after he had resigned that office he remained here for his children's education, leading the life of a Hampshire squire, thoroughly anglicised in all his tastes. His only daughter married the eleventh Earl of Pembroke, and became the mother of Sidney Herbert, the accomplished and amiable Peelite to whose efforts in the first place were due the improved lot of the soldier and the earliest impetus given to colonial emigration. Woronzow's features alone betrayed his Muscovite origin. Overtopping by head and shoulders all other strangers, he had begun his visits to St Stephen's on the nineteenth century's birth; he has left us a graphic word-portrait of Fox as an exquisite of the period on the floor of the House—the astounding waistcoat and the brilliant small-clothes, not concealing a pair of gleaming, very pointed boots with bright scarlet heels. Woronzow seldom missed a great debate; he lived long enough to hear Lord John Russell explain in the popular Chamber the 1832 Reform Bill. In the nineteenth century's last decade there found its way to South Kensington a picture by an Austrian artist representing the interior of St Stephen's in the days of George III.; in the foreground, Fox, Pitt, and Lord North with his blue ribbon. The painting has since gone to the National Gallery. The artist had been a friend of the Woronzow family. To them he confessed his obligation for the accuracy of many personal touches. With a maternal uncle, Count Michael Woronzow, governor of Bessarabia, when visiting England, Sidney Herbert, as a Harrow boy, made his first visit to the Chamber in which, as member for South Wiltshire, he was afterwards, in 1832, to have a seat.

Still to look at our visitors in chronological order, the next eminent strangers whom the collective wisdom at Westminster has, in the orthodox word, 'espied' are all of them from France. The gospel of silence has been enforced and illustrated by Carlyle in between forty and fifty closely printed volumes. The French Premier whose favourite apophthegm describes brevity as the soul of wit has not at the present moment completed the vindication of his short government (from January to August 1870). The last time Émile Ollivier visited England he was the guest of the present writer, who heard from him how, by frequent observation of the debates during the earlier years of the nineteenth century's second half, he had taken lessons in the practical machinery of constitutional government. That was about half a decade before Napoleon III. had asked him to form an administration. Ollivier, in his own phrase, 'got up the House of Commons as a candidate in a competitive examination gets up his subjects and text-books. For weeks together, during the sessions of the early sixties, the tall, strongly built Frenchman with the quickly moving gray eyes that seemed to take in everything at once, found a place, generally under the clock, from which he could not only hear Disraeli, Gladstone, Cardwell, and Lowe, but could watch the social by-play of the place—could even, as he fondly thought, penetrate into the heart of the life behind the scenes. Thiers, he remarked, with all his opportunities—his intimacy with such men as Kinglake, Bernal Osborne, Milner Gibson, and Grant Duff—never had the patience to make the best of his rich material. To that same epoch of more than a generation since belongs another Gallic student of the people's assembly. What chiefly impressed M. Dupeyré was the illogicality of the methods and the contradictoriness of the precedents of the Commons. He had come to Westminster for the parliamentary instruction of his countrymen. In his report to the Paris Legislative Assembly he says, in effect, England can teach no lessons to France. Speaker Denison obligingly saw that this stranger was always accommodated with a good place, and did his best to explain the contents of the Commons' journals, as well as the way in which procedure rules have been evolved from these. The dainty, dapper little Gaul sighed out a pious oath as he gazed, awe-striken, at the array of huge folios under which whole bookcases groaned. Sadder even than this was the absence from the beginning of each day's work of any ceremony such as opens each day's parliamentary séance in France. At Westminster the preliminary procession through the lobby of the president, chaplain, and one or two more reminds one only of the conduct of a criminal from the condemned cell to the gallows. Then the familiarity of members amongst themselves, like schoolboys, is shocking. Picture to yourself a member of the Opposition (who seems, by-the-bye, to have been the then Mr Gathorne Hardy) leaning across the table of the House with a bunch of roses in his button-hole, a whip in one hand, a riding-hat in the other, because even in Parliament the Briton is always the sportsman.

Dupeyré probably may have met under the Clock Gallery of the House his illustrious countryman who had first made the Chamber's acquaintance many years earlier. For the Second Empire had no sooner collapsed on the field of Sedan than Thiers started on his famous diplomatic tour through Europe. Having taken the Continental Powers *en route*, he reached his London hotel in Brook Street shortly before the Houses rose for the long vacation. His faithful friend Kinglake had then ceased to have a seat at St Stephen's; but the force of old associations caused the two men, after dinner, to stroll towards Westminster; the wonderful little French Chauvinist found himself again, and for the last time, in the place allotted to visitors of quality. Thiers had little reason to be satisfied with his European pilgrimage; for the first time in his life he had known what it was to feel very small in foreign Courts and Chanceries; he did not conceal his gratification when Mr Gladstone, hearing him to be within the building, walked up to him. Gambetta's one sojourn on the banks of the Thames

had taken place several years before this, while Napoleon III. still ruled France; he probably came to see, not Westminster, but the Comte de Paris; for the Orleanists and Republicans were then working together against the Empire. His compatriot and host during his English residence was a frequent parliamentary visitor; with him Gambetta was more than once seen within the precinct. I had it from himself that, though in this way he saw the most notable politicians of the time, he never sat out an entire debate.

Since the nineteenth century's second half no very noticeable group of Gauls had gazed upon Mr Speaker until, in the summer of 1903, the honours of the assembly were done by Ministerial and Opposition hosts to the President of the French Republic and to the deputies who either accompanied or immediately followed M. Loubet. Not, however, that those years lacked memorable or entertaining incidents in the record of the relations between the English high court of grievances and its observers from outside. Meanwhile the earliest pilgrims to the building would have noticed, could they have revisited it, certain little changes in the *tout ensemble*. The occupant of the Chair no longer wore a hat over his wig, taking it off to the member whom he desired to address the House. Bonnets and petticoats were now unrepresented in the Strangers' Gallery. The benches on the floor were upholstered with new green leather in the place of the shabby old baize or cloth. 1857 supplies a date and an incident pertinent to the point of view now taken. In the March of that year Cobden carried his motion condemning Palmerston's conduct in the affair of the *Lorcha Arrow*. Amid breathless suspense and suppressed excitement was taken the division that placed Palmerston in a minority of sixteen. Directly the members began to file into the two lobbies, the Speaker issued his order—'Strangers must withdraw.' The Duke of Cambridge, together with the chief ambassadors of foreign Powers, was in the Clock Gallery. At the word of command from the Chair they went outside while the votes were being taken. One foreigner, not observing the signal, remained behind; after a few words of consultation below, the Sergeant-at-Arms, with his sword at his side, walked up to the lingerer and politely escorted him out of the premises. That seems to have been the last occasion on which the seats allotted to visitors were cleared during the processes of a division.

As a fact, since the eighteenth century's close St Stephen's has shown little inhospitality to the pilgrims at its shrine. The visitors began to multiply as soon as the debates had become a popular power. Chatham's contemptuous sarcasm on a 'senate debating with closed doors' had quite as much to do as any of the familiar incidents in the long struggle of Press *versus* Parliament with opening the place to every sort of stranger. Not more recently than 1777 has any member cared to 'espy' an illustrious intruder by way of gratifying a grudge. In that year the greatest English actor of his age, if not of all time, had been smuggled into the House. A Shropshire squire grew white with passion at the impropriety of admitting a mere player to 'our proceedings'—especially since one of the earliest 'scenes' had just taken place, and Roscius had witnessed the Speaker and Sergeant-at-Arms intervene to prevent a duel. The actor, however, was near friends, who would not suffer him to be expelled. Burke appealed to the House to 'treat Mr Garrick with decency, if not liberality; not to exclude a man to whom they were all obliged, in whose school they had all imbibed the art of speaking and been taught the elements of rhetoric, to whom personally he was so much indebted for his instruction.' Charles Fox and 'Tommy' Townsend seconded the motion. The close of the sitting saw all the figures in the incident, the indignant Salopian included, going off to sup at Bellamy's, which stood in Parliament Street, on the site of Lucas's to-day. In the middle of the nineteenth century the Irish members found themselves almost as bitterly at feud with the *Times* newspaper as they were some fifty years later. John O'Connell drew the Chair's attention to the reporters in their gallery. Immediately every stranger in the House had disappeared. In consequence of this Perronet Thompson moved an alteration in the standing order on the subject, but without success.

These are the historic instances. Those witnessed by the present writer during a generation's acquaintance with the assembly may be briefly recapitulated. On April 24, 1870, Mr Fowler, who sat for Cambridge, was introducing a Bill on an unsavoury subject; Mr Crawfurd, representing the Ayr Burghs, thought it well that the press should ignore the subject. He therefore 'espied' the conventional outsider; in a twinkling the Reporters' Gallery had been emptied. The feeling of the place was, however, against the exclusion. That was shown when, a few minutes later, the readmitted pressmen were cheered to the echo by the entire assembly, including Mr Speaker himself. The conditions under which the exclusive order was practically rescinded some five years later were memorable. On April 27, 1875, Mr Henry Chaplin had a motion of wide social interest about horse-breeding. The crowded galleries contained, amongst others, the then Prince of Wales (now Edward VII.) and the German Ambassador (the late Count Münster). Mr Biggar, the member for Cavan, saw his chance of making a noble bag. Disraeli, then leading the House, expostulated with the 'espying' M.P., who, however, persisted. On that Disraeli moved the suspension of the standing order; Lord Hartington seconded. The heir-apparent and the other great people reappeared. As a sequel to that episode Disraeli, a few nights later, moved a resolution vesting in the Chairman individually, to be exercised without debate as he thought fit, the prerogative of expulsion. In April 1878 the new strangers' régime began. A cheery and popular flaxen-haired Irish giant, King-Harman,

wished the House to be cleared. The Speaker put the question; it was carried silently by fifty-seven to twelve. From half-past nine till after midnight raged an Irish row unwitnessed by a single reporter. Newspaper readers grumbled next morning. Since then the attempt to get rid of guests has not been repeated on any considerable scale at Westminster.

The stranger within the parliamentary gate, however, continues periodically to excite a good deal of interest. The elective Chamber resembles Virgil's Avernus in that there are many easy and different approaches to it, and that night and day its portals, at least, are open to the crowd. Unauthorised entrants may, therefore, now and then elude the most lynx-eyed of doorkeepers. Never in my time has the casual invader actually voted in a division. I have repeatedly seen strangers from Westminster Hall, mixed up in a little group of M.P.'s, pass unchallenged through the lobby, then introducing themselves to the interior, find sitting-room below the gangway—for a time. The moment of detection and ejection, sooner or later, invariably comes. In 1876 two strayed revellers from the Licensed Victuallers' dinner-table walked in unnoticed, perhaps even not quite conscious, and sat down not far from the Sergeant-at-Arms, within three feet of so sympathetic a neighbour as the great teetotaler, Sir Wilfrid Lawson himself; they remained there nearly half-an-hour. They might have stayed longer had not one of them caused his companion to laugh immoderately by the suggestion that he should call on Mr Speaker for a song. In the summer of 1878, during the debate on the calling of Indian troops to Europe, a deeply interested visitor, not hearing quite well from his proper place below the gallery, moved several yards up, so as to be quite close to the member on his legs, who happened to be Sir George Campbell. He only reached the place of new members waiting to be sworn; of these there were several. Only an indiscreet exhibition of interest in the debate disclosed the intruder, who, just as he waited an opportunity of getting nearer to the Speaker, found himself his prisoner and in course of removal by the Sergeant-at-Arms. Very often these experiences at His Majesty's Theatre-Royal of St Stephen's passed from the purely comic into the broadly farcical. In the old days the visitor unfurnished with a member's card could generally get into the gallery by giving a silver coin to the custodian. Hence, of course, many more or less authentic stories of droll mistakes. Towards the close of the last century the Sergeant-at-Arms amused his guests in 'Gossett's room' by telling how a successful applicant for admission showed his gratitude by pressing half-a-crown into the terrible official's palm. Similarly Disraeli's Attorney-General, politely giving an 'order' to some one he overheard asking for the absent Sir John Cross, received sixpence. For an exactly similar service an eloquent Irish member, A. M. Sullivan, was rewarded with twice that sum. The third Marquis of Salisbury, Prime-Minister till 1902, once showed himself equally obliging, but was less lavishly recompensed; the stranger whom he had helped out of some small difficulty could only put in his hand some coppers to get a glass of beer.

A man is not more surely known from the company he keeps than the topic of dominating interest at Westminster may be infallibly inferred from the *personnel* of the visitors whom its discussion attracts. Debates on some new proposal for crowning the structure of feminine emancipation fill all the approaches with petticoated politicians, who impetuously overflow into any permitted or prohibited inch of available room. Malt-tax and local rating themes have ever been a sure draw for tenant-farmers from all parts of the country. Education Bills fill the guests' seats with teachers and preachers, lay and clerical, of every degree. Imperial questions, as if by some magical process, bring from the uttermost ends of the earth picturesque hosts of Asiatics and Africans, glittering with jewels and gorgeous with many-coloured turbans and with rainbow-hued silks. Its debates are chronicled in Hansard; the history of the House itself has already been written pretty exhaustively from inside. Perhaps the most variously entertaining and not the least instructive record of St Stephen's—that exclusively from the strangers' point of view—still remains to be penned.

A COMEDY OF LIEUTENANTS.

PART IV.

EARLY in the afternoon of the following day, 24th August, the Governor was seated among the papers in his office when Mouilpied entered, saying, 'Pugsley, from Jerbourg, is here, sir, and would like a word with you.'

'Come in, Pugsley,' called out the Governor, pushing his papers aside and leaning back. 'Well,' as the petty officer entered, 'what's the news? Mrs Pugsley well and blooming?'

'Yes, sir, thank you; very well indeed.'

'And Dolly and Jenny?'

'Both quite well, sir, thank you.'

'Well now, my lad, what can I do for you?

Pugsley, usually a ready man, hesitated.

'Well, sir, Mr O'Flanagan'——

'Yes, yes. What about him?'

'You don't happen to have seen him this forenoon, do you, sir?'

'Seen him? No. Why, he's at the station, isn't he?'

'No, sir; we've seen nothing of him since he left to come up here yesterday evening.'

'Why, what can be the meaning of that? But there, I've no doubt he has knocked across some crony or other, and has gone home with him. There are scores of old half-pay lieutenants in the town and about it, and if they once begin cracking on about their old sea-fights they lose all count of night or day. But you say he didn't come in this morning to sign your log?'

'No, sir.'

'Tut, tut! very irregular—not like Pengelly, not like Pengelly.'

'But—there's something else, sir.'

'Well, spit it out, my lad. What is it?'

'Well, sir, young Le Patoural found Mr O'Flanagan's hat on a bush half-way down the cliff at Moulin Huet.'

'Found his hat?'

'Yes, sir; and his cane was sticking in the brambles close by.'

'Good heavens! you don't mean to say you think he has tumbled over the cliff?'

'Well, sir, I'm afraid'——

'You searched the beach, of course?'

'Yes, sir; but the water'——

'Ah! how was the tide last night?'

'High-water half after midnight, sir.'

'And it comes in close just there, doesn't it?'

'Spring-tides thirteen feet up the cliff-side, sir.'

'Good heavens! Good heavens!—Come in, my dear' (to Madam, who appeared at the door). 'Here's a sad to-do. I fear poor O'Flanagan's drowned.'

'Oh, don't say that!' said Madam, whose affections O'Flanagan had entirely won the night before. To his stories of war and weapons she was by comparison indifferent—she had heard so many of them; but her kind heart had been touched by some whispered pathetic confidences he had made to her about his mother and his sister, and his quiet old home in County Mayo. 'Oh, don't say that!'

'Well, I can hardly believe it myself; but he has not been home all night, and they've found his hat and stick on the cliff-side. But, by the way, Brouard drove him home.—Mouilpied, tell Brouard to come here at once—at once, d'ye hear? Never mind what he's doing.—Now I come to think of it, my dear, didn't you think O'Flanagan was just a little—what shall I say?—merry, last night?'

'Well, dear, he was; but didn't you think that was just his warm-hearted, volatile Irish nature?'

'I don't know. The more I think of it the more I remember he drank a great deal of port.—Now, Pugsley, my lad, there's a lesson for you. God forbid it be true; but if the lieutenant *is* gone, I shall always wonder if his senses were as clear as they ought to have been. Oh, here's Brouard!—Now, Brouard, you drove Mr O'Flanagan home last night?'

'I drove him out as far as St Martin's, sir, and then he said he thought he'd get down and walk on to the station; "for," said he, "Brouard, it's a lovely moonlight night, and there's nothing I love so much as to contemplate the sea with the moon on it."'

'He said that, did he? And did you notice anything that struck you in any way—about his manner—or his speech?'

'No, sir; when I set him down he walked smartly off, singing something about the "young May moon is beaming, love."'

'Did he? Ah, well, my dear! I fear it is as I say. I can't think that an old sailor like O'Flanagan would walk straight over the cliff-side on a moonlight night if his senses were where they should be. But I'll drive out to Jerbourg and try and get some light on the business.—Brouard, put Samson in the gig at once—d'ye hear?—You'll come with me, Pugsley?'

It was a silent drive. When they reached Jerbourg old Mrs Luce, who had kept house for a succession of lieutenants, received the Governor, and would have been interminably garrulous if the Governor had not cut her short.

'Yes, yes, Mrs Luce, of course it's a terrible end; but perhaps it's not an end at all. Oh, that's his chest, is it? Now, what other baggage had he?'

'Just a portmanteau, sir, in his bedroom, poor gentleman! and I do assure you that'——

'Yes, yes, Mrs Luce; I'm going up. Gad! your stairs are as steep as Constitution Steps. Oh, this is the bedroom, and that's the portmanteau, is it?' pointing to a heavy-looking bag which, like its owner, had evidently seen much service and received many hard knocks.

'Yes, sir, that's his portmanteau; and a nicer officer I'——

'Yes, yes, Mrs Luce.—But, Pugsley'—over the staircase—'get a bunch of old keys and a chisel, and come up here.—Don't let me keep you, Mrs Luce.'

'May I not get you a cup of tea, or anything, sir?'

'Yes, thankee, thankee, a cup of tea.'

And Mrs Luce hastened away to put the kettle on.

'Now, what to do about his portmanteau,' soliloquised the Governor. 'In point of fact, I suppose, I have no right to open it. And yet it ought to be done.—Ah, Pugsley, I'm thinking we ought to open the lieutenant's portmanteau and see if there is any clue to his friends; for it takes such a devil of a time to get a letter through to the Admiralty now. And—I don't like to say it; but if the poor fellow should have made away with himself—God only knows the springs of His frail creatures' actions—there might even be some last message. Try the keys first.'

Pugsley, kneeling on the floor, was trying one key after another, and the Governor was standing over him, when the door opened. The Governor looked round with a sigh, fearing another infliction of Mrs Luce; but, instead of Mrs Luce, he beheld—Lieutenant Pengelly.

'Good heavens!' said the Governor, clutching at the bed-post.

'Where's O'Flanagan?' said the lieutenant hoarsely. 'Where's O'Flanagan?' he repeated excitedly.

'Why, we fear he's drowned, poor chap! But how in the name of wonder do you come here? Have you been wrecked?'

'No, sir; not, at any rate, in your sense of the word. But I would recommend Pugsley to finish his work at the portmanteau. Ah, I see he has got it open. Now.'

They bent over, and saw at once that the contents of the bag were iron bolts and brickbats carefully packed in old copies of the *Moniteur*. But at the top lay a sealed packet addressed to Lieutenant Pengelly, who seized it, tore it open, and read it with a tense deliberation which forbade interruption. His face had become almost wolfish in its ferocity; his eyes were bloodshot, and his hand trembled till the paper rattled in it. When he had done he dismissed Pugsley, and put into the Governor's hand the letter, which read as follows:

'GUERNSEY, *August* 23, 1803.

'MY DEAR MR PENGELLY,—I have, I fear, caused you so much inconvenience that I certainly owe you the fullest explanation in my power. When I captured the *Gwennie*, as you know, I found among her mails the Admiralty despatch of 1st inst. to your good self. It occurred to me at once that here was a Heaven-sent chance for me to visit Guernsey, to inspect the interesting military works which are being hastened forward, and, above all, to repair certain gaps or lacunæ which occur in the cartography of the island in the archives of our Ministry of Marine. I copied, therefore, the despatch of the 1st, and added to it the demand for such details as I needed. I take this opportunity of thanking you for the exhaustive completeness with which you have compiled the same. I am sure that when M. Decrès sees them he will unite with me in cordial acknowledgments of your zeal and intelligence.

'Well, having decided that a personal visit to Guernsey was an essential part of my plan, I concocted the further despatch of the 8th. The English sloop-of-war *Fanny* had been taken by one of our frigates only a day or two before—so recently that her name had not even been painted out. I therefore had a truly providential opportunity of landing and taking you off without exciting the least suspicion—a fact which you will appreciate the more when I tell you that the boat's crew were all Irishmen, and, in fact, were the same boat's crew to a man that were with me at Brest when the little affair of the *Pigmy* took place.

'I trust that you received every attention from Captain Touzel, and that your adventure in an open boat caused you no undue discomfort. I was careful to arrange that you should be set adrift only when and where you were certain of being picked up in the shortest possible time.

'I take credit to myself that I have contrived all this with the minimum of disarrangement to your plans. Mr O'Flanagan, the real "Simon pure," will, I doubt not, arrive on the 25th, for, as a matter of fact, the English Admiralty are not at all likely to have learned as yet of the fate of the *Gwennie*. In telling you the story, I was constrained to employ a little artifice in the episode of the bo's'in to explain my own knowledge of the incident. But as the bo's'in proved refractory, we found it essential to put him under some mild restraint. Therefore he was certainly not able to report the capture to the authorities at Portsmouth.

'How I became possessed of the Admiralty seals, or the paper on which to reproduce the despatches, I will refrain from imparting. Nor will I trouble you with particulars of the romantic circumstances under which I am leaving the island.

'Will you present to the Governor and his lady my most sincere acknowledgments of their hospitality, and to the military gentlemen whom I had the pleasure of meeting at Government House my thanks for their courteous information as to the defences of the island? My stay in Guernsey has been brief; but I carry away with me many pleasant memories of my sojourn here.

'If I were a native of Hawaii (where, it is reported, no offering is so acceptable as a fat man-of-war's lieutenant trussed for roasting) I might avail myself of your kind undertaking that, under circumstances which shall be nameless, I might eat you. But I hereby willingly discharge you from the performance of this promise, and beg your acceptance of the small canvas bag and its contents herewith. And if the fortune of war should ever send you a prisoner to my adopted country, I beg that you will, by appealing to my name and influence, give me an opportunity of atoning for some part of the inconvenience which I may have caused you.—I have the honour to remain, my dear Mr Pengelly, your very obedient servant,

'MAURICE SHERIDAN
(*soi-disant* O'FLANAGAN).'

When the Governor had read this letter through he seemed to lose, for the moment, every atom of self-control. The letter dropped from his grasp. He clenched his fists, and beat them together in a way which would have been grotesque were it not for the terrible seriousness in his eyes. And yet, even while he was quivering with inarticulate emotions, some sense of the subtle irony of the situation seemed to strike him. His features, gradually losing their set expression, broke very, very slowly into a smile, which, beginning in his eyes, stole gradually over his whole face. From a mere relaxation of the facial muscles, the smile elaborated itself into a silent laugh; the laugh, becoming every second more expansive, ceased to be silent, became a guffaw, became a burst, became a roar, till the old gentleman positively had to kneel on the floor and bury his head in Mr O'Flanagan's bedclothes to stop his convulsions. The bed shook, the floor shook, the very room shook, till at last

Pengelly picked his old friend bodily up, seated him in a chair, and loosened his stock—an operation which the Governor was too far gone to protest against with more than a faintly negative wave of the hand. And Pengelly himself—when the Governor had first broken into a quiet grin—had set his teeth to stem the torrent of wrath which was trying hard to burst forth. But so infectious is laughter that he too felt a quite involuntary loosening of the muscles, and at last was quivering—he could not have said why—with the sheer contagion of merriment. Finally, the Governor, with many an 'Oh, dear me! Oh, I shall have to get Dr Pallot to open a vein for this!' slowly subsided, and, rising from his chair, put both his hands on the lieutenant's shoulders.

'My dear lad, this is a thing to forget. After all, no great harm has been done. As the rogue says, the right man comes to-morrow. You can go off quietly, and I'll put about some tale to cover appearances. Nobody, save you and I and Madam, need ever know all. As to the information, it will probably, as he says, go into the archives. A few scraps of details like that can neither make nor mar us. By the way, what's in the bag he speaks of?'

They tore it open, and found within another bag, neatly labelled 'Cabbage Seed.'

. . . . . .

Sir Francis Pengelly, K.C.B., Vice-Admiral of the Blue, is now an established figure in the naval annals of his country. After the peace he was much ashore, and devoted himself to the cultivation of an estate which he had inherited in Sussex. He developed a great turn for agriculture; his Southdowns became celebrated; while from his orchards the 'Pengelly Manor' pippins and peaches made his name familiar in circles where else it would have been unknown. But in perambulating the kitchen-garden you would have met with an odd surprise. You might have searched from morn till eve without encountering a single specimen of the harmless, necessary cabbage. The gardeners were often asked about it; but all the inquirer got for his pains was, 'The Hadmiral won't 'ave no cabbages; that's all I know.' And it was all any one else knew. The good old Governor and Madam had long been laid to rest; though it was not till some years after the Restoration that Sir Francis, opening the *Times* one morning, saw an obituary notice of 'that most distinguished naval officer, the Duc de Coutances, one of the peers of the Empire, but better known as Admiral Maurice Sheridan. The deceased peer was of Irish birth, and joined the French service after the Rebellion of 1798. We understand that his memoirs, in four volumes, are shortly to be published, and contain a mass of romantic and absorbing details which throw a flood of light on certain obscure passages in that long contest which closed in 1815.'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE PREVENTION OF LEPROSY.

MR JONATHAN HUTCHINSON, F.R.S., must be regarded as a missionary entitled to the highest honours, for he has devoted his attention for many years to a study of the cause and cure of leprosy, and for this purpose undertook toilsome journeys through the leprous districts of India, and afterwards went to those of South Africa. He has been able to come to a definite conclusion that leprosy is caused by the consumption of fish in a state of partial or complete decomposition. In countries where much salt-fish is consumed, particularly inland places where for religious reasons a fish-diet is compulsory on certain days, leprosy is far more prevalent than in other places, and Mr Hutchinson makes an earnest appeal to the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church to either allow flesh on fast-days or to follow the example of the Greek Church and forbid fish as well as flesh. Another important discovery due to this indefatigable worker and traveller is that leprosy is not infectious. It can only be conveyed to a person by means of his food. Therefore, the segregation of lepers, as at Robben Island, where its victims are condemned to a lifelong and miserable imprisonment, is unnecessary and inhuman.

CONSCRIPTION.

A recent letter in the *Times*, over the modest initial 'M.,' gives a reason for the industrial success of Germany which, if correct, is a revelation in its way, besides being a plea for conscription; and conscription is a subject which will one day come up for serious discussion among ourselves. This writer admits that he is not an educational expert, but he is quite certain that Germany's system of military service is at the bottom of her industrial success. Every man is bound to serve; but the higher the standard of education which he can show the shorter the term of service. So that the industrial advance of the country is the effect of education, which in its turn is the effect of the military system in vogue there. A German has the strongest incentive to become a good scholar, for he knows that in making himself proficient he not only adds to his general knowledge, but reduces to its lowest terms an irksome and onerous duty.

SCENIC ARTISTS.

A well-merited complimentary banquet was given in London recently to painters for the theatre by

their brothers of the brush whose works are of a more portable, and happily of a more permanent, nature. Sir Laurence Alma Tadema presided, and he was supported by artists of equal eminence and many well-known members of other professions. The chairman described the work of the scenic artist as being closely allied with other forms of painting; but it should be noted that the scene-painter had very real advantages in the matter of lighting, which he could control as he wished. Sir Alma Tadema had seen, he said, upon the stage most beautiful architectural scenes, landscapes, and flights of fancy which, alas! he would never see again. Many people must regret with Sir Alma Tadema that these works of art, which, contrary to general belief, are often full of exquisite detail, should be of such an ephemeral character. The suggestion has recently been made that copies of the more important scenes at our theatres should be preserved by means of the trichromatic photographic process. There should not be much difficulty in securing such pictures in any of the modern theatres which are lighted by electricity.

THE AURORA BOREALIS.

The 'northern lights,' which form such a constant feature in the skies of high latitudes, have been the subject of many suggested theories; but all have agreed that the phenomena displayed are of electrical origin. Indeed, that idea has been corroborated by the circumstance that during the occurrence of brilliant auroras electric telegraph apparatus has been strongly affected. Sir William Ramsay, in the light of modern discoveries, has recently given an explanation of the aurora which is sure to receive wide acceptation. He suggests that the beautiful auroral light is due to the swarms of minute particles—electrons—which the sun is continually throwing out, and that these act on the krypton in our atmosphere. In a letter to *Nature* he writes: 'We have to take into account that outpour of corpuscles from the sun which, in the upper regions of the atmosphere, is able to excite into intense activity the internal motions of krypton which produce the green auroral line, and presumably with equal and perhaps increased vigour imparts energy to the molecules of helium which range to still higher altitudes.'

MACHINERY FOR THE FARM.

Much of the picturesque charm of country-life has gone out of it with the necessary introduction of machinery, and it is impossible to associate mentally the scene of Gray's famous *Elegy* with the hum of the steam-thrasher and the *click, click* of the modern harvester. The ploughman is replaced by steam or oil motor, the straw is stacked by an 'elevator,' and hand-labour in the field is all but dispensed with. Even in the dairy, mechanical methods are supplanting the old ways. The cream, instead of being left to rise naturally from the milk, is torn from it by means of a 'separator.' But the newest invention of all in this department of labour is enough to take one's breath away. For the future there will be no one to answer the query, 'Where are you going to, my pretty maid?' for the cows are to be milked by electricity. The Lawrence-Kennedy cow-milker consists of a vacuum vessel which is connected by tubes with the animals to be milked. In connection with it is a 'pulsator,' which, we read, can be regulated by attached screws 'giving adjustability to the characteristics of each cow.' It will thus be seen that in the near future the word 'farm' will become obsolete, and 'factory' will take its place.

BRICKS FROM THE GAS-WORKS.

When electric lighting first came within practicable bounds the holders of gas shares were in despair; but now that the electric light has become common, more gas than was ever used before is in demand for stoves, engines, &c., so that investors in such property feel that they are pretty secure. And now a fresh source of income is promised in the utilisation of gas-lime and clinkers for the manufacture of bricks. At the new Wortley gas-works this refuse, which has hitherto entailed a cost of between two and three thousand pounds a year for removal, has been the subject of experiment, and it is found that good marketable bricks of a blue colour can be made by a cheap process, in which the material is hardened without being burnt in a kiln. The gas company are now inviting tenders for the erection of the necessary plant to carry out the brick manufacture on a large scale, and the product will be sold not only for building, when blue bricks are admissible, but also in the form of slabs for street pavements.

FIRE-PREVENTION IN THEATRES.

It has long been the belief that a theatre is doomed to destruction by fire sooner or later, for it usually contains a quantity of inflammable materials which are brought into dangerous proximity with lamps. The danger has been greatly minimised by the employment of electricity for lighting purposes; but the awful holocaust at Chicago shows that a modern theatre, fitted with the best appliances, and supposed to be a fireproof structure, can be in a few minutes converted into a fiery furnace. But this would be quite impossible were certain precautions taken, and this was proved by experiments shown recently at the Alhambra Theatre, London, which a number of theatrical managers, scenic artists, and fire insurance representatives were invited to witness. On this occasion Mr Moul, the demonstrator, showed that all the materials used in a piece now running at the theatre, including dresses, canvas, *papier-mâché*, gauze, cloth, &c., would, when held in a gas-flame, refuse to ignite. Even wood converted into shavings by a carpenter present for the purpose would not inflame. All these materials had been treated by the same process as that adopted for the woodwork of American

warships. Mr Moul said that nine months had been expended in these experiments, and that the extra expense was by no means excessive. He hoped that the adoption of the precautions which he had described would have the effect of reducing the heavy premium on theatres, which in his own case amounted to one thousand pounds per annum.

STEEL RAILWAY-CARRIAGES.

Another fire which led to lamentable loss of life was that which occurred a few months ago in the underground railway in Paris, and the various 'tube' railways throughout the world see that they have a possible foe to reckon with. The new Subway Company of New York are determined that their rolling-stock shall be fireproof, for they have ordered two hundred passenger-cars which are to be constructed entirely of steel and lined with aluminium. They are said to be the first all-steel cars in the world, and are fifty-one feet in length, and are necessarily completely fireproof. There were many difficulties in their construction, which were only overcome after two years' experiment. Should these new railway vehicles bear out the anticipations of their promoters, they will probably find universal adoption. The old type of carriage, with its absorbent woodwork and dusty, germ-inviting upholstery, could with advantage be displaced.

OSTRICH-FARMING.

A journal published at Johannesburg, the *South African Times*, says that it is not generally known that ostriches in a wild state are to be found in certain parts of the Transvaal, and that on some farms a few of the birds are kept under observation. The reason why ostrich-farming has not developed into a recognised industry there is due to the prevalence of wild-dogs and jackals, which prey upon the birds, and also to the absence of proper fencing. It is believed that if ostrich-farming were seriously taken in hand in the western and north-western parts of the colony, it would soon become a lucrative business. The conditions necessary to attain this end seem to be, firstly, good fencing, like that which prevails in Cape Colony; secondly, a systematic and combined action on the part of farmers for the destruction of vermin; and thirdly, at a later period, when the birds have had time to increase, the veldt must be improved by the growth of lucerne, a food which has proved suitable to the birds in the south, and by the encouragement of salt-bushes. In many districts where cattle cannot be raised on account of the prevalence of Rhodesian red-water, ostriches could be profitably dealt with, feathers being always in demand, and commanding high prices.

EGG-PACKING.

The Consul-General at Christiania describes in a despatch to the Foreign Office a new system of packing eggs which appears to possess several advantages; but as the description is not accompanied by diagrams, it is difficult to understand the exact form of apparatus employed. As far as we can gather, it consists of a series of trays made of cardboard, and containing hollow oval spaces for the reception of individual eggs. The trays fit one upon the top of another, each tier consisting of twenty-five trays of thirty eggs, equal to seven hundred and fifty eggs in all. The cardboard framework bears the weight, the eggs sustaining no pressure at all from those placed above them. The eggs cannot fall out of their cells even if the packing-case is turned over. Breakage is avoided, the eggs can readily be counted without being handled—and the less eggs are touched the longer they keep fresh—and warehousing takes up the minimum of space. The trays are cheap, and as they pack one inside the other they are easy to return to the place of origin.

THE MOTOR-LORRY.

The requirements of modern warfare demand the quick transportation, very often over the roughest possible ground, of a vast mass of heavy impedimenta, and it has long been recognised that some kind of locomotive vehicle is wanted for military purposes. Such a conveyance is found in the motor-lorry, which has recently formed the subject of a series of successful trials in Edinburgh and its vicinity. This vehicle, which is designed to carry a load of three tons, is very strongly built, and has four massive and wide wheels, each of which weighs five hundredweight. During the trials the lorry was so loaded with heavy pieces of iron, barrels of water, &c. that its total weight was made up to seven tons, and routes were purposely chosen which presented every variety of hilly road and uneven ground. In spite of all the difficulties presented, the vehicles tested attained a speed on the level of nine miles per hour, which was considerably more than that contracted for. Underneath each lorry is a large winding-drum fitted with a long steel cable, and this drum can be geared to the engine, and can be turned quite independently of the wheels; so that if half-sunk in marshy land, the vehicle can pull itself out of its difficulty by the attaching of its cable to a tree or an anchor; while, on the other hand, it can help another vehicle or a field-gun in like predicament. These lorries are fitted with four-cylinder petrol-engines of twenty-four brake-horse-power, and have been constructed by Messrs Stirling of Granton Harbour, Edinburgh.

STEAM SMOKELESS COAL.

The coal most suitable for naval purposes is singularly restricted in its occurrence. It is found in Belgium, but its chief source is South Wales. Mr W. Boyd Dawkins has lately pointed out that Britain has practically a monopoly in this coal, and he thinks that instead of allowing the precious material to go out of the country in such vast quantities to strengthen foreign navies, the whole of it should be bought up by our Government and

jealously kept for home consumption. But his letter to the *Times* has met with a rejoinder from Cardiff which shows the practical difficulties of adopting the course which he recommends. The smallest of the collieries produces more coal than is needed by our navy. What is to be done with the rest of the collieries, with an output of many million tons per annum? What, too, is to be done with the railways, docks, and other works connected with these collieries, which are mainly employed in the transport and shipping of coal? Who is to feed the vast populations depending upon regular work in connection with these enterprises? With every sympathy with a suggestion born of patriotic sentiment, we fear that these questions are unanswerable.

THE GAS COMMITTEE.

The scientific committee recently appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into the statutory requirements relative to the purity and the illuminating power of gas has to solve one or two problems of great importance. The companies have hitherto been bound to supply gas which has an illuminating power, when burned at a certain rate, of sixteen candles; but gas obtained from the coal now available will not give this high luminosity without treatment with certain enriching agents which adds greatly to the expense of manufacture. And they plead, very reasonably, that the gas used with the modern incandescent mantle and for heating and cooking purposes requires no luminosity at all, a blue flame like that given by the Bunsen burner being actually used for both purposes. The companies therefore seek powers to supply a gas of inferior illuminating power to that at present required, with a corresponding reduction in its cost to them and to their customers. The question of purity practically resolves itself into the minimum amount of sulphur which can be allowed to contaminate the gas. If the products of combustion from every gas-burner were carried off by efficient ventilation this would not be such a serious consideration as it is at present. Lord Rayleigh is the chairman of the gas committee, and his colleagues are men equally well known in the scientific world.

BREAD.

It has again and again been stated in text-books and in newspaper paragraphs and magazines that in the manufacture of modern white bread the most nutritive portion of the wheat (protein) is thrown away, and that certain ailments are thereby induced. A fresh light has been thrown upon this important matter by experiments recently undertaken by the United States Government. Since the year 1877 they have promoted a systematic inquiry into the nutrition of man; and one of the investigations undertaken deals with the composition, digestibility, and nutritive values of different kinds of flour. The various sorts of flour were made into bread, and the subjects experimented upon were specially selected healthy men. From a report issued it appears that although the entire-wheat bread is richer in protein, it is not so easily digestible as the bread made from the more refined material. And this is due to the fact that a considerable portion of that valuable constituent 'is contained in the coarser particles (bran), and so resists the action of the digestive juices and escapes digestion.' It seems, therefore, that the benefits of whole-meal bread have been overrated; for while it does contain more protein than the whiter and more appetising kinds, its value must be discounted on the score of its being more difficult of assimilation by the digestive organs.

LISTEN!

Brother, are the skies o'erclouded,
Are there shadows overhead;
Is the pathway long and stony
That your weary feet must tread?
Is the golden light of sunrise
Hidden by the mist of gray,
And the peaceful vale where waiteth
Rest from toiling, far away?
Listen to the song-birds singing
Sweetly in the kind, warm rain;
Listen to the streamlet's whisper,
Flowing to the far-off main!
Listen to the murm'ring breezes,
Singing unto flow'r and tree;
If the Father cares for these things,
Shall He not have thought for thee?

Brother, is thy heart desponding,
Burdened with its weight of care;
Is the toil unending, fruitless,
And the strife too great to bear?
Does the morrow hold no promise
Of respite from all thy ill;
Does thy hope, far-off at sunrise,
Seem at sunset farther still?
Listen to the music round you,
There is hope in everything;
List to bird and stream and breezes,
As in sun and rain they sing!
Listen to them in the shadow,
And no more despondent be;
If the Father loveth all things,
Will He not remember thee?

Clifton Bingham.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SIXTH SERIES.

AUNT MARY.

By FRED M. WHITE.

IN TEN CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

THE spirit of spring was in the air; a thrush piped with full-throated melody from a swinging blackthorn. Over beyond the water-meadows a ridge of larches gleamed with the tenderest green, save where their crests flamed into the sunset. A March evening full of light, a sky wind-swept and saffron to the zenith, crisp and cold, and yet it had been the sort of day when Nature turns in her sleep. There was a jingle of harness somewhere, the bleat of lambs; a long thread of noisy rooks melted into the flaming-red furnace of the west.

A quaintly hammered pair of iron gates (Quentin Matsys gates, Walter Whitworth felt certain) opened upon a winding drive, carpeted on either side by primroses and violets. It was Whitworth's destination, but he hesitated. He was not quite filled with the beauty of it yet. The silence was a little oppressive, for the din and roar of the train was in his ears still.

And he was an artist to his finger-tips. A day or two ago he had been a poor and struggling student, with nothing but genius and a fine ambition behind him. The turn of a day had changed all that. He was heir to Grey Gables and a matter of some six hundred pounds a year besides. Miss Mary Bentley's prim letter testified to the fact.

It was all very dreamy as yet. Walter had not yet grasped the full measure of his happiness. Here was a young man who pined for the country. In his dull bed-sitting-room, under the tiles of a Bloomsbury lodging-house, he had drawn glowing pictures against the background of fog. He would have a country residence like Sir John Pettifer, R.A., in whose studio he worked. He thought of the dewy lawns in the sweet June twilight, of the cool splash of the sea against the moonlit rocks, of heathery uplands, and the music of the rippling waters where the ferns grew. He didn't know that he was breaking his heart for it, but he was.

And then came that advertisement, the visit to a dingy solicitor in an equally dingy office, and the production of the last will and testament of Colin Whitworth of Grey Gables, in the county of Norfolk, the uncle of whom Walter had only heard casually. For the best part of a year the family lawyer had been advertising for Walter Whitworth. The cast-iron manner of the man of enactments was in fine contrast to Walter's feelings.

'There are a few formalities, of course,' Mr Benn had said; 'but there is no reason why you should not take possession of your property. There is a distant relative of my late client's there, and a Miss Bentley who has been your uncle's housekeeper for many years. I am afraid it will be a wrench for them—um—because attached to the place, and so forth. If you can see your way to giving them a considerable latitude in the way of—er—um'——

Walter smiled. So there was a heart somewhere even in that flinty bosom.

'They shall stay as long as they like,' Walter said. 'I dare say they won't mind looking after my comfort: the plainest food, and a room to paint in. Seeing that my father is still abroad'——

'Oh, your father is still abroad, eh?' Mr Benn asked dryly. 'In his younger days I knew your father well. To put it mildly, he was a source of some anxiety to his friends. Your uncle Colin was a long way off being my ideal of a wise man, but he showed a fine discrimination when he passed over your father in favour of you. Is he likely to be away long?'

Walter muttered something to the effect that, in his capacity of a mining engineer, his father might be in Spain for months; but, on the other hand, he might be at home next week. He was vaguely impressed with the fact that Mr Benn regarded his father as a *mauvais sujet*. Walter would have called him a Bohemian. In all the young man's struggles he had not had the least paternal support. Jim Whitworth was proud of his son's genius; he

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was prodigal of good advice; but there it ended. Walter felt vaguely conscious that there was some mystery here. Mr Benn looked significantly at his watch.

'Go down to Grey Gables,' he said, 'and do your best to please Aunt Mary—I mean Miss Bentley. Good-day.'

And now Walter was at the gate of his terrestrial paradise with Miss Mary Bentley's passport in his pocket. He felt a little nervous and uneasy, for the letter had been terribly stiff and formal. There was a suggestion of chill disappointment about it, too. Walter's quick, artistic temperament had not failed to see that.

He passed up between the shining belt of primroses, past a lawn edged with old-fashioned rose-trees of the standard variety, and under an Elizabethan porch shielding a monastic door. Walter drew a breath of pure delight. He had read about these kind of things; he had studied them lovingly. In his dreams he had pictured a home of this kind when he should have grown rich and famous. There was a blurred mist before his eyes, so that the quaint brass knocker loomed large. Of course there must be an old-fashioned bell-pull somewhere—one of the hanging sort, wrought in bronze. There it was.

A bell clanged somewhere in the distance, and presently an ancient servitor appeared: an old woman amazingly clean; an old woman with white hair, and cheeks red and hard as the sunny side of an apple, and as glowing. She had on a lilac cotton-print dress and a cap of quaint design. It was almost an extinct type, the old-fashioned servant who spends all her life in one family.

'My respects to you, sir,' she said; 'you are Master Walter. And how like your father you be! But a better face, thank God—a better face!'

The last words came involuntarily, like an anxious thought put into words. There was the same strange feeling again, the feeling that his father somehow was at the bottom of some disgraceful family secret. Mr Benn had hinted as much, and old Martha was confirming it. And yet Walter knew that his father was a popular man.

'Miss Bentley is expecting me?' he asked.

'Oh dear, yes,' Martha replied. 'And you just try and be gentle with Miss Mary. The parlour isn't quite ready just yet. Here is the dining-room.'

Walter drew a deep breath. Old oak on the floors; old oak on the walls. A low ceiling that suggested Pugin, a great black settle, a Cromwellian dresser with a marvellous old willow-pattern dinner-service, some carved chests, a deep seated-window or two, a suggestion of stained glass. There snored a grandfather's clock with a date 1694. Wonderful! wonderful!

It was the same in the drawing-room. The great John Pettifer, R.A., would have raved over those fluted-backed chairs. Some cunning hand had arranged blue plates and dishes with a hawthorn pattern along the picture-rail. Spode! Walter had seen collectors tumbling over one another for worse specimens at Christie's. Had he been commercial-minded he would have appraised his surroundings highly. But he was only excited and uplifted by the atmosphere of the place. It was Tennyson's haunt of ancient peace. Some rooks were cawing somewhere. The glow of the March evening filled the room.

That was a portrait by Hoppner in the corner, of course; and there was a Lely and a Romney, also a Gainsborough, and two more portraits by Reynolds: a small collection of pictures, but all of the best. The spirit of rest and refinement breathed upon everything like some magic varnish. All this belonged to the young man who had merely dreamt of such things a week ago.

Everything else was as it had been for two centuries. Behind the brass lattice of the book-case atop of the Dutch bow-fronted bureau were old editions, the one modern volume being Tupper's *Proverbial Philosophy*. A Shakespeare in leather, a worn edition of Bacon, Beaumont and Fletcher, Ben Jonson, Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and a long row of manuscript music-scores. Colin Whitworth had been a fine musician. There was an organ in the house built by Father Prout himself.

Tea was laid out on the oval oak table: a fine service of Chelsea, a fluted teapot *circa* William and Mary; six candles ready for lighting sprang from candelabra of old English Sheffield plate. The fair white cloth had a faint suggestion of lavender about it. Wonderful! wonderful!

Somebody was speaking to Walter, who stood there in a waking dream. He was conscious that a timid hand was touching his shoulder. He came suddenly to earth again; the golden light was fading from the room.

'Martha told me you were here, sir,' the prim voice said. 'I have the honour to be Miss Mary Bentley, at your service, sir.'

CHAPTER II.

WALTER bowed and held out his hand. The prim little figure before him took no notice. The young man's face flushed. He had come down here actuated by the kindliest thoughts and feelings. But, after all, he must make allowances.

He saw before him a slight little lady who might have been any age between thirty and fifty. Her complexion was pure and brilliant, the skin without a wrinkle. The mouth was gentle and sensitive, though now it was drawn tight with a droll attempt at sternness. The hair, piled high on the erect little head, was quite white; and the spare, dignified figure was clad in stiff gray silk; at the throat and neck was lace so beautiful that Walter was quite fascinated by it. He was a little chilled and disappointed, but the man had to be born yet

who could be angry long with Miss Bentley. Despite her frosty dignity and the hauteur of her manner, she carried an atmosphere of kindness about her. The small white hands, covered with glittering gems, trembled slightly.

Walter smiled despite himself. It was such a quaint yet pleading picture! He could easily imagine that slight figure at a bedside; those slim hands were made to render hot pillows soft and cool; those dark-gray eyes——

'Aunt Mary,' Walter said with a sudden impulse, 'indeed, indeed I do want to be friends. Won't you shake hands with me?'

The sensitive mouth shook, with the ghost of a smile upon it. Two trembling little hands went out, and Walter caught them heartily. The dark-gray eyes had a yearning look in them, a touch of retrospection. They were reading Walter. He wondered why they filled with tears so swiftly.

'You are very like your mother,' Miss Bentley said. 'The same handsome features; the same fearless eyes. And yet—well, you have your mother's soul and expression. I am glad of that—ah, I am glad of that!'

'I have often heard my father speak about you,' Walter said. 'Of course I knew there was some bitter quarrel, and that the two brothers had not met for years. They called you Aunt Mary when you were quite a little girl, didn't they?'

Miss Bentley nodded with her hand pressed to her side as if some sharp pain racked her. Just for a moment the prim gray figure drew up swiftly.

'Won't you take a seat?' she asked politely.

'Certainly not!' Walter smiled. 'At least, not yet. Aunt Mary, won't you forgive me? It wasn't my fault that Uncle Colin left me this property. I never expected it. Won't you give me a kiss?'

'So like his father!' Miss Bentley murmured. 'So very like his father! And yet different.'

Her face was broken up with smiles and tears, a young face now smiling and rosy. Only the eyes were a little sad and retrospective. 'I am a silly, selfish old woman,' she cried. 'There! That is the first time a man has kissed me since—— Well, never mind, sir. I told Kathleen exactly how I was going to treat you, and she laughed. I am afraid my dignity is not a robust plant. But Colin Whitworth had no business to leave the property to you, sir.'

'I never expected it for a moment,' Walter replied.

'Oh, I quite believe you. Did your father ever tell you why he and his brother Colin quarrelled so bitterly and finally?'

Walter shook his head. The little figure in the gray silk lay half-buried in a deep arm-chair, the fitful light of the log-fire touching up her pretty, thoughtful face. The crocus flames were reflected from the blue Dutch tiles of the hearth, with their presentment of the story of Ruth.

'Your father was always a popular man,' Miss Bentley said. 'There was a fascination about him. And he was so handsome, but always careless and charmingly selfish and inconsiderate for the feelings of others. Your uncle Colin was worth a score of him. Colin was engaged to your mother, and Jim—I mean James, your father—to—to somebody else. Then he ran away with your mother and married her. It was a dreadful time for—for all of us. And that's why your uncle and father never met again.'

'I am very sorry,' Walter said humbly. 'It was not a—eh, well, you know what I mean.'

'I understand, my dear boy. Then I came here to keep house, and little Kathleen followed. On the whole, we have had much to be thankful for: years and years of peace and quiet happiness. Your father's name was never once mentioned till three years ago, when he behaved so nobly over that mining business in the north of Spain. It was in all the papers. It was just the kind of reckless, magnificent bravery that your father always revelled in. And he was always so passionately fond of children!'

'Extraordinarily so,' Walter hastened to say.

'Colin Whitworth thought a great deal about it. He told me he should leave the place and the money to your father in trust for you till you came of age. After all, Kathleen was no blood-relation of his. It wasn't at all just; but it was a case where I could say nothing. So the will was made. A little over a year ago Colin told me he had changed his mind. He had heard good accounts of you. He said it would be best for an ambitious young man to make his own way. And Kathleen was ill'——

'I hope she is better now,' Walter said politely.

'Kathleen will never be better. She is dying.'

There was a ring in the little speech, a suggestion of the bitterness of death that is past. A flame leaping from the blue tiles touched the hopeless sadness of Miss Bentley's face. A new world was opening to Walter.

'You will see her presently,' Miss Bentley said. 'Kathleen is dying of consumption. We have to take the greatest care with her. A sudden chill, a cold air, and—— You will see her presently. And that is why I am sore and angry with you. By all moral rights this place should be Kathleen's. Colin promised me he would revoke that will; but he put it off till it was too late. And when I heard that they had found you at last, and that you were coming down here, I was hard'——

'Aunt Mary, you were nothing of the kind. You couldn't be.'

'Well, I tried to be. I pictured you as being easy and charming and selfish, as Jim—I mean your father—used to be. You would be very polite and very fascinating; but, all the same, you were going to turn us out of the house'——

'Aunt Mary, I swear to you that I never meant anything of the kind,' Walter cried. 'My father has so often spoken of you that I was quite sure from the first we should be friends.'

A blue flame seemed to give a red glow to Aunt Mary's cheeks.

'I am an artist. I have often dreamt of a home like this. Only I never expected to find anything half so perfect. Here I can follow my own bent, and do just the class of romantic picture that my soul loves. I had planned it all out as I came along. You were to look after my comfort, and find me a big room for a studio. And, on the other hand, you were to do me the favour of stopping here, and we were to be as happy as the day is long, Aunt Mary.'

Miss Bentley made no reply. She was crying softly into a cambric handkerchief. Hers was the rare kind of woman's face that looks none the worse for tears.

'Aunt Mary,' Walter said pleadingly, 'you won't go away?'

Aunt Mary dabbed her eyes with fierce little pats.

'I am a very foolish old woman,' she replied. 'Go and get ready for our high tea. Your room is the first door to the right. I am going to do the silliest thing of my life—I'm going to stay here. Goodness knows the complications and troubles there will be; but I stay. Kiss me again, my bonny boy; you are very like your—mother.'

It was quiet and still in the hall; beyond a door at the end of a passage somebody was playing the organ. Walter's artistic soul expanded to the music. He crept down the passage and opened the door.

Here was a lofty room, oak panelled and lighted by two long windows. The very place for a studio! Between the long windows the reeds of an organ upraised. A figure sat before the worn, yellow keys that gleamed in the light of two wax candles in silver sconces. The atmosphere of the place was intolerably warm by reason of a tortoise stove, the one modern innovation in the house.

The room was flooded with the glorious melody. A girl with fair shining hair and a white, purely cut face was playing, with her heart in the music. She turned suddenly; her fingers dropped on the keys; the wailing melody stole into the shadows. There was a hush of silence in the room.

Walter spoke very softly; but his words were plain to the player's ears.

'Kitty,' he said, 'what a day it has been! Oh, Kitty, *Kitty!*'

LORD NELSON'S PRIZE CAPTURES.

By Rev. R. A. Gatty, LL.B.

PART I.

THERE is always something that is very pathetic about old letters. How well one knows the sight of the packet tied with faded ribbon, once cherished by its owner, now dead and gone, that is reverently burned that no profane eyes may see its contents! More than three hundred letters came into my possession not long ago owing to the death of a near relation, and their history is so peculiar that I deemed them deserving of historical notice.

Just one hundred years ago Lord Nelson sailed to the Mediterranean in the *Victory*, taking with him his chaplain and secretary, the Rev. A. J. Scott. It was part of the duty of the secretary, who was a good linguist, to write Lord Nelson's letters in any language that was necessary, and to translate all letters captured in prize-ships and search them for news of the enemy. It happened that Mr Scott had taken on board with him two low arm-chairs covered with leather, which on each side had deep pockets extending the whole length of the chair. Lord Nelson took a fancy to these chairs, and they were placed in his cabin. An extract from the Life of Mr Scott, published by his family after his death, will serve to explain the use the chairs were put to, and will account for the 'intercepted letters' above mentioned:

'It must be remembered that Lord Nelson made it a point of etiquette to accompany all his original English letters to foreign Courts with translations in their respective languages, and the preparing these was an office that occupied much of Mr Scott's attention. In addition to constant communications with the royal families of Naples and Sardinia, a correspondence was carried on at intervals during the greater part of the blockade of Toulon with the Dey of Algiers, the unsettled and intricate state of affairs between that personage and the English Government causing Lord Nelson a great deal of annoyance and wearisome negotiation. Besides the graver employments above spoken of, Mr Scott was in the habit of reading to his chief all the French, Italian, Spanish, and other foreign newspapers which were sent regularly to the fleet, and these were ransacked as well for the amusement as the information they contained. Mr Scott had also to wade through numberless ephemeral foreign pamphlets, which a mind less investigating than Lord Nelson's would have discarded as being totally unworthy of notice; but he entertained a persuasion that no man ever put his hand to a paper without having some information or theory to deliver which he fancied was not generally known, and this was worth looking after through the encumbering rubbish. His own quickness in detecting the drift of an author was perfectly marvellous. Two or three pages of a pamphlet were generally sufficient

to put him in complete possession of the writer's object, and nothing was too trivial for the attention of this great man's mind when there existed a possibility of its being the means of obtaining information. Day after day might be seen the Admiral in his cabin closely employed with his secretary over their interminable papers. They occupied two black leathern arm-chairs, into the roomy pockets of which Scott, weary of translating, would occasionally stuff away a score or two of unopened private letters found in prize-ships, although the untiring activity of Nelson grudged leaving one such document unexamined. These chairs, with an ottoman that fits between them (now treasured heirlooms in Mr Scott's family), formed, when lashed together, a couch on which the hero often slept those brief slumbers for which he was remarkable.'

The above will explain the presence of these letters in the pockets of the chairs, and there they remained until the great Admiral fell at the battle of Trafalgar, and passed away in the arms of this chaplain and secretary in the cockpit of the *Victory*. On the return of the fleet to Portsmouth, the secretary took away with him the cabin papers connected with his own work and the chairs which belonged to him. As a reward for his services he was presented to the vicarage of Catterick in Yorkshire, and the University of Cambridge conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

It is, however, the history of the intercepted letters, and not that of the secretary, which concerns us. He, no doubt, forgot all about their existence, and for thirty or more years they remained in the chair-pockets. I have a vivid recollection in my early youth, when the chairs had become the property of my mother, of diving my hands into the capacious pockets and pulling out the unopened letters. There were frequently enclosures, such as bits of lace and patterns of silks, which to children's eyes were acquisitions, and numbers of them contained cheques and drafts of money. Happily, we were prevented from going too far in the destructive line, and the letters were gathered together and put away in safety. There is, perhaps, nothing more than a sentimental value in such a collection, as those which have been translated refer only to general matters occurring at the time, some love-letters, and some sermons. The bulk, however, has never been translated; but I have no doubt the judgment of the secretary was right, and there is nothing of real interest in them, or they would not have found their way into the pockets of the chairs. Perhaps there was one which might have proved of some interest at the time, for it is addressed to Madame Letizia Bonaparte, Paris. It is written in Italian, and is signed 'Giuseppe Levie Gio. Girolamo.'

If, however, these old letters fail in historical interest, this cannot be said of the documents which Mr Scott brought away from his desk in the cabin. The half-sheets of paper with letters dictated by Lord Nelson recall to one's mind the secretary's duties on board the *Victory;* and one sheet shows that at times paper was scarce, for on the top of the page are the last words of a sermon by the chaplain, followed by 'And now to God the Father,' &c.; and then begins a letter transcribed into Italian, 'Illmo. Signore Proñe Coliñe,' to say that Lord Nelson has been informed that certain work has been satisfactorily completed. Two well-thumbed maps of the coasts of Spain and France were also among these documents, and the order issued to the fleet by Admiral Collingwood, who hoisted his flag on board the *Euryalus* immediately after the battle of Trafalgar. The concluding words of the order are worth repetition as a specimen of the manly and religious spirit of the Admiral and those in command:

'General Order.—The Almighty God, whose arm alone is strength, having of His great mercy been pleased to crown the exertions of His Majesty's fleet with success, in giving them a complete victory over their enemies on the 21st instant: that all praise and thanksgiving may be offered up to the throne of God for the great benefit of our country and to mankind, I have thought proper that a day should be appointed of general humiliation before God, and thanksgiving for this His merciful goodness, imploring forgiveness of sins, a continuation of His divine mercy, and His constant aid to us in the defence of our country's liberties and laws, without which the utmost efforts of man are naught; and direct, therefore, that Thursday the 7th of November next be appointed for that holy purpose.

'Given on board the *Euryalus*, off Cape Trafalgar, the 22nd October 1805.—Cuthbert Collingwood.

'To the respective Captains and Commanders.'

It may be of interest to repeat a letter of Mr Scott's giving a brief account of the battle of Trafalgar, written to his uncle, Rear-Admiral Scott. All his life Scott could never get over the horrors of that day and the sufferings of the wounded whom he was attending below. He had gone up for a few moments on to the deck to breathe some fresh air when Nelson fell, and he returned with him to the cockpit. He never would allude to the subject in conversation; but once the expression came from him, 'It was like a butcher's shambles.'

'*Oct. 27*, 1805. *Victory.*

'My dear Uncle,—On the 21st instant the combined fleet of thirty-three sail of the line were completely defeated by our twenty-seven sail of the line. The enemy were extended to leeward, and in as good a line as they could well form with so little wind as there was. Our fleet in two divisions went down all sail set, steering-sails, &c.; the wind right aft and the swell forcing the ships down. Lord Nelson in the *Victory* led one division, Admiral Collingwood the other. The first cut through between the enemy's ninth and tenth ships, the latter between the nineteenth and twentieth. Never was so complete a defeat. There has been a heavy gale of wind ever since the night of the action, the wind dead on a lee-shore, and we have been lying a wreck

part of the time; consequently we know nothing of particular damages, or all the enemy's ships might have been taken. I believe there were at least nineteen taken—two three-deckers, one called a four-decker (the largest ship ever built), the Spanish Admiral Gravina, the French Admiral Villeneuve, &c. Having told you the news, which will make you rejoice for your country, what will you think of me who detest this victory? It has deprived me of my beloved and adored friend. I knew not until his loss how much I loved him. He died as the battle finished, and his last effort to speak was made at the moment of joy for victory. I cannot talk more to you about it. I hope soon to see you. I shall attend my dear Lord's remains, and act when I reach England as his executors may direct. Let me find a letter from you at Portsmouth. *This ship must go home*—the mizenmast gone, the main and foremast cut to pieces, and only standing by miracle, &c. It still blows hard, but we are in tow by the *Neptune*, and hope to get the gut open to-morrow morning. Possibly we shall rig a good jurymast at Gibraltar, and then go home. I do not say much of my loss; it is beyond all utterance. I, of course, now retire.'

The funeral of Lord Nelson was a national one, and Mr Scott was appointed one of the pall-bearers, who were six in number. To each of these gentlemen was given a gold ring with Lord Nelson's arms in enamel, with the inscriptions inside the ring and outside, 'Lost to his Country,' and '*Palmam qui meruit ferat.*' These, with an ornamental card of the funeral and a lock of Lord Nelson's hair cut off by Scott after death, are treasured relics by his descendants. The pall which covered the coffin had six bannerets with Lord Nelson's arms, and each pall-bearer was given one of these with the gold ring. A few years ago, when there was a naval exhibition in London, and Nelson relics were shown, several of these bannerets were lent, and the rings also.

Another document must be mentioned, as it has peculiar historical interest, though it is not part of the *Victory* letters. This is the original draft of the Treaty of Copenhagen, corrected by Lord Nelson in his own hand, and drawn up by Mr Scott. It would, perhaps, be well to explain that Mr Scott before he joined Lord Nelson was the chaplain to Sir Hyde Parker, and secretary on board the *London*. His diary, written on board that ship at the time of the Danish expedition, has the following entries:

'*Sunday, March* 29, 1801.—We still remain off the mouth of the Sound, but have approached nearer to Cronenberg, and have had some communication by a flag of truce with the Governor.

'*Monday*, 30.—Nothing more interesting, but we are nearer the fairway between the Danish and Swedish shores. Are under sail, and shall in a few moments pass the famous castle, from whence they now keep up an immense fire, although apparently not a shot reaches the ships they fire at. At anchor at Copenhagen. Lord Nelson and Sir Hyde are now concerting a plan of attack. They reconnoitred the enemy's position in the *Amazon*. They were warmly fired at, but needlessly, as the shot did not reach the ship.

'*March* 31.—The Admirals are employed in arranging the mode of attack in the *Elephant*.

'*April* 1.—Lord Nelson, with twelve ships of the line, has anchored to the southward of the enemy's line.

'*April* 2.—The squadron got under way to attack the enemy. About twenty minutes before eleven our ships opened their fire. The battle lasted four hours, when the whole line from the southernmost end down to the Crowns was completely destroyed or taken.'

After this follows the entry: '*April* 8.—Went on shore as secretary to the Legation. Was presented to the Crown Prince. After five hours *pour et contre parler* with General Walterstorff and Adjutant-General Lindholm, we agreed upon the heads of an armistice. Dined with the Crown Prince, the Prince Augustenbourg. The Crown Prince's brother-in-law was there, as also the Prince of Wirtemberg.

'*April* 9.—General Walterstorff and Adjutant-General Lindholm came on board. Another armistice was signed and sealed, after which Lord Nelson took it ashore for the ratification of the Crown Prince.'

Slight as Mr Scott's mention is of his being selected to go on shore as secretary to the Legation, it was nevertheless an office which conferred the greatest honour upon him, since for the fulfilment of it no ordinary abilities were required. It was not merely a linguist that was wanted, but a diplomatist of skill and tact, and experienced in the negotiation of delicate public business. Lord Nelson feeling this, and appreciating, as he had the peculiar faculty of doing, the exact qualifications of all about him, and how to employ them to the most advantage, fixed at once upon his old acquaintance Mr Scott for the occasion, and applied to Sir Hyde Parker for his assistance. Thus it happened that Mr Scott was employed in the arrangement of the celebrated Convention at Copenhagen, the articles of which were drawn up by him; and so highly did Nelson value this service that he urged him to subscribe it with his name as secretary, and told him, when he modestly declined doing so, that he would live to repent it, which proved true.

But it was not only in missions of this kind that Lord Nelson utilised the diplomatic abilities of his secretary. The fleet had to be fed and watered, and this was not always an easy matter to accomplish in the Mediterranean, with the French on the alert to detect any breach of neutrality. Mr Scott was an enthusiast over book-collecting, and the landing of a clergyman like himself from the fleet at a neutral port, with a few boxes to hold his books, attracted small attention. An extract from his Life says:

'The object of these missions was known only to himself and Lord Nelson at the time they occurred, the business being kept so strictly secret that there is no mention even in his diary of what took place on any one occasion—a precaution which may have been dictated by common prudence, as he was constantly liable to fall into the hands of the French faction. Happily, however, no misfortune of this kind ever befell him; but there can be no doubt that the risks he ran were considerable, and it is interesting to record what we have been assured of by an eye-witness, that when Mr Scott was absent on these services Lord Nelson was in a state of the most restless uneasiness and anxiety on his account, and when the few days' absence was over, was always more pleased to see Mr Scott safe back than at the success of his missions.'

Vice-Admiral Sir W. Parker, speaking of Scott's work, said: 'He was frequently and most eminently useful in obtaining, by personal communication with the authorities and even peasants of Sardinia, supplies of fresh provisions, vegetables, fruit, &c. for the fleet, which could not have been procured by any one less conversant with the language and manners of the natives.'

Another letter among these documents must be put on record, though it has to do with the one shadow on Lord Nelson's life: his relations with Lady Hamilton. I give it, therefore, without comment, as it is needless to enter into all the particulars only too well known by the public. The letter is from Lady Hamilton to Mr Scott:

'CROMWICH,
'*September 7th*, 1806.

'MY DEAR FRIEND,—I did not get your letter till the other day, for I have been with Mrs Bolton to visit an old, respectable aunt of my dear Nelson's. I shall be in town, that is at Merton, the end of the week, and I hope you will come there on Saturday and pass Sunday with me. I want much to see you, consult with you about my affairs. How hard it is, how cruel, their treatment to me and Horatia. That angel's last wishes all neglected, not to speak of the fraud that was acted to keep back the codicil. But enough! when we meet we will speak about it. God bless you for all your attentions and love you showed to our virtuous Nelson and his dear remains; but it seems those that truly loved him are to be victims to hatred, jealousy, and spite. However, we have innocence on our sides, and we have, and had, what they that persecute us never had—that was *his* unbounded love and esteem, his confidence and affection. I know well how he valued you and what he would have done for you had he lived. You know the great and virtuous affection he had for me, the love he bore my husband, and if I had any influence over him I used it for the good of my country. Did I ever keep him at home? Did I not share in his glory? Even this last fatal victory, it was I bid him go forth. Did he not pat me on the back, call me brave Emma, and said, "If there were more Emmas there would be more Nelsons." Does he not in his last moments do me justice, and request at the moment of his glorious death that the King and the nation will do me justice? And I have got all his letters, and near eight hundred of the Queen of Naples' letters, to show what I did for my King and country, and prettily I am rewarded! Psha! I am above them, I despise them; for, thank God, I feel that having lived with honour and glory, glory they cannot take from me, I despise them—my soul is above them, and I can yet make some of them tremble by showing them how he despised them, for in his letters to me he thought aloud. Look at Alexander Davison courting the man he despised, and neglecting now those whose feet he used to lick. Dirty, vile groveler! (*sic*). But enough till we meet. Mrs Bolton and all the family beg their compliments. Write to me at Merton, and ever believe me, my dear sir, your affectionate EMMA HAMILTON.

'Horatia is charming. She begs her love to you. She improves dayly (*sic*). She sends you 100,000,000 kisses.'

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

By WILLIAM LE QUEUX.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE HAND AND THE GLOVE.

SOME grave mystery enveloped both the Earl and his daughter; of that I felt absolutely convinced.

Her attitude towards me was one of fear. She believed me to be her enemy. What reason she had for such suspicion was an enigma.

Do you believe in love at first sight? I did not until that moment when, in the brief conversation, I detected the beauty of her character. I had often heard it said that only fools love a woman at first meeting her. Yet within this woman's heart was a fathomless well of purest affection, although its waters slept in silence and obscurity—never failing in their depth, and never overflowing in their fullness. Everything in her seemed somehow to lie beyond my view, affecting me in a manner which I felt rather than perceived. At first I did not know that it was love for her. Amid the strange atmosphere of mystery and conspiracy into which I had so suddenly been plunged, amid the convulsions of doubt and fear which had during those past few

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days harrowed my soul, the tender influence of this woman came like that of a celestial visitant, making itself felt and acknowledged, although I could not understand it. Like a soft star that shines for a moment from behind a stormy cloud, and the next is swallowed up in tempest and darkness, the impression it left was beautiful and deep, but vague.

Perhaps you may blame me. Most probably you will. But man is ever the jetsam of the wind of destiny.

In those strange words to me, as though she were defeated, there seemed a calm fortitude and elevation of soul, arising from the consciousness of duty, and lifting her above all considerations of self. Her natural reserve, her tardiness of disposition, her subdued quietude of deportment and expression, the veiled shyness thrown over her emotions, her language, and her manner seemed to make the outward demonstration invariably fall short of what I knew to be the feeling within.

I glanced at her, and took in every detail of her countenance and dress. She was no longer in shabby black, but in a pretty costume of dove-gray cashmere, with silken trimmings of a somewhat darker shade; she looked daintily bewitching, supple and slim, gray lending relief to the delicate roundness, the gentle curves of a figure in which early womanhood was blooming with all its sweet and adorable charm. And the hat that covered her fair hair, streaked here and there with gold, suited her exquisitely, whether the eye sought harmony of colour or unity of lines. She wore no veil, and thus I could freely feast my eyes upon her beauty.

To the man of the world like myself, and more particularly to one gifted with a lively imagination, as a writer of romance must necessarily be, such a character as that of Judith Gordon was calculated above every other to impress and captivate.

'I really don't understand you,' I exclaimed after a pause. 'You do not trouble me, for until I saw you by chance passing in the street we were entire strangers.'

'No benefit can be obtained by discussing the matter,' she answered blankly. 'Why were you watching in Harpur Street if not to witness my despair?'

'I had a motive in watching,' I answered.

'Of course you had. You cannot deny that. My father has already spoken of you, and told me everything.'

'And he is still triumphant?' I queried, recollecting his expression of satisfaction on seeing the fatal sign.

She was silent, her lips set closely, her fair face turned towards the open expanse of gray sea.

'Am I not right in suggesting that your enemy is a person named Selby, and that he'——

'Who told you that?' she cried. 'How did you know?'

'By my own observations,' I replied, as calmly as I could, yet secretly gratified that she should have thus betrayed the truth.

'Ah!' she sighed. 'I see! I was not mistaken. You are not my friend, Mr Kennedy.'

'But I am,' I declared. 'Give me an opportunity of proving my friendship. You apparently believe that I am implicated in some plot against you, but I swear I am innocent of it all. I myself am a victim of some extraordinary conspiracy—just as you are.'

She looked me straight in the face as though hesitating whether she dared speak the truth. Next instant, however, her natural caution asserted itself, and, with tactful ingenuity, she turned the conversation into a different channel. She seemed uneasy, and eager to escape from my cross-examination; while I, on my part, became determined to obtain from her the truth and to convince her of my good intentions.

I was in a difficulty, because to reveal my connection with The Closed Book might upset all my plans. For aught I knew, she might inform the man Selby, who, gaining knowledge of my presence in England, would suspect that the precious volume had come again into my possession. Therefore I was compelled to retain my secret, and by so doing was, of course, unable to convince her of my intention to be her friend.

Mine was a painful position—just as painful as hers. For some reason quite unaccountable she held me in terror, and now that dusk was darkening to night, was in haste to return to Saxlingham, about three miles distant. It was apparent that my admission of having watched her and her father in Harpur Street had aroused her suspicion of me, a suspicion which no amount of argument or assertion would remove.

She was disinclined to discuss the matter further; and, after some desultory conversation regarding the beauties of Norfolk, she called her dog Rover, preparatory to taking leave of me.

'You must excuse me, Mr Kennedy,' she said, with a smile, the first I had seen on that sad, sweet face. 'But it is growing late, and it will be dark before I get back.'

'May I not walk with you half the distance?' I urged.

'No,' she responded. 'It would be taking you right out of your way for Sheringham. I have known the roads about here ever since I was a child, and therefore have no fear.'

'Well,' I said, putting forth my hand and lifting my hat to her, 'I can only hope, Lady Judith, that when next we meet you will have learnt that, instead of being your enemy, I am your friend.'

She placed her hand in mine rather timidly, and I held it there while she replied, with a sigh, 'Ah, if I could only believe that you speak the truth!'

'It is the truth!' I cried, still holding her tiny hand in my grip. 'You are in distress, and although

you decline to allow me to assist you, I will show you that I have not lied to you to-night. Recollect, Lady Judith,' I went on fervently, for I saw that some nameless terror had driven her to despair—'recollect that I am your friend, ready to render you any assistance or perform any service at any moment; only, on your part, I want you to give me a promise.'

'And what is that?' she faltered.

'That you will tell no one that you met me. Remember that, although you are not aware of it, your enemies are mine.'

For a moment she was silent, with eyes downcast; then she answered in a low voice, 'Very well, Mr Kennedy. If you wish it, I will say nothing. Good-night.'

'Good-night,' I answered, and having released her hand, she turned from me with a sad smile of farewell, and with her collie bounding by her side, made her way over the brow of the hill along the straight white road, while I, after watching until she had disappeared from view, turned and walked in the opposite direction.

The truth dawned slowly upon me as I went along: I was in love with her! Did that light trembling of the eyelids that I had noticed as our gaze met at the instant when we parted betoken any reciprocation? That was the problem that puzzled—nay, distracted me.

Anything like mystery, anything withheld or withdrawn from our notice, seizes on our fancy by awakening our curiosity. Then we are won more by what we half-perceive and half-create than by what is openly expressed and freely bestowed. But this feeling is part of our life; when time and years have chilled us, when we can no longer afford to send our souls abroad, nor from our own superfluity of life and sensibility spare the materials out of which we build a shrine for our idol, then do we seek, we ask, we thirst for that warmth of frank, confiding tenderness which revives in us the withered affections and feelings buried but not dead. Then the excess of love is welcome, not repelled; it is gracious to us as the sun and dew to the seared and riven trunk with its few green leaves.

Like every other man I had had my own affairs of the heart. I had loved unwisely more than once, and had become world-weary before my time; the ardent passions of youth had turned to rashness and wilfulness; therefore the sweetness, sensibility, magnanimity, and fortitude of the unhappy Judith's character appealed to me in all the freshness and perfection of what a true woman should be.

I cared nothing for the repugnance she felt towards myself, because I knew that it must be the outcome of some vile calumny or some vague suspicion.

As I passed back along the narrow path over the cliffs, my face set towards the gathering night, I calmly examined my life, and saw now that seven years had gone since the great domestic blow had fallen upon me, and caused me to ramble aimlessly across the Continent; that I still stood yet in the morning of life, and I felt that energy was indeed everything.

It was energy that had helped to advance me beyond my years; it was energy which was giving me position and popularity with the reading public; and it was by energy alone that I could secure not only the prize of my overcrowded profession, but the prize, the glorious prize that I had asked of life—love incarnate in sovereign beauty, endowed with all nobility and fervour and tenderness and truth.

In any case, whether she became mine or not, I loved her with my whole heart; and to know that I could love again, in spite of all the torture of the past, was in itself both comfort and delight.

I was striding onward steadily down a steep dip in the cliff-top, my head bent against the strong night-wind that had now sprung up, when of a sudden a terrible truth flashed upon me—so terrible that I halted and cried aloud in blank dismay.

For the first time I recollected that the gloves I was wearing were those I had worn while handling those envenomed pages. I had held her uncovered hand in farewell, grasping it in earnestness for the space of several minutes. Was it possible that sufficient of the secret venom of the Borgias could actually have been absorbed by the porous leather to act with deadly effect upon any person touched by the gloves? Most of my readers have, no doubt, read stories of poisoned gloves, and been somewhat incredulous. But the fact of such a fatal mode of envenoming is indeed proved by the secret documents still existing in the archives of Venice herself. Those who are sceptical regarding the secret poisoning of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries should read the thousand pages of the *Secrets d'État de Venice, à la fin du XVe et au XVIe Siècle*, par Vladimir Lamansky (St Petersburg, 1884), for they throw a remarkable light upon this strange story that my own personal experience enables me to tell.

I recollected the strange symptoms that had twice seized me, and remembered Pellegrini's diagnosis, and it occurred to me that my touch upon the hand of the woman whom I had in such curious circumstances grown to love might actually be fatal. The deadliness of that secret poison, which, according to ancient legend, was obtained from the foam of a bear poisoned by arsenic, was proverbial, and I must confess that the reading of the secrets contained in The Closed Book had excited my imagination to the utmost pitch.

Halting there, my face turned towards the twinkling lights of Sheringham village, I became seized by the haunting suspicion that the contact of her small, soft hand with mine might have been baneful, even poisonous; therefore, with desperate

resolve, I turned and hurried back over the mile or so of winding footpath which I had already traversed.

In breathless fear I hurried past the spot where we had met, on across The Quag to the cross-roads at Kelling Street, and over the broad heath of Salthouse in the direction of Wiveton, which an old man at Kelling had pointed out as the most direct way to Saxlingham. Having crossed the heath, I was passing through a small spinney where the road ran gray through the gloom of the overhanging trees, when of a sudden something at the roadside shone light, and at the same moment I heard the short, defiant bark of a dog.

Next moment the truth was plain. The collie had mounted guard beside his mistress, who had apparently stumbled and fallen at the roadside, close to a heap of broken stones piled ready for use next winter.

At first I feared to approach, for Rover had already shown his teeth threateningly at me; but, with a kind word, I patted him, then eagerly I dropped upon my knees, and, taking off my gloves and casting them aside, I proceeded to investigate whether her heart were still beating.

You may well imagine how eager I was to ascertain the truth, and how quickly I bent to detect any sign of life.

There was none. I blamed myself for my own thoughtlessness, for if she were actually dead it was assuredly through my own culpable negligence.

Her position showed that she had stumbled and fallen helpless in a heap, struck down suddenly by that secret poison which, after three centuries, still retained its fearful potency.

I took her slim white hands in mine. They were icy cold. I touched her brow, and found it was equally chilly. The body had no warmth, and as far as I could distinguish, not being a medical man, there was no respiration.

Was it really possible that my contact had killed her?

Rover went sniffing across to where I had tossed one of my gloves, and ere I could prevent him had taken it in his mouth, as dogs will often do. He laid himself out full length with it between his paws, as a lion does with his prey; but I was too intent upon the condition of the fair-faced girl, whose past was such a mystery, to endeavour to regain the fatal glove from him.

I moved her arms slowly. I spoke to her and chafed her cheeks that were already cold as marble; and, although ten minutes passed, no sign of animation did she betray—no sign of heart-beating or of inflation of the lungs.

Then a strange sound behind me caused me to glance round, and I saw Rover roll upon his side with his legs drawn up. He gave one long, low moan, and next moment the poor animal was dead—a victim, like his unfortunate young mistress, with my glove lying just beyond reach of his forepaw.

Sight of this aroused me to immediate action. If Lady Judith were dead, then I had unconsciously murdered her!

Fortunately I am physically strong; therefore, after an effort, I succeeded in taking her frail, unconscious form in my arms and carrying her a little distance beyond the wood, where the light was better.

Then on a grass-bank beside the road I laid her down again, with my coat beneath her head to form a pillow.

Again I watched her, there being just sufficient light to allow me to distinguish her features, and as I did so I thought I saw her countenance relax slightly.

I placed my hand upon her heart, and felt a feeble, almost imperceptible, pulsation there.

There was still left a single spark of life.

MANGOES IN JAMAICA.

TO those naturalists and horticulturists who only know the poverty of northern woods and fields in edible fruits—where 'the natural man' would find it impossible to subsist on the few berries, acid crab-apples, and bitter rowans that nature deals sparingly out—or the toil of muscle and brain, the care and cultivation, it takes to produce fields of strawberries and orchards of apples, the lavish profusion of the season of mangoes in Jamaica would form the most marvellous and interesting subject. Only, when the mangoes come in, the tourists and visitors to the 'Gem of the Antilles,' who have been basking in sunshine instead of fighting influenza with woollens and overcoats, umbrellas, gaiters, and goloshes, blankets and cough cures, have taken themselves away from the waxing heat and moisture to the awakening green of their northern lands.

What time the fields of the farmer in the North are green with springing crops and the orchards are bright with apple-blossom, when the housewife laments that potatoes are scarce and bad at sixpence a stone, when apples are not to be had, and oranges are twopence and threepence apiece, the peasant of the lowlands of Jamaica, who has had fruit desserts in plenty all the year through, prepares to become a practical fruitarian for three months. The shop where the salt-fish and bread are sold then bewails reduced receipts; the rum-shop knows him little; the proprietors of land whistle for labour in vain. Round every hut are mango-trees, along every road are mango-trees, in every pasture or

brush-land or uncultivated stretch stand mango-trees, and these are laden from the topmost to the lowest branch with clusters of fruit, as much as they can possibly hold. There is never any complete failure of crop; be it wet or dry, the mangoes fruit much the same. In the poorest soil the same as in the richest soil there are always mangoes. Yet the tree is an exotic in Jamaica; it is a native of the East Indies, whence it was brought, and in its coming there was some romance.

It was in 1782 that H.M.S. *Flora* (appropriate name), one of Lord Rodney's squadron, cruising about the West Indies, chased and captured a French ship bound from Mauritius to Hayti (then French), and on board were found many plants and seeds of economic value, which the French Government were introducing from their East to their West Indian colonies. Amongst these were a number of young mango-trees all numbered. The ship was sent as a prize to Jamaica, and the collection of plants was placed in a garden at Gordon Town, afterwards used as a Government Botanic Garden. But the numbers got mixed or lost, and only one retained its number plainly, and that was Number Eleven, which to this day is its only name. As it happens, too, it is the best and most famous variety. Just as the rabbit taken to Australia, finding there no enemies, but most congenial conditions, multiplied and increased enormously, so the mango, requiring cultivation and manuring to produce prolific crops of sweet fruit in its native home, found conditions evidently so suitable in Jamaica that it is the most common and hardiest tree of the plains, and in some districts grows and bears fruit up to an elevation of two thousand feet. Yet there are other parts not so high but very humid where it grows into a great tree, but seldom fruits.

It has sprung up wherever a seed has been flung, on any kind of soil, and refused to be checked by damp or drought, weeds or shade. Indeed, no tree in Jamaica can keep so splendidly green or blossom and fruit so profusely under the driest conditions of soil and atmosphere.

With the month of May the mangoes begin to ripen, although here and there in certain situations some trees bear fruit out of season, as several of almost all kinds of fruit-trees do here in Jamaica, and as most trees may be made to do by the horticulturist who cares to take the trouble.

The mango-tree bears early from seed according to soil and treatment, as it is seldom cultivated. If you drop a seed on the ground anywhere it will grow if left alone. At the end of the season, in September and October, thousands of seeds may be seen sprouting underneath the parent trees along the roadsides and in every gully where they have been thrown. In a year the young tree, if left to itself, will be two feet high, in two years four feet, in three years six feet, in four years eight feet (when it may probably bear some fruit), and in five years it will be a respectable tree bearing much fruit, and if cultivated, a great deal more. It finally will grow into a large, spreading tree, forty feet high and over, and if left to itself always assumes a neat, round, compact, dome-shaped top until it grows very old, when it may straggle. When the young leaves shoot they are of different colours: olive, pink, purple, bronze, finally assuming their natural dark, glossy green.

A large tree bears an enormous amount of fruit, more than any other fruit-tree I have ever seen. The fruit is kidney-shaped more or less, according to the variety; but, while still keeping to that form, it assumes many different variations. Indeed, one variety which is most like that organ is called the kidney-mango. As the trees have nearly all grown from seed and been crossed and recrossed, there are hundreds of different shapes, colours, and flavours produced in the fruit, mostly grouped, when they are not choice eating, under one name, common mangoes. In different districts of Jamaica, and in different islands of the West Indies, the same mangoes may bear different names; but there are some so very well known because of their superiority to others that they bear uniformly distinct names.

The most famous of these in Jamaica is the Number Eleven, bearing fruit of the most delicate and delicious kind, which never cloys. It is known by its colour (delicate pink on one side and sea-green on the other), its sweet light fragrance, but inevitably by its taste, which is incomparable. This mango may be sold locally at as much as one-halfpenny each very early in the season, as in April; by May the charge is three-halfpence for five—a standard Jamaica value instead of a penny, which is seldom quoted; in June it will be three-halfpence for eight; in July and August twelve or even fourteen may be had for the same price; during September they begin to go out of season, and by October are gone. As for the other kinds less preferred, you may get twenty for three-halfpence in the town. In the country you never dream of buying common mangoes; you would knock them from a tree, for when nearly ripe they drop at a touch.

The Number Eleven is the mango that is mostly shipped abroad, when it figures in the London or New York market at sixpence or twelve cents each.

Another fine mango is the one called the East Indian or Bombay mango, a later introduction than the others, and known specially by this name, though of course all are originally from the East Indies. It is still only a garden variety, and will always be so, as it has such a thin seed, which is seldom fertile, so that it is propagated by grafting. Then there are the black mango, sometimes called green-gage, a small, dark-skinned, subacid variety; the beef-mango, a large, fleshy, juicy fruit; the robin-mango, a delicious brown-skinned fruit; the yam-mango, large and roundish, and also very delicious; and numerous others not so well known, as the bishop-mango; parrot-mango, which is hooked at the small end; the doubloon-mango, yellow

like a Spanish gold-piece; the peach-mango, of a delicate maize-yellow deepening to pink in colour, with a peach-like flavour; the apple-mango, very rosy-cheeked and tasting like an apple; the hairy-mango, which is sweet and juicy, but stringy; the turpentine-mango, which has a pronounced flavour of turpentine, common in a little way to all, but not unpleasant—in fact, very attractive after the first mouthful.

Whenever a tree is seen bearing fruit down to the ground untouched, it is surely a common mango. On a tree bearing any fruit known as good no ripe fruit will be seen; but the ground below will be littered with stones.

Long strings of countrywomen coming down from the hills to market suck mangoes continually. For the time being sugar-cane is passed by. Everywhere are women, boys, and girls, with tremendous loads of mangoes on their heads, going to town. Lordly man does not stoop to carry loads. He may be seen lolling in the shade or riding his donkey or mule to market; he has probably done a little work in his 'grounds' during the week among his yams, sweet-potatoes, and cassava. In the pastures, the horses and cattle disdain grass when they can get mangoes. They eat them in different ways. The horse simply bites the skin and slips it off, rolls the yellow fruit between his teeth until the pulp is off, and lets it drop. Cattle, on the other hand, swallow the fruit whole, and at night as they lie down they chew it, and in the morning each animal has a curious pile of green mango-stones before it. Pigs luxuriate and fatten on mangoes. Poultry and rabbits eat them. Bees become demoralised, and suck the sugar from the broken fruit on the ground, and this worries apiarists, for the honey from such a source ferments easily. The whole ground is sour-smelling in places with rotting fruit.

What is the flavour like? It has been described as a mixture of turpentine, carrots, and molasses, with a dash of strawberry, peach, and honey in it. The truth is that it is indescribable, for the mango is distinct from all other fruit, and has a flavour particularly its own. At any rate in Jamaica men, women, and children of the peasantry fatten on them, and the number an individual can eat is almost unlimited. I have known two big baskets, probably containing from two to three hundred, taken in to a family in the afternoon, and next morning there was none left. I should say that a hearty Jamaica peasant could with gusto get through sixty to eighty mangoes a day; the writer has managed forty comfortably. Whenever the mangoes get scarce avocado pears begin to come in, and on bread and pear the peasant is still supremely comfortable. With September, too, oranges and grape-fruit generally begin to appear in the markets, and from October to February oranges are plentiful, though never so very plentiful as the mangoes in their season. Grape-fruit is never cheap and common. Pines last from May to September; but the peasant sells what he has. He rarely eats one; he prefers mangoes, which are in season at the same time.

On many estates the owners have cut down all the mango-trees, and whenever they show head again cut them down, determined that there shall be no demoralisation of their labour.

When one looks at the mountains and hills, pastures and bush-lands, with many spreading, weather-worn, moss-grown mango-trees, large as oaks centuries old, and reflects that it is only a hundred and twenty years since the seed was brought to the island, the extreme adaptability, prolificacy, and rapidity of growth of the mango in Jamaica make one wonder why such a tree bearing such a fruit has not been greatly utilised as a money-maker.

To an economist the tremendous waste of fruit is saddening. There is, indeed, in the parish of St Andrew alone, and within a radius of five or six miles from Kingston inland, enough fruit to run factories for six months in canning or otherwise preserving mangoes by millions of pounds weight.

ACROSS THE CHILIAN ANDES.

DURING a residence of some years in the Argentine Republic I took advantage of a favourable opportunity of crossing the Chilian Andes accompanied by a friend.

We had arrived at the city of Mendoza. It had been destroyed by an earthquake in 1861; but as there have been no serious disturbances since, the city has been rebuilt on an adjoining site, the long and low houses being of adobe (sun-dried brick), and the streets very wide. While breakfasting at an hotel there, we entered into conversation with a Chileno at our table, and inquired what there was of interest to be seen in the neighbourhood. He mentioned the ruins of the former city, and also told us about the Puente del Inca (the Bridge of the Inca), a natural bridge of rock spanning the Rio Blanco, away in the heart of the Andes, where there are natural hot springs and sulphur-baths; the distance being something like fifty-five leagues on the road to Chili. He said he was starting that evening, and would be very glad of our company so far on the rather dreary journey. After some further talk we learned that the Puente del Inca was more than half-way to Chili; and as we might never be so near that country again, we decided to go right across the Andes, and visit Santiago and Valparaiso.

Our Chileno acquaintance willingly gave us information as to hiring a guide and animals, he having his own servant and mules. After some trouble and a lot of talking, we made out a written agreement with a guide to supply us with four mules —one for each of us and one for the baggage. The guide was to go over with us, wait, and return again, we paying for his food and that of the mules. Half the amount was to be paid at the start, and the other half on our return to Mendoza. We then bought the necessaries for the journey: a kettle, tin mugs, coffee, sugar, bread, and a small keg of Mendoza wine; for, although provisions can be bought at the various *posadas* or roadside inns, they are dear and not always good.

Though rather short of cash, not having contemplated such an extended trip, we were not to be deterred by that. We bought, among other things, a pair of large mule-spurs, as it is impossible to do much mule-travelling without them. It is quite customary with the native or *gaucho* of the camp to use—like the knights in Macaulay's *Battle of Ivry*—only one spur—namely, on the left heel; a spur on the right being apt to interfere with the working of the lasso.

Saddling up for such a journey, especially in windy places, is a difficult task, requiring experience and patience; and if it is not done properly the results are sore backs and delays on the journey. First is put on a square of soft felt or cloth; then five or six small sheepskins, woolly side down; next a small framework of wood or iron covered in hide, forming a sort of bridge, with a peak fore and aft. On this again is laid a broad band of hide, with two broad hide girths, which are brought round below the mule, one in front where an ordinary saddle-girth would go, the other well behind the belly, to prevent slipping of saddle-gear in ascending and descending steep places. The two ends are then brought round and pulled up tightly by means of rings and thongs attached to the other side of the broad band of hide on the framework. On top of all this, and secured by a strap going right round the mule, are laid some bright-coloured skins and generally a folded *poncho* (a native cloak, oblong in shape, with a hole in the centre to pass the head through). All this forms a soft and comfortable seat. The stirrups come last, but are by no means the least equipment; for the most part they are large wooden boxes entirely covering the feet, thus serving many useful purposes, such as a shelter from hot sun, rain, or snow, and protection from thorny brushwood. Being wide and heavy, in the event of a fall they swing clear of the feet, which saves the rider from being dragged. The pack-mules are fixed up in much the same way as to framework, &c., the whole being made fast by long hide-thongs. In these districts cord or rope is hardly ever seen, being considered untrustworthy.

Everything was arranged before sundown, and after supping with our Chileno friend we made a start. We three rode in front; then followed the two pack-mules, the guide, and our companion's *peon* (servant) in the rear. The first stage from Mendoza being very dry, it fatigues the mules less to travel by night; so shortly after we left, darkness came on. The road here, however, is pretty easy to follow, being wide and lined on each side with scrub and bushes, and no very steep places are encountered. Towards daylight we arrived at the first *posada*, distant about fifteen leagues from Mendoza, called Villa Vicencia. Here there was very poor accommodation for man or beast, there being no *alfalfa* (lucerne) paddocks for the mules. We therefore only made a short stay, unsaddling the mules to let them roll and drink, while we made our fire and had coffee. The next *posada* being distant about eighteen leagues, it was necessary to start at once. We called a short halt at noon, and arrived at Uspallata, the second *posada*, by sundown, rather tired, as we had been nearly twenty-four hours in the saddle. We passed a few old and disused mines on this last stage. The difficulties of getting up machinery and plant to these regions still retards the mining industry.

The scenery thus far is very disappointing: bare, stony hills, loose stones, and scrub, little better than a wilderness. In fact, from Mendoza all the way to the foot of the snow-clad Andes is a bare, arid region, where rain seldom falls, and only by irrigation can anything be grown. At *posadas* they usually have large enclosures of lucerne, watered by irrigation and surrounded by loose stone walls; there the mules feed all night at a small charge per head, and there the large droves of cattle passing from the Argentine Republic to Chili are pastured and rested. At Uspallata the Argentine Government have a Custom-House, where baggage is examined on entering and leaving the republic, and duty paid on certain articles.

Within five or six miles of the *posadas* it is necessary to dismount and gather sufficient scrub, roots, &c. to make the evening fire, as in the immediate vicinity all materials suitable for fuel have been used up long ago. After seeing our mules fixed up for the night, and our baggage examined at the Custom-House, we sat down, hungry as hawks, to supper. This consisted of a piece of meat bought from the owner of the *posada*, and roasted on our fire, eaten with bread and washed down with wine, followed by coffee. Then, after a smoke, we turned in, feeling very tired. The bed consisted of the skins, &c., used to make up the mules' saddle trappings, with the addition of a coat and *poncho*. We could have obtained a bed in the inn; but our cash being limited, and dreading the other occupants of the bed, we decided on the cheaper and safer plan, and slept well after our long ride.

Next morning we were astir before daylight, got our fire started for coffee, and sent the men after the mules. Then we all saddled up, taking great care with the pack-mules, as the road on this stage gets more dangerous; and to avoid accident they

must be well looked after, and the packs readjusted when necessary. Often, owing to carelessness, mules, cargo, and all are lost by the pack swerving round and overbalancing the mule with its load into a deep ravine, to become the prey of vultures and condors.

Where the track was broad enough, we rode three abreast to enliven the journey with conversation. These lengthy marches from *posada* to *posada* are rather wearisome, and mean sitting in the saddle for a good twelve hours, and often longer, with nothing to see but interminable bare mountains, loose rocks, and gravel, from which the glare of the sun is very trying.

We follow, from this point right to the foot of La Cumbre or the Summit Pass, the course of the Rio Blanco, fording the river when necessary, the only bridge being the natural Puente del Inca. As a rule there is not a living creature to be seen except occasionally vultures which prey on the carcasses of cattle lost out of the droves. Usually the first part of the morning is cold till about eight o'clock; but it gets warmer afterwards, and often very hot in the valleys and gorges. There are some rather awkward corners and ledges to pass, but no very steep ascents till after the Puente del Inca is passed, when you come to the actual base of the snow-clad Andes, and begin the ascent to the pass over the *cumbre*, or summit, about twelve thousand four hundred feet high. The pace was a sort of jog-trot, very tiresome to one not accustomed to Argentine horse or mule exercise; and it must be kept up steadily in order to cover the distance between the *posadas*, averaging fifteen to eighteen leagues. About midday we generally rested a little, to let the mules drink, and to have a snack ourselves and a smoke.

Shortly after sundown we arrived at the third *posada*, Punta de la Vacca. Here we found quite a gathering of *gente* (people), most of whom were engaged in taking over a large drove of cattle to Chili. These cattle are bought by Chilenos and Mendozinos on the Argentine pampas, pastured and rested for a time in lucerne-paddocks in the neighbourhood of Mendoza, and when they are in fair condition, sent over the Andes before the snow closes the passes. In Chili they are drafted into similar enclosures, and there fattened for the butchers. A large business is carried on in this way between the two countries, as Chili looks mainly to the Argentine for her beef-supply. One often meets at the *posadas* during the season for crossing—which lasts from November to May, when the passes are free from snow—many drovers, merchants, and travellers returning.

After supper we all joined together at the largest fire, squatting on stones or the skulls of bullocks (which are the favourite native seats), to smoke and discuss the road and other matters of interest. Sometimes the native *maté*, or Paraguay tea, is passed round, and perhaps a wandering minstrel produces the Spanish guitar and discourses music and song. The various figures grouped in the flickering firelight form a weird and picturesque spectacle, many of the drovers being clad in bright-coloured *ponchos*, surmounted by the national *sombrero*, and here cigarettes are exchanged with all the native politeness.

Next morning we made an early start, in order to get away before the cattle began to move. It is comparatively easy to pass these droves when going in the same direction; on the return journey it is no joke meeting them on a narrow path or ledge, coming on in single file, their widespread horns making it rather difficult to get past them, the animals being wild though slightly tamed by the long marches. The drovers, when moving, keep up a pretty continual shouting; therefore they can usually be heard a good distance off, and a halt made at some fairly clear space till they pass. Tired or sick bullocks left by the way, and wandering on at their own sweet will, are often more dangerous than the droves; they sometimes so far recover as to be the cause of serious accidents. Another source of danger is the falling of huge boulders and rocks, which, loosened by storms, come crashing down the steep mountain-sides, in some places completely blocking the path. These can generally be avoided by riders; but droves of cattle, and sometimes trains of mules carrying merchandise or ore from the mines, fall victims.

As we were now near the snow region, the air became very keen, with a slight frost in the early morning; but by nine o'clock, just before getting to the Puente del Inca, which lies in a long deep valley, it was quite hot again. At the Puente there is a fairly good inn, as many people go there during the season for the baths; in fact, it is quite a camping-ground from November to March. It was April when we arrived, so the place was deserted, except for the innkeeper, who leaves about May, this not being a regular *posada* or stopping-place for travellers, and in May it is often snowed up, as it lies so near the Cordilleras. We stopped here to have a good bath and enjoy the luxury of a second breakfast in the inn.

The road at this place crosses the Rio Blanco by the Bridge of the Inca, and a path runs down at the side of the bridge along a kind of terrace above the river, which runs in a deep gorge. Here, in alcoves or caves, the warm springs, mostly sulphurous, come bubbling up and form small baths or wells. We stripped and had an excellent bath, which partly made up for the scanty ablutions on the way. The water rises in the centre of rounded basins large enough to hold two people; and as the water runs over the edge all round, the baths are always clean. We tried and enjoyed them all, passing along the terrace from bath to bath, the water being just hot enough to sit in with comfort.

We had an excellent meal at the inn, and before leaving purchased a small flask of whisky at rather a high price, intending to drink healths when crossing the summit of the pass, where, it was said, the wind would be high and bitterly cold. Leaving

about noon, we jogged merrily on, the scenery now being much grander, with the snow-peaks in front seeming to block up all outlet. We kept a good lookout now for condors, as this is the region they frequent. At last the guide called our attention to two black specks up in the blue vault, and seemingly almost stationary. These, he informed us, were condors. Afterwards, on seeing one in the Zoological Gardens of Santiago, we had some idea at what an immense altitude these birds must soar.

The last and steepest ascent, the pass of La Cumbre, begins at the end of the valley. Here a very zigzag course has to be followed, winding up the mountain-side, and frequent halts have to be made in order to rest and breathe the mules, the air at this altitude being very much rarefied. On this ascent there are some fairly good views to be had, as we look back on the valleys and hills we have passed; but there are no very good views to the north or south of the higher peaks, such as Aconcagua, &c. In fact, approaching the Andes from the eastern side is disappointing, and gives only a poor idea of the actual height and grandeur of these mountains. All the way from Mendoza to the foot of this pass there are so many chains of smaller sierras that you nowhere get even an approximate idea of the true altitude of the higher peaks. It is only at Valparaiso that you realise the grandeur of this snow-clad mountain-chain seen from sea-level.

It was now very cold, a strong wind blowing down against us, and the snow lying in drifts by the side of the track. After some rather breathless work we reached the summit. Here we drew into the shelter of a large rock, and, dismounting, drank with relish our modicum of whisky, and felt as if we could have consumed double the quantity and got no harm thereby. A short halt could only be made here, however, if we were to reach our next *posada* that night, the steep ascent having taken a long time, and the now equally steep descent requiring time and caution, and testing to the full the sure-footedness of our mules.

On both sides of this pass for a distance of some miles are to be seen the letter-carriers' shelters, at distances of about a mile apart. These consist of large domes built of brick and stone, with a small doorway on the most sheltered side. Here the letter-carriers take shelter when overtaken by sudden snowstorms. These men, carrying the mails between Chili and the Argentine, are a fine, brave set of fellows, who cross by forced marches on mule-back in the fine weather, and when no mule can travel they cross on foot, at the risk of their lives. If during bad weather a carrier does not pass the *posada* when he is due, one of his fellows starts in search of him; and, as has happened more than once, if he finds his comrade dead in the snow, overcome by fatigue, he takes the letter-bag and goes on his way, leaving word at the *posada* in passing as to the whereabouts of the body. The burial, performed by men from the *posada*, is in a shallow grave, covered with a heap of stones, surmounted by a wooden cross. Several of these sad mementos are to be seen by the wayside. These men have a good way of coming down the steep sides of the snow-covered mountains. They envelop themselves in a sack made of raw hide, tied round the waist, and launch themselves down the mountain-side. Whenever the pace becomes too rapid, the man thrusts his long staff into the snow and brings himself to a halt, thus making the descent very skilfully and rapidly.

It was quite dark when we arrived at our fourth halting-place, called Ojos del Agua Posada, and put up for the night as usual. The next and last stage before coming to Santa Rosa, where the railway is reached, being rather shorter, we did not start quite so early next morning, and went slower, the country now being much more picturesque. The western slope of the Andes, following the course of the river Aconcagua, is a strong contrast to the bleak and barren eastern one. As the mountains are now nearer the sea, the climate is milder and more moist, and all the valley is clothed in verdure, made up of trees, shrubs, and many bright-coloured flowers and cacti.

Just before reaching what might be called the inhabited district we came to the Chilian Custom-House, where we had our baggage examined. After this the roadside assumes a more cultivated aspect, as it is dotted at frequent intervals with small *ranchos* (cottages) and gardens, many of them being houses for refreshment, where native wine made from the garden grapes, fruit of all kinds, and especially water-melons are to be had very cheap. We rested at one of these places, and had some talk with the natives, who are a much less swarthy race than their Argentine neighbours, some of them being quite fair, and speaking purer Spanish than is heard in the east. Here we passed, and saw on other tracks, long trains of mules laden with copper ore from adjacent mines.

On nearing Santa Rosa the road broadens out, following and at times crossing by good bridges the river Aconcagua, and here and there shaded by long avenues of the eucalyptus. Here are also large vineyards, from which excellent red and white wines are made, and sold at a cheap rate.

We reached Santa Rosa shortly before sundown, and were taken by our Chileno friend to a comfortable hotel, where, after a bath to get rid of the dust and travel-stains, we enjoyed a good supper. Having arranged with our guide to wait for us here, and rest the mules for five days while we went on by rail to visit Valparaiso and Santiago, we took a turn round the town. It is a quiet, pretty little place, the only excitement being occasional earthquakes—which, by the way, are experiences you never get accustomed to.

Next morning we took train to Valparaiso. The railway carriages here are quite different from the long cars of the Argentine, being built in the English style, and the speed is greater than in the Argentine. Stations are frequent, nicely kept, and

clean, and at almost every one children with baskets were selling fruit, cakes, and flowers. We changed carriages about half-way, where there is a junction for Santiago, and arrived at Valparaiso in the afternoon. On approaching that town we got a fine view of the Pacific, the line skirting the shore for some distance.

We spent two days at Valparaiso in sight-seeing; but the town is too well known through British enterprise to need description here. Certain novelties, however, may be mentioned that strike a stranger at first—namely, the nice young girls dressed in blue serge employed as conductors on the tramway-cars; and also the volunteer fire-brigades, which dispense with the aid of horses, and when a fire occurs and the alarm is sounded —which happens pretty frequently—the young men rush from their offices, putting on their fire-gear as they go, drag out engines, and hurry away at a good round trot, joined and assisted by others on the way.

On the third day we started by train for Santiago, and arrived there in time for midday breakfast. It is a very fine city, situated among hills, with views of the distant snow-clad mountains. The streets are broad, and many of them are lined with trees and running water. There are also some handsome pleasure-grounds, and one of the finest Zoological Gardens in the world. In the evening the band plays in the principal *plaza*, and all the *élite* turn out after supper, dressed in their 'war-paint,' and walk round or sit on chairs chatting and listening to the music. The Spanish evening-toilet for ladies is very pretty, surmounted, as it usually is out of doors, by a fine lace mantilla, which, gracefully placed over head and shoulders, takes the place of the cumbersome English hat. The ladies also carry fans, and are proficient in their use. There are a great many fine public buildings, houses, and churches that add to the importance and beauty of the city. Few finer places could be found to reside in were it not for its unfortunate liability, like all South American countries, to periodical revolutions.

Finding our funds getting low, we returned next day to Valparaiso, and after bidding good-bye to our Chileno friend, who resides there, left by train for Santa Rosa.

The best way to conclude such a trip as we have sketched is to go by steamer to San Francisco, thence by rail to New York, and home; but, for various reasons, this was impossible for us. There was nothing for it but to retrace our steps, and that without delay, as the autumn snow-season (May) was near at hand, and the road then becomes very dangerous.

At Santa Rosa we looked up our guide and bought the necessaries for the return trip. This, by dint of a forced march, we did in four days, and just got through in time; for on the morning of the third day after leaving Uspallata, we saw, on looking back, the hills close by white with snow, a heavy fall having occurred during the night. A man I knew lost his life afterwards between Uspallata and the next *posada*, having insisted on crossing in May against the advice of his guide. Had we delayed we should most likely have been snowed up about Puente del Inca for some time. We pushed on all that day, stayed a short while at Villa Vicencia, and then travelled all night, arriving at Mendoza on the morning of the fourth day as the people were going to Mass. Our mules had given us good service by covering the journey in that time; they were wonderfully sure-footed, scarcely ever making a false step. In going along some of the narrow ledges they always keep the outside edge of the path, so that you have one foot overhanging the precipice. This they do from habit, as otherwise, when they are carrying bulky packs, their cargo would rub and knock on the cliff or rocks.

The actual trip from Mendoza to Santa Rosa and back cost us, in English money, nine pounds for hire of guide and mules, and three pounds for limited outfit and food by the way. It can now be done quicker and more comfortably, as the railway (Trans-Andino) has been extended to a point well up the Rio Blanco, and from there mules can be hired to take you over the summit to Santa Rosa. It is intended ultimately to carry this line right across to Santa Rosa.

THE GREAT MAGICIAN.

What spell lies on the street to-day?
I found it dull not long ago;
Now these old houses, dim and gray,
Seem bright with a mysterious glow;
And even the sober trees look gay
That once I called 'a gloomy row.'

Ah! *then* I longed for sunny fields,
Where bud and bell fresh leaves unfold;
But now the joy this pavement yields
Is quite as much as heart can hold:
Think you some great magician wields
His wand, transmuting stone to gold?

Sweetheart, you know the reason why
Such witchery hangs about the place:
From one small window—all too high—
There shyly leans a flower-like face,
That smiles to see me loiter by,
Though Time—the tyrant—runs apace.

And be the morning dark or fair,
I carry to my daily toil
The light that shines from eyes and hair,
Which neither rain nor wind can spoil;
And to the grimeful city bear
Pure thoughts that nought can stain or soil.

Oh! happy he who thus may take
Heart-sunshine into mart or mill;
And happy she who for his sake
Can smile behind the humblest sill:
The world its wiser head may shake,
But Love's the true magician still.

E. Matheson.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE COMING DOMESTIC EVOLUTION.

AS FORESEEN BY A MERE MAN.

AFTER the waning of the honeymoon many an honest, well-meaning middle-class man finds that he has unwittingly committed a grave injustice. He admits it to no one; but there it lies rankling in his heart, a sinister domestic ghost that is for ever asserting itself. He discovers, deeply to his chagrin, that the lady whom he has graciously intended to make happy for ever has in reality entered upon a form of slavery which he himself would not put up with for a single day. When his well-earned hours of leisure arrive he naturally wishes his wife to share his pleasures with him; but he finds himself face to face with a strange paradox. The higher his wife may be above the average woman in ideas concerning the duties of life, the less able is she to share with him its simple pleasures. Much to his disappointment and surprise, the whole of her time seems to be devoted to an unceasing round of domestic duties; she has no time for self-culture of any kind, and the awful fact gradually dawns upon both husband and wife that the few intervals for conversation which they are able to obtain are generally occupied with reflections and observations on the conduct of the domestic servant. If the wife has been earning her living before marriage, she finds that she has given up a life of comparative ease and liberty for one of unceasing drudgery. She is from morning until night helping to keep clean the innumerable articles which fill up every inch of space in what is called home, but which would be more truthfully named the domestic museum. Articles which are neither useful nor ornamental, but which have been probably bought or presented because they were cheap, must be kept free from dirt, or the young housekeeper will win for herself the unenviable notoriety of sluttishness. Her days are passed in a continuous round of preparing meals and clearing them away, and in trying to persuade an unwilling servant to sink her individuality and to devote her life exclusively to the service of people in whom she is not in the slightest degree interested. The young housewife finds that in becoming the spouse of the man she loves she has become his squaw, a washer-up of his plates and dishes, the patient Griselda of modern times without the slightest probability of attaining the ancient Griselda's immortality. In many cases she, all other feelings subordinated to a paramount love for her husband and children, accepts her burden with quiet patience and dignity; but in only too many instances she feels that life might have held better things for her, she resents the monotonous round of domestic duties, and vents her feelings in speech, often with the result that she and her husband join in the frantic scramble for wealth, in the vain hope that domestic troubles will cease with the possession of riches.

There was a time when women looked upon household drudgery as their proper sphere in life, and desired nothing better, their lords and masters encouraging them in that idea, writing poems in praise of the domestic virtues, without in the least conceiving the amount of self-effacement involved in a life devoted to such a great extent to the cooking and washing-up after the said poetical lords and masters. But now, when larger views of life are taken by a daily increasing number of men and women, both sexes chafe at the inordinate portion of a woman's life that is consumed by devotion to domestic affairs, and one of the results of this is seen in the marked decline in the marriage-rate. With the growing improvement in the education of women, and the opening up of means for enabling them to earn a living wage without anything approaching to the monotonous drudgery of domestic life or to the slavery that was formerly the lot of all women-workers, some drastic change is bound to come about in the arrangements of the average household. Much might be done if people would only be content to lead more simple and unpretentious lives; but it is unfortunately too early in the day to attempt to preach such a gospel with any chance of success. There is not the slightest doubt that the number of meals per day might be reduced

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by one-half with benefit to the family health, the family purse, and domestic serenity. By such an innovation the amount of household work would be reduced 50 per cent. at one fell swoop; but we are too much the slaves of habit to tolerate such a reform. At least half the furniture, knick-knacks, so-called ornaments, curtains, and hangings in the average home are not only altogether unnecessary but positively harmful. The attempt to keep them all free from dust and bacteria means an incessant round of anxiety and toil. Our homes would be far more beautiful and happy if they contained fewer articles of furniture, and those of good design and first-class workmanship. Instead of filling up every corner of our rooms with a large number of cheap things, it would be far wiser to spend the same amount of money on fewer well-made and artistic articles.

The reorganisation of domestic life will, however, not be a matter of choice much longer, but one of compulsion. The days of domestic service, as it is at present understood, are numbered. It will soon be quite impossible for a middle-class family to secure the services of any young person willing to work from early morning until late at night. The only domestic service obtainable will be that of a new class of servant, who will be better educated and probably far more intelligent than the present typical maid-of-all-work, but who will be even more independent, if that be possible. Her independence will, however, be founded on honourable self-respect and not on ignorance, and will therefore be more endurable. She will be fairly well trained in household duties, and will require to be left alone to perform them to the best of her ability. She will not submit for one moment to anything approaching to dogmatic autocracy, and will demand the same sort of respect and tolerance as is already given cheerfully to the trained nurse. The chief difference between her and the present race of unsatisfactory domestic servants will be that she will only work for a certain number of hours a day, probably eight; she will not sleep in the house, but when her day's work is done she will retire to her own home, or to the drawing-room, entertainment-room, or the study of the residential club or institution of which she is a member. This new order of things will be at first strongly resented, especially by the more ignorant class of housewives; but they will have to submit eventually or do their housework themselves without any assistance.

The change will eventually be a great improvement on the present system. The old race of servants and charwomen, with their ignorance and self-conceit, will disappear for ever, just as the race of Mrs Gamp disappeared, giving place to the most honoured of all callings, that of the trained nurse. Domestic service will again become, what it was in the past, a service of which no woman need feel ashamed. The altered conditions of service will, however, necessitate considerable changes in our domestic economy. Servants working fewer hours and receiving higher rates of pay, the work done in the average home will have to be considerably curtailed. It will be quite impossible to carry on the present absurd arrangements which necessitate a series of cookings and washings-up from morning until night. Our wasteful and ridiculous feeding arrangements will have to be considerably modified. Domestic cookery will be reduced to a reasonable minimum, leading to the saving of an immense amount of labour and fuel. Business men will probably seize the opportunity for forming great syndicates for the supply of cooked food on a scale that we can now scarcely conceive. In some cases, where private enterprise fails, and where the municipality has given proof of its honesty and organising capacity, the domestic kitchen will most certainly become an institution of the past; and the municipal breakfast, dinner, and supper service will be as commonplace as the present public supply of water and gas, tramways and the electric-light.

When one reflects on the enormous economy that might be effected by such organisation, it is difficult to believe that in an age when new ideas are accepted far more readily than they were fifty or even twenty years ago, the old extravagant and inconvenient methods can continue much longer. It is common knowledge that at least three-quarters of the heat from the ordinary kitchen grate is wasted, and that if it were properly utilised the amount of coal expended in cooking one dinner would cook a score. The domestic servant difficulty will force us to act upon this knowledge sooner or later, and the municipal or the co-operative kitchen will be a solution of the problem which will give us convenience and economy without breaking up that privacy of family life which is so dear to the average English man and woman. We have already advanced somewhat in this direction. Our carpets are beaten and our windows are cleaned, not by the domestic servant, but by the expeditious servants of an enterprising company. A little more enterprise and a little more sweeping away of old prejudices, and we shall have our boots and knives cleaned, our grates polished, and our spring cleaning efficiently carried out in a single day, instead of the usual prolonged domestic upheaval, by the expert servants of large organisations. All the rough work of our households will be done, as it should be, by strong men and not by female slaves. Our wives will be the happier for spending their days in the companionship of educated, refined, and intelligent servants instead of enduring the daily torture of the society of ignorant, intractable, and semi-rebellious household drudges. The mistress and the servant will both be the better for that spirit of mutual self-respect and esteem which we now see between patient and nurse. To many people such a domestic evolution may appear to be very remote; but have living men not witnessed a far more astounding evolution? Could Betsy Prig in her wildest dreams have imagined that the sick-room in which Mrs Gamp snored and guzzled would some

day be transformed into a haven of peace and hope wherein the nurse should rival the physician in the alleviation of human suffering? Just as people now wonder how their grandfathers lived without bath-rooms, so we shall some day wonder why we were once so absurd as to allow a kitchen to form part of our home instead of relegating all the inconvenience, the labour, and the evil smells thereof to food emporiums, wherein food will be prepared in far greater variety than on the domestic hot-plate, and will be cooked with all the aid that science can give.

The reduction of the amount of domestic work and worry that now so seriously narrows women's lives would have a most beneficial effect. They would have leisure to follow more closely the education of their children, they would be able to devote some time to the consideration of questions of a non-domestic character, and there would be no excuse for their failing to set their husbands an example in self-culture and the living of a larger and broader life. It is absurd to expect a woman who has servant-girl on the brain, who is from morning until night oppressed by a weight of domestic cares, to attend university extension lectures, to take an interest in current literature, science, and art. And yet why should married women be shut out from these things? Considering the enormous influence that women naturally have upon their offspring, it is at least as important that they should be as well educated and as much in touch with the trend of modern thought and the march of events as their husbands; but it is to be feared that only too many women are dependent for their knowledge of 'affairs' upon the driblets of conversation which their lords and masters dole out to them in the narrow intervals between one domestic care and another. Of what use is it to struggle to obtain the suffrage for women until we have done something to secure for them some leisure in which to think out the political situation for themselves? If women had the power to vote, there is not one in a hundred among the married ones who would be able to find time to get to the polling-booth. It is high time that this domestic slavery ceased, and that women were relieved of many duties that might be carried on much more efficiently by new methods. These new methods will come about not by direct design, but as the inevitable result of a far-reaching evolutionary movement which has brought about the domestic servant problem. The revolt of the servants will lead to the emancipation of the mistresses.

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW.

I WAS very much interested in an article in *Chambers's Journal* for October 1903, 'Changes in Housekeeping' (p. 632), and I should like to make a few remarks upon it. To begin with that much-maligned product of the present day—the general: she has my entire sympathy. I received an outline of what was expected of one such girl. The family consisted of six people (father, mother, and four children), and they lived in a ten-roomed house. All the washing was done at home, a washerwoman coming in to help; and the amount of silver in daily use was such that it often took the girl two afternoons to clean it. She was expected to be dressed in time for a one o'clock dinner. Tea went on intermittently during the afternoon, followed by a meat-tea at six when the master returned from his office, and supper at nine-thirty concluded the day. Now, when you consider all the boot-cleaning, fire-laying, cooking, and incessant washing-up, I think you will agree with me that the routine work is too much. It is places of this sort that ruin our maids-of-all-work. They are hurried from one thing to another, and in the end do nothing really well. It all arises from that fatal mistake of the present day: the people who keep one servant trying to live as if they had two or three. If people of small means would only be brave, give up that mouldy little drawing-room and papa's dingy den of a smoking-room, and have one large, comfortably furnished sitting-room where everything is done! You cannot afford mere acquaintances; but surely your friends will be very much happier in a warm, properly used room than in an icy chamber where the newly lighted gas-fire seems to emphasise the cold.

At the present time the only co-operation possible, at any rate in country towns, seems to be in washing. If eight or nine families would take a cottage with a good drying-ground attached, and employ two good laundresses constantly, I think that difficulty might be met. As to co-operative living, I hardly think we are ready for it. An American gentleman was recently giving me some amusing experiences of his own in that line. As far as I could gather, the entire management of the servants employed to work the co-operative system had fallen upon him. The meals for each family were served separately, every flat having its own dining-room; and this entails a great deal of thought in the commissariat department, as one man likes his dinner at one o'clock, another at one-thirty, another at seven, and so on. To my mind, it would mean one person interested in the scheme giving up all his or her time and thought to it. A committee hardly seems to meet the case.

What we have found the greatest difficulty is to get good odd-job men or women to come for an hour or two a day to clean boots and knives, carry coals, clean windows, &c. Boys are not of much use; they play at marbles and fight with the cook. Co-operation would be useful here, as eight or nine families could employ the same man or woman to go from house to house, taking it in turns to have the treasure first.

Did space allow, I could tell some funny experiences I have had with these so-called helps, especially during a recent removal. The oilcloth

gentleman seemed to profit most from their care; and the painters will derive future benefit, as most of the white paint has been scrubbed off by a strong decoction of soda and boiling water—about the only thing they did scrub. But all this does not bring us nearer any solution of the servant difficulty. At present the only way to manage seems to be to keep to one's self those servants whose faults are least aggravating, and to shut one's eyes to much that goes on in the kitchen.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XX.—WALTER WYMAN IS UNREASONABLE.

SPRINGING to my feet, I glanced around, and saw in the distance a light—from what, however, I was unaware. I only know that, leaving Lady Judith, I sprang over a fence and went across a wide turnip-field, and then across two good-sized pastures, making straight for that light, which, as it turned out, came from a window in a good-sized house, which, I afterwards discovered, was called Swan Lodge, and the inmates of which, when I announced my distress, were eager to assist me.

A horse was at once saddled and a man sent on it for the nearest doctor at Holt village, about two miles away, while I conducted the occupier of the house and two other young men to the spot where Lady Judith was lying.

I told them nothing save that I had in passing discovered her and her dog. She was apparently dead, but I found at length that she was still breathing, so had rushed away to seek aid. I saw that if I revealed my identity to any one it might compromise her; therefore I purposely misled them both as to where I was staying and my object in passing across Salthouse Heath. The utmost caution was necessary, for at all hazards the Earl ought not to know that I had discovered his daughter; neither should he have any suspicion that her sudden seizure was due to the venom of The Closed Book, the same that had so nearly caused the death of the mysterious Selby.

When we reached the spot we found her just as I had left her, save that she had lifted her hands to her head and lay with her face buried in them in an attitude of intense suffering.

The occupier of Swan Lodge, an amiable man of middle age, whose curiosity was, like that of all the rest, much aroused, spoke to her, but she made no response. One of the men held a stable lantern, and by its light we examined her face, but saw no other sign of returning consciousness. The action of the heart was much more pronounced, however, than when I had left her, and that aroused hope within us.

A dozen questions were put to me as to how I had discovered her; and I think my account must have sounded very circumstantial, for not one of the four entertained any suspicion that I was acquainted with her.

The man whom I had called upon identified her as soon as he set eyes on her, saying in greatest surprise:

'Why, it's actually Lady Judith Gordon, old Lord Aldborough's niece! She's evidently visiting at Saxlingham, although she hasn't been there for these last five or six years. She was quite a girl when last I saw her. How she has grown, to be sure!'

I let him wander on while we awaited the arrival of Doctor Lynn, and then by means of one or two well-directed questions discovered that the Earl of Glenelg seldom came to see his brother-in-law.

'People do say that there's some mystery about the old gentleman,' he added. 'I remember years ago, when he used to be down here a good deal seeing his sister, old Lady Aldborough, that there was a lot of queer gossip about him.'

'And what about the young lady here?' I inquired eagerly.

'Oh, I've heard nothing against her, of course. She was a mere slip of a girl then, and used to walk out with her governess. But how beautiful she has grown! She has the Gordon face, although I'd hardly have known her if I'd met her casually. I heard only the other day that she'd become engaged to somebody; but how true the report is I don't know. Old Reuben Dixon, the Squire of Huntworth, told me.'

'Who was the man mentioned?' I demanded.

'He didn't know. Some young nobleman abroad, he seemed to think.'

'A foreigner?' I exclaimed.

'So he said. But I'm not inclined to believe it. The Earl would never let her marry a foreigner. He's too good an Englishman for that, every one knows.'

I did not pursue the subject further. As father and daughter passed much of their time abroad, I thought in my own heart that such an engagement was quite within the bounds of possibility. Country-people always view the aristocracy and landed proprietors from a curious standpoint.

Although, as became a total stranger, I tried not to show any undue anxiety regarding Lady Judith's critical condition, and although I knew the cause, I could not explain for fear of betraying myself; nevertheless I watched her narrowly, and with the utmost satisfaction saw that consciousness was gradually returning.

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Suddenly it struck me that she ought not to recognise me as her discoverer, as she would at once connect her sudden seizure with her contact with my hands—that is, if she were aware of the existence of The Closed Book and the veil of mystery in which it was enveloped. No, she must not see me; hence I set to work to divine some means of escape. Yet I could not go away coatless, my coat being still beneath her head.

Half-an-hour had passed and the doctor had not arrived; therefore, as though a sudden idea occurred to me, I induced one of the men to place his coat in the position mine occupied, and assuming my own, I cast one last look at her pale, sweet face, and then walked down the road a short distance, announcing my intention to go and meet the doctor.

It had grown quite dark now—unusually dark for the time of year; therefore, having walked a quarter of a mile, and turned back to see the gleaming lantern in the distance, I leapt over a gate and struck away across the country back in the direction of Sheringham.

What else could I do? I had left her in the hands of persons who at least were respectable and who knew her; and, besides, I was well aware that the poison had not proved fatal. To have betrayed myself to her would only have aroused her suspicion of me in a still more acute form; hence my action in escaping as I did.

My walk was dark and lonely, and more than once I stumbled into ditches and lost my way, until at length I struck the cross-roads at Rodham Common, and just as midnight chimed and the gilded hall-porter was closing the doors of the 'Grand,' I entered, presenting, I fear, with my clothes wet and torn, a rather disreputable figure for a guest at a first-class hotel.

What, I wonder, did the occupier of Swan Lodge and his men think of my disappearance? Surely they would regard it as mysterious, unless they perchance surmised that in the darkness I had lost my way back.

In all probability they had put my non-return down to the latter cause.

That night I slept little, my mind being full of thoughts of the evening's adventure. Before my eyes I had constantly that pale, tragic face, just as previously visions of the countenance of the woman I had seen in the prior's dim study in Florence seemed ever before me. Was it by intuition that I knew that these two women were destined to influence my life to a far greater degree than any woman had done before? I think it must have been; for while I loved the one, I held the other in a constant indefinable terror. Why, I know not until this day—not even now that I am sitting here calmly chronicling all that occurred to me in those wild days of ardent love, reckless adventure, and impenetrable mystery.

In order to keep up communication with the woman I had so strangely grown to admire, I wrote to her next morning a brief little note expressing a hope that she arrived back safely, and adding that my most ardent desire was that she would allow me, in secret if not publicly, to stand as her friend. I reminded her of her assurance to say nothing to the Earl regarding her meeting with me, and relied upon the promise she had given me.

This letter I addressed to Saxlingham Hall, and posted it before ten o'clock, having learned that it would be delivered that same evening.

At noon Walter Wyman unexpectedly walked into my room with a cheery greeting, and, throwing himself down upon the couch in the window that looked over the sea, exclaimed, 'Well, old chap, what does this extraordinary book contain after all?'

I took the transcript from the place where I had hidden it, and, seating myself on the edge of the table, read it through to him.

'Hang it!' he exclaimed excitedly when I had finished, 'then we may, if we are persevering and careful, actually discover this great treasure?'

'Exactly,' I answered. 'My suggestion is that we lose no time in making preliminary observations at the two spots mentioned by the man who hid it from his enemies.'

'And supposing we found it, would it benefit us, having in view the law of treasure-trove?' was Walter's very practical inquiry.

'Not very much perhaps,' I admitted. 'But we should at least clear up a mystery that has puzzled the world for ages—the actual existence of the Borgia poison and its antidote, besides rescuing Lucrezia Borgia's emeralds, and at the same time discovering the real motive of the strange conspiracy surrounding the book.'

'I quite agree with that,' exclaimed my friend; 'but does it not strike you that we are considerably handicapped by that folio being missing—the very page of all others most important for the success of our search? Besides, this man Selby has, in all probability, read the chronicle, and therefore knows just as much, and probably more, than we do.'

'That I grant you,' I said. 'But, nevertheless, I somehow feel that we ought to search both at Crowland, which is within easy reach of this place, and at Threave, in Scotland.' And I explained how I had written to my old friend Fred Fenwicke, asking that we might both be allowed to come up and visit him.

'You certainly haven't let the grass grow under your feet, old fellow—you never do,' he said, taking a cigarette from the box I handed to him and lighting it. 'I think with you that we ought to try Threave, seeing that the plan is evidently of the spot. But we are unable to do anything till the 17th of September, when we ought to be there at three o'clock in the afternoon, according to the directions given.'

'We have still three weeks, then,' I remarked.

'In that case we might go over to Crowland first and look around there. In all probability the other plan is meant to indicate where the treasure of the abbey is concealed.'

'By Jove!' he exclaimed, taking the transcript from my hand. 'This list of things, the silver altar, gold chalices, and boxes of gems are sufficient to make one's mouth water—aren't they?'

'Yes,' I laughed. 'We ought, if we act in a circumspect manner and arouse no attention on the part of the villagers, to be able to make a secret search. The one thing to avoid is public interest. The instant anybody suspects what we are after, the whole affair will get into the papers, and not only will our chance of success be gone, but our enemies, whoever they are, will know that The Closed Book is again in our possession.'

'I quite follow you, Allan,' he said with sudden seriousness. 'We'll go to Crowland to-night if you are agreeable, and set carefully to work in order to see if the plan tallies with any landmark now existing. It's a pity the old chap who wrote the record didn't label it, as he did the other.'

'He may have wanted to give the plan but hold back the secret from any one who casually opened the book,' I suggested. 'You see, the volume has evidently been preserved for centuries in the library of the Certosa Monastery at Florence—the house in which the monk Godfrey Lovel died—and, being written in Old English, could not, of course, be translated by the Italian monks.'

'I wonder how many people have died through handling those poisoned pages?' my friend observed. The deadliness of that secret Borgia venom appealed to him as it has appealed to the world through ages.

'Ah!' I said, 'it is impossible to tell.'

And while he sat listening to me open-mouthed, I related to him my strange adventure of the previous night, and the manner in which Lady Judith Gordon had been unintentionally poisoned.

'What!' he cried, jumping up from the couch and glaring at me; 'you've actually seen her and spoken to her?'

'Certainly. She is charming, and I admit, my dear Walter, that I've fallen most desperately in love with her.'

'Love! You actually love her?' he demanded quite fiercely.

'Certainly. She is the perfect incarnation of what a good, sweet woman should be. Is there any reason why I should not admire her?'

'Reason—reason? I should rather think there was!' he answered in a hard voice. 'Look here, Allan, you and I are friends, but I warn you that you'll have to give up all thought of her if I'm to assist you in this rather risky enterprise. Recollect, I'm a man of my word, and no coward,' he added firmly, looking me straight in the face, his own countenance growing pale with excitement. 'That woman with whom you've fallen in love, as you call it, although you are scarcely acquainted with her, is your very worst enemy. I know her—you don't. Give me your hand, and promise, old chap, you will never again mention her name to me.'

'But what proof have you of this?' I asked, much surprised and not a little annoyed that he should speak of her like this.

'Proof that one day I will reveal to you,' he answered mysteriously. 'I've not been investigating this affair in London without discovering several very extraordinary facts—facts that you shall know before long. When you do, you won't give credence to them without proof. That you'll have soon enough, never fear.'

GIANT SUNS.

By Alexander W. Roberts, D.Sc., F.R.A.S., F.R.S.E., Lovedale College, South Africa.

THERE are few things more difficult to realise than stellar distances and dimensions. Indeed it is impossible, we believe, on this side of time to form any conception whatever of some of the vast magnitudes and long arrays of figures that astronomers frequently have to deal with in their researches.

The actual reality is so far removed from the apparent seeming that the mind utterly fails, not infrequently, to pass from the one set of ideas to the other.

Take, for example, the simple case of the size of the stars. Astronomical text-books tell us that certain stars are suns of such majestic proportions that, in comparison with them, our sun's vast bulk sinks into insignificance. With the aid of a star-atlas we explore the midnight heavens in order to view these giant systems. Alas for our expectations! many of them are probably faint stars barely visible to the naked eye, and it requires more than an effort of the imagination to see in these specks of light great suns and systems of suns wheeling round one another in orbits of vast dimensions.

We do not doubt the statements in the text-books. They rest on too stable a foundation for us to do that; but somehow we cannot get the two ends of the matter to meet.

What we see is a faint gleam of stationary light, so faint that a wisp of cloud will obscure it, so stationary that in a thousand years the keenest eye would not detect the slightest change in its positive relation to the other stars. The reality, on the other hand, is a great globe of fire, probably larger by far than our sun, and speeding through the distant

stellar spaces with a velocity a hundred times more swift than that of an express train.

The inability of the mind to pass from the apparent nearness and smallness of celestial objects to the actual vastness of their magnitude and distances was borne in on the mind of the writer some years ago, when standing on the summit of a hill in the Scottish Highlands overlooking the western sea just as the sun was creeping down to his evening rest.

Away in the east, in the uncertain evening light, the distant hill seemed shadowy, remote. To the west, the great ocean lay many-coloured under the setting sun; and from out its waters here and there rose islands green and gray and violet. All around was the sense of vastness. Seaward or landward, the view seemed to stretch out and out and out to some far-off horizon, infinitely removed. Yet it was only a very small portion of Scotland that thus lay revealed.

Low down in the west hung the sun, just like a golden goblet. As it dipped into the sea a fishing-boat sailing along the sea-line seemed projected on its ruddy surface.

Now, one knew well both the sun's size and its distance: the figures had been learned long ago at school, and had been repeated again and again till the mind was quite familiar with them. But on that hill-top the numbers refused to come; or, if they arose in the mind, they were put aside as something that had no connection whatever with that smooth round disc of ruddy light no bigger than a new penny.

The telescope might, indeed, reveal the fact that on the apparently unbroken surface of that orb were caverns so broad and deep that if some giant hand were to cast the round earth into one of them it would disappear and be lost as a stone thrown into a well would; the spectroscope might give evidence that from the outer shell of that apparently smooth, inviolate surface there frequently leapt into space, as the surf of an ever-raging sea of fire, lapping tongues of flame full two hundred thousand miles in height; it might be proved in books that within the circumference of that vanishing disc the moon and the earth would circle round one another and leave room enough and to spare: all this might be true; but to the watcher on the hill-top that evening the sun was but a big ball of golden light a little farther away than the fishing-boat, bathing isle and shore and sky in a flood of glorious beauty.

And now the sun sets, and slowly, one by one, the stars come forth. As the darkness deepens the sky gathers to itself a greater and yet greater glory. But if it was difficult—nay, impossible—to realise the vastness of the sun's bulk, what can we say of those tiny points of light—points, not discs—points to the naked eye, and points still in the most powerful telescope the intellect of man could devise or the cunning of his hand fashion? Yet we know that many of those faint, twinkling points of light are giant suns, orbs so vast that if our sun were placed near them it would look like a little satellite; orbs so majestic that within the circuit of their outer circumference the whole solar system, sun and moon and planets, would find a lodgment.

Here and there amid the scintillating points of light the eye rests on a hazy star, of such uncertain brightness, however, that we consider it of no importance. Yet that faint haze is not a dull, insignificant star. If we look at it through the telescope there is revealed a view of indescribable beauty and grandeur: stars, stars, stars, stars, massed in battalions, and each one a sun, and the whole an island-universe away out in the great silent loneliness that lies beyond our universe.

To the southward, rising like a white rainbow out of the sea and from behind the hills, we view

> A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold
> And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear
> Seen in the galaxy, that milky way.

And in this pathway, 'powdered with stars,' are millions of suns, each one a giant in size and lustre.

In this star-strewn zone are regions so crowded that in the telescope one has the vision of a fall of star-flakes in a stellar snowstorm. Yet each flake of star-dust, each speck of light, is a mighty sun separated from his fellow by a space as great as that which lies between our sun and the nearest star.

As we look up into the heavens little of all this creeps into our minds. We see not suns and systems and universes, but gems and jewels set in the brow of night. The mind turns away from the oppression of figures, and finds in the stately, restful beauty of the evening sky a calm content that numbers and measurements cannot give.

Still, numbers and measurements have their time and place, and that place and time are in a book and by a fireside. Thus situated, we can often in imagination lift ourselves away from the hampering earth, with its towering mountains, deep rivers, wide seas, spacious heavens, and betake ourselves to a point in space where we see things as they are.

Were we to deal with all the giant worlds of space we should need a whole book for our tale. I may accordingly only consider one or two of the better known.

The two most conspicuous stars in the southern sky are 'The Pointers.' They are so called because a line drawn through them lies in the direction of the Southern Cross. They are so brilliant that the eye has no difficulty in finding them among a host of lesser lights. One of the two, and the brighter of the two, is the famous double star Alpha Centauri, probably the most noteworthy star in the whole sky. It was the annual swing to and fro of this yellow sun that led the Scottish astronomer Henderson to try to measure its distance from us. This he succeeded in doing, and thus was the first

to throw a measuring-line over the great abyss of space that separates our sun and planets from the outposts of the stars.

In later days the distance of Alpha Centauri has been redetermined by another great Scottish astronomer, Sir David Gill. Now, the labours of Sir David Gill and other men indicate that Alpha Centauri, the brightest of the two Pointers, is the nearest star to us of all the stars in the sky. If there are any people on Alpha Centauri, they will no doubt point up to a certain yellow star in their sky and call it 'famous' because it is nearest to them. Fame to a large extent depends upon standpoint. Now, the second star of the two Pointers, Beta Centauri, is also 'famous,' but for a very different reason. Those able men who

> Measure out the blue
> Of infinite space like roods of garden ground,

sought naturally to determine the distance of this companion to Alpha Centauri. Success had crowned their efforts with this latter and many another star. What of Beta Centauri, the other Pointer?

Alpha Centauri was in the van of that army of stars that surround our sun on every side. Was Beta Centauri also well in the foreground?

Again and again have expert and able men essayed to discover the distance of Beta Centauri, but all attempts have ended in failure. No! not in failure: they have shown us this, that Beta Centauri is so far away that no instrument at present known can measure its distance. Beta Centauri *appears* to be a companion to Alpha Centauri, but in truth they are separated by the span of half the universe.

If, as we have said, Alpha is in the van, Beta Centauri is somewhere far out in the rear of the army of stars.

Now, it may be urged, what is wonderful in Beta Centauri being so far away from us? Are there not other stars still farther away? Most certainly there are, in all probability an unnumbered host; but the wonder lies in this, that Beta Centauri should be so far away from us *and yet shine so bright.*

If I see clearly with my naked eye a monument on the summit of some lofty distant hill, there is certainly nothing very wonderful in the monument being on that hill; but if the hill is a hundred miles away, there is certainly something exceedingly strange in the circumstance that I can see it. The marvel is the size of the monument, for its proportions must be truly vast for me to see it clearly at a distance of one hundred miles.

And so is it with the second star of the Pointers, Beta Centauri. The marvel is not that it is so very far away from us, but, considering its immeasurable remoteness, that it is visible to us at all.

We have said that if there are any astronomers on Alpha Centauri, they will point to a certain yellow bright star in their evening sky as their 'nearest neighbour;' but if there are any astronomers on Beta Centauri, they will search in vain in *their* sky for our sun. It will not be visible to them, not even as a faint speck of light. Possibly their telescopes will reveal it as an inconspicuous telescopic star, one that they will not give a name to, only a number with the label 'insignificant;' yet in our sky Beta Centauri shines conspicuous as one of our brightest lights. It must, therefore, be at least a thousand times bigger than our sun. A thousand suns rolled in one: what a majestic aggregation of matter!

When we looked out over the hills and valleys of northern Scotland, and out upon the apparently limitless sea, this world seemed everything, and the stars mere points of light.

If we multiply the view we obtain from the northern hill a thousand times, we obtain an area equal to that of the round earth. Multiply, again, this great globe of ours one million times, and we have the sun's vast bulk. Let us now increase the sun's size ten thousand times, and then we only reach the volume of such mammoth suns as Arcturus, Canopus, Antares, and Beta Centauri.

Let us push this multiplication one step farther. Away in the remote reaches of space are clustered together in single island-universes myriads of suns every whit as large as Canopus or Arcturus, and each one separated from his fellow by a space equal to that which divides our system from the nearest star; yet so infinitely removed are these galaxies of suns from our shores that in our sky they shine as hazy single stars scarcely visible to the naked eye.

It is almost impossible to express distances so vast and magnitudes so great in language that can be even faintly understood.

To bring these conceptions of almost infinite space nearer to our finite minds, astronomers have, I think, exhausted all the illustrations earth can yield. They have used the speed of light, of a bullet, of a train, of a steamer, to make their conclusions more easily understood. I do not think they have used the motor-car yet. Now, these are the days of motoring. A motor-car travelling at the rate of one hundred miles an hour would take eight thousand years to go once round Beta Centauri. It would take far longer than this to go round either Arcturus or Canopus.

If we could imagine empires and kingdoms upon the surface of these giant orbs, the stupendous distances between the various states would make intercourse a practical impossibility, always supposing that the people on these distant worlds were no wiser, no more gifted, no better equipped than we.

What a curious state of things would arise in the case of strained relations between a Canopian Russia and a Canopian Britain! The telegrams from the East would take years in their transmission, and if they revealed a weakness on the part of Britain in the waters of a Canopian China, there would be little use sending out reinforcements from

a Canopian Plymouth, for the ships would take fifty thousand years on the voyage.

We can imagine a traveller in a world like this taking a very affectionate leave, or rather farewell, of his friends before he went on his first and last holiday to the Continent.

How carefully Canopian, Arcturian, or Centaurian men and women would have to plan out their lives, or have them planned out for them; for if any man wanted to see the world he would have to leave the most of the seeing to his descendants; he would require to 'do' various lands by generations!

And how many lands and peoples there would be to see! For if we could think of Canopus as thickly peopled per square mile as our earth, then for every man our globe holds Canopus would shelter one hundred million. And worlds like these—vast, majestic—are strewn thick through space as boulders are along the sands by the seashore.

We have in imagination peopled these worlds with beings like ourselves. One is tempted to excursions of this nature.

But if Canopus or Arcturus or Beta Centauri were a world in any way like our own fair earth—with hills and valleys, rivers, lakes, and seas; with trees and flowers and grass-grown lands; with many beautiful things to please the eye and gladden the soul, genial days and kindly nights, and the ever-returning seasons bearing beneficent gifts from Nature's storehouse—no being like man, or with any semblance to him, would tenant its dominions. If one took the wings of the morning and lighted on the shores of, say, Arcturus—his ruddy glare is well known in northern lands—then the force of Arcturian gravity would chain the visitor to the spot he landed on with a force of thirty tons; that is, the average weight of the human frame on any star like Arcturus would be thirty tons. The human body, as we know it, would be crushed in an instant of time into a shapeless mass by a force so terrible.

Not only so, but terrestrial life and existence generally under such conditions would be impossible. Trees would not grow, nor rivers flow, nor winds blow, nor birds fly; rain would come down as a deadly hail in such worlds.

And here we have, I think, an insurmountable difficulty in the way of peopling those vast orbs that brighten and beautify our sky with men and women like ourselves. It is, indeed, a tempting excursion of the imagination to consider worlds so vast, so multitudinous, as being tenanted with beings wiser, purer, happier, more richly endowed than we are; but gravity, like Mark Twain's cow, keeps coming through the roof of our dreams.

In a boundless universe there are boundless possibilities; but the human frame as we know it is exactly suited to the load it has to bear. Place this same delicate frame in other and totally changed conditions, and the altered circumstances would instantly imperil the whole wonderfully adjusted mechanism. There may be, there possibly are, intelligent beings in other worlds than ours; but if so, the outer garment of their existence is of a different texture and pattern from that which we have to wear.

Much of what we have stated regarding the size of such stars as Beta Centauri, Arcturus, Canopus, and other giant suns rests on indirect evidence. We thus argue that if a star is very bright and at the same time very far away from us it must also be very large. It may be urged, however, against this contention that there is extreme diversity in brightness among the stars. Some are quite dark, emitting no light at all; others, again, give out, surface for surface, more light than the sun. Thus a square mile of the surface of Sirius is eleven times brighter than a square mile of the sun's surface.

Notwithstanding this weakness in the arguments used, the main contention holds good that the brightness of a star may generally be taken as a measure of its size.

We are able, however, in the case of certain stars to set indirect evidence aside, and to arrive at a definite determination of their size.

This happens when the spectroscope yields information as to the rate that two stars forming a system wheel round one another, and when one of the twin stars eclipses the light of its companion every time it circles round it.

When this twofold condition of things exists we can determine with considerable accuracy not only the size but the mass and density of the revolving stars.

Thus the variable star Algol is found to be composed of two stars, the brighter of which is one million two hundred thousand miles in diameter, and the dark companion eight hundred and fifty thousand miles—that is, the dark satellite of this remarkable system is itself as large as our sun.

In the southern hemisphere there is a star in the constellation of 'The Ship' which recent research proves to be a double star, each member measuring fifteen million miles in diameter. The extraordinary thing about this system is that the two suns revolve round one another in contact.

In the northern sky is a still more remarkable star. The second brightest star in 'The Lyre,' Beta Lyræ, consists of two stars, one member of which is twenty million miles in diameter. Numbers like these are almost appalling.

It would prove tedious to multiply examples of the vastness of the stars and star-systems that fill the great galleries of space. These examples that we have given are simply types of the majestic lines on which the domain of nature has been built.

Although, as we have already said at the outset of this article, the mind of man fails utterly to comprehend the scale on which these lines have been set forth, yet the contemplation of their grandeur must ever be a source of pleasure to the thoughtful.

AUNT MARY.

CHAPTER III.

NO reply came from the slim figure by the organ. Her lips were parted as if she were worn by some physical struggle. The light from the high window was still on her face.

It was a fine face: white, almost transparent, with a broad forehead from which the black hair was pushed back; a sweet, refined, noble face rather than a strictly beautiful one. The features were marked with a high intelligence; the small mouth suggested ambition.

'So you have found me out?' she said presently.

Walter came forward; he noticed the clear whiteness of her hands, the fragile figure, the pure brilliancy of the complexion. His mind had not taken it all in yet. This was the girl who was dying, the Kathleen to whom Aunt Mary had alluded. The Kitty of Walter's dreams and Kathleen Evershed were one and the same.

'I ought to have told you,' the girl said without moving.

'You knew who I was all the time?' Walter asked.

'Yes. I discovered that the first time we met in Mrs Pettifer's drawing-room. You see, I had heard a great deal about your father'——

'Not all to his advantage, I expect.'

'No. But I—I liked you. We both had ambition; we were both full of enthusiasm. You were to make your fortune as a painter, and I as a musician. It was your uncle who first fired my ambition in that way. He played the organ like a master; you shall hear some of his compositions.'

Kitty Evershed spoke rapidly, nervously. She seemed to have some difficulty with her breathing. Walter watched her with shining eyes.

'But why did you run away from me?' he asked.

'But I didn't; at least not in the way you mean. I never went to the Pettifers' again because I was afraid of meeting you. But you found me out, and we met elsewhere. They were happy days for me, Walter. But I was frightened because I feared what they would say at home.'

'There was no reason why we should not have loved one another, Kitty.'

'Perhaps not,' Kitty said doubtfully. 'I don't know. But as I was going to be a great composer and you a great painter, it didn't seem to matter. Then I had to come down here because I was ill. Soon after that Dr Evans told me I was dying of consumption. He gave me a year to live. I don't think that anybody quite realises what a sentence like that means. And that is why I never gave you a sign or a word. Your pride would be wounded; you would try and forget me. It would save you much pain and suffering.'

'You knew that I should never forget you.'

'Perhaps I hoped that you wouldn't. I tried to arrange it so that you shouldn't find me. It was only for a year, and then it would be all over. And so it comes about that Uncle Colin is dead, and I linger on waiting for the end. But you couldn't be found, and that gave me a cold kind of comfort. And then your letter came, and I dared not tell Aunt Mary after all that time. Oh! I did it all for the best.'

Her voice shook; she could say no more. Walter caught up the slim hand still resting on the keys. The golden glory beyond the long windows was fading to a pale-gray like the dim light on Kitty's face.

'I am not going to believe it,' Walter cried. 'Kitty, I have never kissed you yet. But I am going to kiss you now, because you belong to me. We are going to fight this thing together. Just now I thought I had found everything that my heart wanted. But if I am going to lose you, the rest matters nothing.'

He took the girl in his arms and kissed her. A page of music fluttered to the floor. It was the piece that had attracted Walter to the room.

'This is your own?' he asked.

'Yes,' Kitty said hopelessly. 'It is part of a short oratorio. People say that it will live, that I have a fine future. As if they knew! But I shall never see it; I shall never see the day when—— Walter, suppose you were suddenly blind! Try to imagine yourself blind, and then you may understand.'

Walter could feel the slender frame shaking passionately. Words seemed cold things to pour on a sorrow like this. Kitty dried her eyes, and a smile shone on her face.

'I have finished,' she said almost gaily. 'I have never broken down like this before, even to Aunt Mary. Was she very frigid to you, Walter?'

'She tried to be,' Walter laughed. 'The regal dignity of five-feet-one! But her eyes betrayed her, and when I called her Aunt Mary and asked for a kiss, she yielded like the dear old soul she is. She's quite in love with me now.'

'Can't you understand why that should be?'

Walter responded that he could see nothing to account for the change beyond his own merits and virtues. But his humour was subdued.

'Did Aunt Mary say anything about your father?' Kitty asked.

'Little to his credit,' Walter admitted. 'Personally, I am fond of my father, though I don't see him much. But he seemed to have behaved badly by stealing the affections of my uncle Colin's choice, and deserting somebody else who'——

'But surely you can guess who that somebody else was?'

'Aunt Mary?' Walter cried. 'Of course! I might have seen that by the way she looked at me. And she said I was very like my mother. Kitty, I believe she is the dearest little woman in the world.'

In the hall a chiming gong made music. Kitty threw a shawl over her head.

'I must make a dive for tea,' she said. 'I have to avoid all draughts and cold airs. It seems superfluous, but these are the doctor's orders.'

Walter followed thoughtfully. It was hard to believe that that bright young life was so near an end. It could not be; it must not be. Walter set his teeth together and choked down a sob. Aunt Mary stood smiling behind the big tea-urn. She was glad, she said, that the young people had found each other out. Why, they might have known each other for years!

'So we have,' Walter said coolly. 'Aunt Mary, a great surprise awaits you. I am going to tell you a love-story—Kitty's and mine.'

'Well, I never did!' Aunt Mary exclaimed.—'Kitty, I am ashamed of you. I don't know when I have been so angry.'

'You never were angry in your life,' Kitty said sweetly. 'You don't know what it means.'

'Well, perhaps not,' Aunt Mary said, setting her cap severely.—'Tell me all about it, Walter. I made those fish-cakes especially for you.'

It was a pleasant meal, despite the dark shadows that had lain over Grey Gables for the past few months. Walter told his story simply, Aunt Mary following with a smile on her face and the tears in her eyes. Then she drew Walter on to speak of his hopes and ambitions: how he meant to travel all over the cities for himself; how Rome the desirable, the unattainable, was now in his hands.

'I'm sure you can't grudge Walter the property after that,' Kitty said. 'It would have been useless to me—to Walter it means everything. And now let us have some more music. Aunt Mary, *do* have another look in the old Dutch bureau for that fugue of Uncle Colin's. I know it's amongst the manuscript music somewhere.'

Aunt Mary made up her accounts, solemnly debated the next day's domestic programme with Martha, and folded up her work-basket with mathematical precision. Then she donned a huge cotton apron and proceeded to take down a dozen volumes of manuscript music, most of it original compositions of the late Colin Whitworth.

One volume after another was disposed of, but the missing fugue was nowhere to be found. Perhaps Aunt Mary's search was not a very careful one, for her eyes were dim to-night, and her mind was full of bitter-sweet imaginings.

The little love-story, with its inevitable sad ending, touched her. And yet it was far better as it was. Kitty was dying. The property would have been no use to her. And to Walter it had meant everything. What a nice boy he was; how clever and ambitious! Colin Whitworth had always intended to change that impulsive will made after Jim's gallant exploit in Spain, and leave the property to Kitty. Here was a letter from Mr Benn urging him to do so. Mary had remembered that letter. She turned it over idly. A reply in Colin Whitworth's handwriting was duly set out on the other side. Aunt Mary fumbled for her spectacles. She read the letter; then she sat down with her limbs shaking.

'Shall I?' she murmured. 'I recollect my father telling me that a document like that—— Yesterday I should not have hesitated. To-day it would be wicked folly. And he is so like his—mother.'

She dropped the letter back, and restored the volume to its place. Then she blew out the candles as if she had done something that needed the shelter of the darkness.

CHAPTER IV.

THE big music-room had been transformed almost beyond recognition. In the centre stood a huge easel with a partially finished picture upon it. Walter's two sets of old armour had been imported from London; a carpet had been laid on the floor; there were pictures on the walls and old furniture scattered here and there. Kitty's taste had provided the flowers and their settings.

'It's grand!' Walter exclaimed, with swelling pride. 'I used to envy Pettifer his studio, and wonder when I should have one like it. And now look at this!'

'Sir Walter Whitworth, P.R.A.,' Kitty laughed, 'as seen at home in the pages of the illustrated weekly papers. Here is the celebrated Flemish buffet, yonder the Lady Erskine by Hoppner. You are a lucky man, sir.'

Kitty coughed and dropped into a chair. She was looking terribly white and fragile. There was a dull, echoing pain at Walter's heart. Sometimes that dreadful trouble was forgotten; at others Walter fought against it with passionate rebellion. The atmosphere of the studio oppressed him; it was like a greenhouse.

'I am,' Walter sighed dubiously; 'I suppose I am. And if I were to say—— Hullo!'

The studio door opened breezily, and a big man in a large-pattern tweed suit stood in the doorway. He was bronzed and bearded; he had a reckless, easy air, and a large cigar in his mouth. He looked just a little disturbed as he noticed Walter's companion.

'Why,' Walter cried, 'it's my father!—I thought you were in Mexico.'

'Just back,' James Whitworth said, with the contempt for distance of the seasoned traveller. 'Finished the job there; back in England looking for another. Pettifer told me of your good fortune, so I thought I'd run down and see you. As you're of age now, my authority over you ceases; but, unless I am mistaken, I am still more or less guardian to this young lady here.'

He held out his hand with a frank smile that most people found so taking. With his bright, breezy selfishness, James Whitworth was not an easy person to snub.

'I am sorry Miss Bentley is not here to receive you,' Kitty said coldly.

'I declare I had forgotten all about her,' Whitworth cried, as if the circumstance was one of the most natural in the world. 'To be perfectly candid, I expected to find Walter in bachelor quarters here. Otherwise—well, I treated Mary Bentley shamefully years ago, and, with all my faults, I'm not blackguard enough to—you understand. My dear young lady, you know all about the story, or the expression of your face belies you. Upon my word, I really am most dreadfully sorry.'

In a vague kind of way, Kitty seemed to feel that James Whitworth was more sorry for himself than anybody else. Yet he was a brave man and loyal to his friends, and he had a perfect passion for little children. Kitty had heard that often. Instability and a desire for change were the alloys that had spoilt his character.

Kitty slipped away, leaving father and son together. Whitworth roamed restlessly about, puffing furiously at his cigar.

'What's the matter with that girl?' he asked.

Walter explained. He had a sympathetic listener. It was a chord that touched Whitworth. He would have parted with his coat to help anybody in sorrow or trouble. The romantic vein in his nature was tapped. Kitty was wonderfully beautiful, and Walter loved her.

'Never heard anything so sad, so pathetic,' Whitworth said huskily. 'That girl must be saved; she must go away. Change is everything in this matter.'

'Change requires money,' Walter said coldly.

'I see. And the poor girl hasn't got any. Also, you are quite sure that neither she nor Aunt Mary would hear of touching yours. Who's the doctor?'

'Mr Evans of Morton Cross.'

'What! that old ass? Biggest old humbug in the profession. Why, he was pretty well past his work when I left home. What's the course of treatment?'

'Perfect seclusion from draughts, a high temperature, and all'——

'I knew it. My dear chap, that poor girl is being slowly murdered. That old-fashioned way of dealing with consumption is as dead as Queen Anne. I'll go and see Partridge. He's got a place at Ambermouth yonder where he comes every week-end. I once saved Partridge's life on the Mosquito Coast years ago, and he'll do anything for me. We'll have that girl of yours about in no time. Fresh air—lots of it—bedroom window open all night all the year round, and, when she's up to it, a trip to St Moritz. Got a cycle of any sort about the place?'

The big man spoke in sanguine, strident tones; in his mind the desired end was already accomplished. It was the buoyant spirit that had lifted him beyond the reach of many a peril. Walter caught a little of the infection.

'Dr Evans will permit no interference,' he said doubtfully.

'Won't he?' Whitworth said, with a resolute air. 'I'll see Evans presently. I'll open his eyes for him. Do you think I am going to stand by and see a lovely creature like that done to death? If you've got as much feeling as I have'——

He paused with just a touch of colour on his bronzed cheeks. A slight gray figure stood silently in the doorway. Her lips were parted; her hands were pressed to her side. Otherwise she gave no sign whatever.

'I did not think it possible,' she began, 'that'——

'I didn't do it on purpose,' Whitworth said. He stood there downcast and ashamed; all his buoyant manner had vanished. 'I swear I had no notion you were here, Mary. If I didn't know that you had forgiven me'——

'I forgave you long ago, James.'

There was a strange contrast between the two figures, the one so small and gray, so upright; the other big and loud, and yet bent as if caught in some shameful practice.

'I'll go away,' Whitworth said, with loud meekness. 'I'll take my blackguardly self off. I never cared much for any one, so I can't expect any one to care much for me. But I didn't know; upon my word, I didn't know.'

'I believe that,' Miss Bentley said in a low voice; 'I believe that.'

'I was never half good enough for you, Mary.'

'I knew that too. I always knew that you were not the man to make any woman happy for long. But that didn't prevent my loving you, Jim.'

There was no reproach in the speech, no anger or resentment, nothing but sorrow. The humiliation of the man was so complete that Walter was fain to come to the rescue.

'My father is greatly distressed by what I have told him about Kitty,' he said; 'and he is quite convinced that Dr Evans's treatment is all wrong. The modern cure is practically an open-air one.'

Miss Bentley stiffened visibly. She had all the prejudices of the old school to her finger-tips. She and the recreant Evans had not been doctoring the whole parish all these years for nothing. Aunt Mary's essences and herb-teas were famous. There was one noted cure of a stubborn rheumatism where even a great London doctor had failed.

'Nothing has been left undone,' she said. A little red spot glowed on either cheek. 'Dr Evans is very sound. The modern "cure" is murder. Expose my dear child to all kinds of weather; expose those delicate lungs to *air!* My dear Walter, I would sooner cut off my right hand. Kitty would be dead in a week. In this respect you will find me firm—quite *firm*.'

She drew herself up; her little foot tapped the floor imperiously. A great principle was at stake. Walter poured oil on troubled waters.

'But, aunt,' he urged, 'there have been some wonderful cures. The most famous physicians in the world are adopting the open-air cure. And Kitty is dying. Even your friend Evans gives her but a few months to live. We won't hurt his feelings, but we will get him to call Partridge in. It is our duty to try it.'

He spoke pleadingly, and Miss Bentley obviously faltered for a moment. Then she drew herself up resolutely again.

'I cannot discuss the matter further,' she said. 'I came to tell you that luncheon was ready. I am going to give James Whitworth the tulip-panelled bedroom.'

She swept out of the room with her head high in the air, the gray silks rustling. But the offender had been forgiven; the pregnant information as to the tulip-panelled bedroom proved that.

'The best and kindest and dearest little creature in the world,' Whitworth cried, with a little click in his throat, 'but as absolutely obstinate as a loving woman can be. But I 'm going to have my own way over this, Wat.'

'Indeed, sir; and how do you propose to get it?'

'Oh, I 've thought out a way. Under my brother's will, I am guardian to Kitty until she comes of age. If necessary, I am going to enforce that authority. I don't often do a wise thing, but I 'm pretty sure I 'm about to do one now. Old Evans is going to have a lovely afternoon.'

PROGRESS OF STEAM NAVIGATION.

LORD INVERCLYDE, chairman of the Cunard Company, lately said that one of the things which trouble shipowners to-day is that they never seemed to come to an end with the size of the ships, which is continually being increased, as is also the power of the engines. The pioneers thought perfection was reached with paddles; the stage of paddles is passed, and so is that of single screws. Engineers are even now considering whether they can be satisfied with twin-screws. It has been suggested that some day they may find themselves with screws all round the ships. Again, turbine machinery seems destined to take the place of reciprocating machinery; and, if so, some shipowners already see their ships doomed for the scrap-heap. The two turbine passenger-steamboats on the Clyde have been very successful. Last year five vessels fitted with the turbine were added to Lloyd's Register: two warships, two Channel steamers, and one yacht. Then, in two of the new Allan liners the turbine is being introduced for the first time for the Atlantic passage. The Cunard Company are also making the experiment with one or two of their vessels. The Clyde, which was the cradle of the marine engine, takes the lead for output amongst shipbuilding centres; Newcastle comes next, then Sunderland, followed by Belfast, Greenock, Middlesbrough, and Hartlepool.

Our present stage of progress in steam navigation has been reached within less than a hundred years. This fact is recalled to us by the publication of a volume, *The History of Steam Navigation*, by John Kennedy (Charles Birchall, Liverpool). It is a fascinating and interesting page of our national history, engaged as we are in doing the chief carrying trade of the world. The steamship has been a good jackal to the British lion. By its aid we have swift communication with foreign countries, our choice of food commodities has been vastly increased, and we have been linked to our colonies and other countries by ties of self-interest.

The pioneers on the inventive side of steam navigation were Patrick Miller of Dalswinton, James Taylor, William Symington, and Henry Bell, all Scotsmen; and Fulton in America. Patrick Miller (1731–1815), an Edinburgh banker, spent some thirty thousand pounds in experiments of various kinds, including shipbuilding; his main idea being the construction of a ship with two or three hulls, propelled by paddle-wheels placed between the hulls, and worked by men from capstans on deck. As related in articles in this journal for March 9, 1833, and March 11, 1854, James Taylor is styled the 'originator of steam navigation.' Miller engaged in a sailing match with a party of gentlemen in the Firth of Forth. He embarked at Leith in his double vessel against a first-rate sailing-wherry. James Taylor, tutor in Miller's family, who was on board, took a spell at the wheels, but found the labour so exhausting that he told his employer that unless he could apply a more effective power his invention would be of no use. Taylor is said to have suggested the use of the steam-engine. Another account is that his friend William Symington made the suggestion. The bust to Symington in Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art, and his memorial at Leadhills, give him the credit of originating steam navigation. This is mentioned in the article on Symington in this journal for 1900. At all events, Symington was the practical man to whom was committed the task of fitting up the boat, twenty-five feet long, with an engine, for the first experiment, in 1788, on Dalswinton Loch, Dumfriesshire.

In the next experiment, on the Forth and Clyde Canal, a hitch took place, from the fact that James Watt said he considered Symington's engine 'an attempt to evade our exclusive privilege.' From this time Miller, for various reasons, dropped the experiments. Symington persevered, however, under a new patron, Lord Dundas. Instead of the clumsy chain and ratchet-wheel system, 'he employed a piston-rod guided by rollers in a

straight path, connected by a connecting-rod to a crank attached directly to the paddle-wheel shaft, thus devising the system of working the paddle-wheel shaft which has been used ever since that date.' All the trials of the *Charlotte Dundas* in 1803 were successful, the first steamboat fitted for practical use. Both Fulton, who brought out his *Clermont*, the first American passenger-steamer, on the Hudson in 1807, and Henry Bell, who launched his *Comet* on the Clyde in 1812, benefited by a close examination of the *Charlotte Dundas*. On this point W. S. Lindsay in his *Merchant Shipping* says: 'There can be no doubt, from existing drawings, that Symington's *Charlotte Dundas* was superior in mechanical arrangements to either Fulton's *Clermont* or Bell's *Comet*. But what Fulton and Livingston accomplished in the United States, Bell effected in his own country; each was, therefore, instrumental in the introduction, for commercial purposes, of the steam-engine.'

None of the pioneers seem to have realised the greatness of the revolution which was to follow on these initial efforts. Miller felt he had been squandering money unprofitably; Henry Bell never made money from the *Comet*, which plied between Glasgow, Greenock, and Helensburgh; and neither did Fulton from his *Clermont* on the Hudson. The widow of James Taylor received a small pension from Government; Symington died a disappointed man. Symington attempted to take out a patent for a different method of propulsion of which we have seen the sketches and specification amongst his papers. He also attempted to do what Watt was inclined to do in regard to his own engine—to prohibit Henry Bell's new steamer as an infringement of his rights. But the period of experiment was over. In 1813 there were three more steamers on the Clyde, one of which is believed to have visited Liverpool in 1815, when there were seven steamers on the Clyde. It was about this time that Cork and London received the benefit of steam navigation. The *Savannah*, an American steamer, was the first to cross the Atlantic from New York to Liverpool in 1819, *en route* for St Petersburg. She took twenty-six days on her first stage, and did not steam all the time.

From its very novelty, and the spice of danger in taking the first steamer round our coasts from Glasgow to the Thames, the first ocean voyage of a steamboat from the Clyde in 1815 is worth more than passing notice. There was a full narrative of this voyage in *Chambers's Journal* of 28th May 1857, under the title of 'Captain Dodd at Sea.' Captain Dodd had served in the navy, distinguished himself as an engineer and architect, and projected the Thames Tunnel; but, becoming a victim of intemperance, he died in poverty. He was entrusted with the task of taking the *Argyle* to London, a steamer which was launched on the Clyde in 1813, and plied for a year between Glasgow and Greenock. She was purchased by a London company to run between the Metropolis and Margate. The *Argyle*, renamed the *Thames*, was a packet of seventy tons register, measuring in her keel seventy-nine feet, with sixteen feet of beam, and fitted with engines of fourteen horse-power; the paddles were nine feet in diameter; there were two cabins, one in the forecastle, the other in the stern. In her waist was the engine, with the boiler on the starboard side and the cylinder and fly-wheel on the larboard. Her funnel, besides carrying off the smoke, also did duty as a mast. A gallery upon which the cabin windows opened projected on each side so as to form a continuous deck interrupted only by the paddle-boxes. Eighteen large port-holes were painted on the outside of the gallery, and two on the stern.

It was believed at the time that grave perils awaited any captain foolhardy enough to brave the perils of the open sea. With a crew of eight persons Captain Dodd sailed about the middle of May 1815, and at the outset narrowly escaped being driven on to the ironbound coast at Portpatrick. Dodd found it impossible to beat off in the teeth of the gale by the united power of steam and sails; he depended entirely on the engine, and laid the vessel's head to the windward, when she managed to make three knots an hour. He gained the Liffey, where the appearance of the *Thames*, as at every port of call on the voyage, attracted much notice. Some naval officers who saw her declared that she could never live in a heavy sea, and that there would be great danger in venturing far from shore. Mr and Mrs Isaac Weld, the first passengers to cross the Channel in a steamboat, went on board at Dublin. Mr Weld, in describing the motion of the vessel, said it differed essentially from that of a sailing-vessel; the action of the wheels at each side prevented her from rolling. The most disagreeable movement was felt when the waves struck the vessel on the beam; then the coverings which enclosed the wheels acted as buoys, and helped to keep her afloat. When the steamer was thus struck by the waves the noise, owing to the sudden compression of the air within the paddle-boxes, was frightful. At Wexford, as well as on the Welsh coast, the dense smoke from her mast-chimney caused the pilots to think she was on fire, and to start off to her assistance, with the hope of salvage; of course they were disappointed. The boat had a bad time rounding Land's End, and the rocks commanding St Ives were crowded with spectators. Thousands of people came to see the vessel at Portsmouth. On 11th June she was at the mouth of the Thames, having done the seven hundred and fifty-eight nautical miles from Dublin in one hundred and twenty-one and a half hours.

Victor Hugo, in *Toilers of the Sea*, gives an amusing account of 'Lethierry's Galley,' as the first steamer to run between Guernsey and St Malo was nicknamed. The chapels fulminated against the new steam-vessel as an 'atheistical construction;' the horns of the devil were seen in the fire-ship, which was named 'Devil Boat.' It was a flying in the face of Scripture to separate fire

and water. She is described as too short, round, and thick-set. She pitched very little, but she rolled a good deal, and the paddle-boxes were too high. The massive machinery encumbered her, and to carry a heavy cargo her bulwarks were raised to an unusual height. The engine was made at Paris; the vessel was built at St Peter's Port. The *Durande* prospered in spite of the outcries of the owners of cutters, which suggest the Clyde skipper quoted by Mr Kennedy: he piped all hands, a man and a boy, when a steamboat passed his slow-going sloop, and bade them 'kneel down and thank God that ye sail in the Almichty's ain win', an' no' in the deevil's ain fire an' brimstane, like that spluttering thing there.'

It is impossible to give in detail the rise and progress of all the modern steamship companies, yet an exception must be made in favour of the Cunard Company. Mr Samuel Cunard, a shipowner of Halifax, Nova Scotia, has impressed his name and personality upon that pioneer Atlantic steamboat line, the Cunard Steamship Company, founded in 1840. The British Government had advertised in 1838 for tenders for the conveyance of the North American mails by steamers, instead of by the mail-boats of that date, which 'were wretched old Government ten-gun coffin-brigs, slow and uncertain in their passages.' The tender of Mr Cunard of Halifax was accepted, but being unsuccessful in raising the necessary capital at home for the founding of a mail steamship service between England and North America, he came over to Great Britain. In association with Mr Robert Napier, the celebrated Clyde engineer and shipbuilder, Mr George Burns of Glasgow, and Mr David MacIver of Liverpool, he raised a capital of two hundred and seventy thousand pounds, and the Cunard Steamship Company was launched. At first the company was called 'The British and North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company.' The names of the earliest vessels were the *Unicorn*, *Acadia*, *Caledonia*, *Columbia*, and *Britannia*. The four paddle-wheel steamships last-named had engines of seven hundred and forty indicated horse-power, and went at an average speed of eight and a half knots an hour. The last of the paddle-wheel steamers was the *Scotia* (1862). The first screw-steamer was the *China*, followed by the *Cuba* and others in 1864. In 1878 the company was registered under the Limited Liability Act, with a capital of two million pounds. When steel began to be substituted for iron in shipbuilding, the magnificent steamer the *Servia* was completed in 1881, fitted with the most modern appliances for comfort and safety. Of later vessels the *Etruria* made the passage from Queenstown to New York in five days twenty hours fifty-five minutes. It was in the *Lucania* of this fleet that the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy was first set up, and in October 1903 messages were transmitted over a distance of two thousand miles. An agreement was made by the Cunard Company in 1903 with the British Government, by which the company was to build two new screw-steamers of an average speed of not less than twenty-one and a half knots, which, along with all other Cunard ships, were to be at the disposal of the Admiralty for hire or purchase when required. The number and tonnage of the vessels of this and other Atlantic lines are being increased, with every prospect of severe competition.

The largest steamship in the world, the *Baltic*, has been built by Messrs Harland & Wolff, Belfast, for the White Star Line (whose *Oceanic* has been called a Hotel Cecil afloat), and will be ready in summer. The decorations and appointments of this vessel are handsome and luxurious. There is accommodation for about three thousand passengers, besides three hundred and fifty of a crew. The grand dining-saloon, on the upper-deck, extends for seventy-five feet, occupying the full width of the ship, and has seating accommodation for three hundred and seventy people. There are twin engines and twin screws, and her whole equipment is such as to make her one of the finest and fastest vessels afloat. There are over four thousand ships of the German merchant marine of a tonnage of one thousand tons and more. The *Kaiser Wilhelm II.* and the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* of the Lloyd Line have hitherto held the world's record for speeds of twenty-three knots an hour. The *Deutschland* of the Hamburg-American Line is another of these monster ships. There is a world of difference between the four-horse-power little steamer *Comet* of 1812 and our present Atlantic liners, which more and more deserve the name of floating palaces.

One of the largest commercial houses in the world is that of Messrs Elder, Dempster, & Company, Liverpool, with its fleet of over one hundred steamers, which have done much in the way of forging the links of Empire, and in greatly increasing the prosperity of Jamaica and West Africa. This firm was founded in 1868 by Alexander Elder and Alexander Dempster, who were intimately acquainted with the African steamship trade, and who retired in 1884. That shipping Napoleon Sir Alfred Lewis Jones and Mr W. J. Davey are now the controlling partners in the firm. Sir Alfred Jones was born at Carmarthen in 1846, came to Liverpool in his teens, began low down the ladder, and through push, tact, and hard work has climbed to the top. Sir Alfred Jones has been described as a thick-set, smooth-featured, well-complexioned man, with iron-gray hair, a smart manner, and a serious and kindly face. As he is a thorough business man, the details of this vast concern move like a well-oiled machine. He is president of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, founded the School for Tropical Diseases, and was decorated in recognition of services to our West African Colonies. Many of the splendidly equipped fast cargo-steamers belonging to this firm were used as transports for troops and munitions of war during the progress of the conflict in South Africa. The firm has helped to save the Canaries and Jamaica from bankruptcy

by the development of an enormous fruit trade, including the now popular banana. There is a joke that Sir Alfred Jones proffers to visitors some of this palatable fruit with the words, 'Have a banana, the finest fruit in the world.' The firm owns the Hotel Metropole at Grand Canary, also coaling-stations at Las Palmas and Teneriffe. The fact that this firm sold a fleet of fifteen large ocean liners to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company caused considerable remark at the time. Besides the African Steamship Company and the British and African Steamship Navigation Company, Messrs Elder, Dempster, & Company maintain a mail service between Antwerp and the Congo. Their express service to the West Coast of Africa reaches Sekondi, the centre of the new gold-mining region, in fifteen days. The home port for the vessels engaged in the Jamaica fruit trade is at Avonmouth, Bristol.

The perfecting and adaptation of the turbine to marine purposes is due to the Hon. Charles Algernon Parsons, brother of the present Earl of Rosse, and son of the builder of the great Birr telescope. Three countries are specially concerned in its manufacture, for the patentee is an Irishman, the works are on the Tyne in England, while Messrs Denny of Dumbarton have had much to do in adapting the turbine to the passenger-steamer. A leading American engineer speaks of building up a great turbine industry in the United States. Another American engineer, named Curtis, has brought out a turbine in which the shaft is vertical, and not horizontal as in the Parsons turbine. It is a coincidence that the Hon. Charles Algernon Parsons should have a residence at Holeyn Hall, Wylam-on-Tyne, near which was the birthplace of George Stephenson the railway pioneer. The electrical and engineering works of C. A. Parsons & Company are at Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and the marine turbine works are at Wallsend, where they cover twenty-three acres. The development of the turbine, whereby it has been made suitable for the generation of electricity and the propulsion of war and mercantile vessels, has been termed the most important and original departure in steam engineering practice since the compound engine was introduced. The turbine is purely rotary in its action, whether actuated by steam or water, the turning movement being equal and constant. The Clyde passenger-steamers *King Edward* and *Queen Alexandra* (1902) have been often described. The latter vessel did equal to twenty-five miles an hour on her trial trip. Of the torpedo-destroyers fitted with turbine machinery, the *Viper* and the *Cobra* were unfortunate. The *Turbinia* has done thirty-four and a half knots an hour. The *Queen* for the Dover and Calais passage, and the *Brighton* for that between Newhaven and Dieppe, have shortened the time considerably. The first of the two turbine Allan liners, the *Victorian*, will be ready in autumn, and she will be the largest and swiftest of this fleet. She is being fitted by Messrs Workman, Clark, and Company, Belfast, in the most modern style for one thousand five hundred passengers. Great power is attained for forward and backward movement, and the reversing power is equal to the forward propelling power. There are three propellers.

The Parsons Marine Steam Turbine Company describe their turbine as a cylindrical case with numerous rings of inwardly projecting blades. Within the cylinder, which is of variable internal diameter, is a shaft, or spindle, and on this spindle are mounted blades projecting outwardly, by means of which the shaft is rotated. The former are called fixed or guide blades, and the latter revolving or moving blades. The diameter of the spindle is less than the internal diameter of the cylinder, and thus an annular space is left between the two. This space is occupied by the blades, and it is through these the steam flows. The steam enters the cylinder by means of an annular port at the forward end; it meets a ring of fixed guide-blades, which deflects it so that it strikes the adjoining ring of moving blades at such an angle that it exerts on them a rotary impulse. When the steam leaves these blades it has naturally been deflected. The second ring of fixed blades is therefore interposed, and these direct the steam on to the second ring of rotating blades. An important feature is that steam is used in escaping from a nozzle in the same way as the air which turns a windmill; this is called the impact or inertia plan. Also, the water which comes away from the turbine is pure, there being no internal lubrication.

In the light of what has been accomplished in less than a century, the prophecy made by Dr Lardner in 1835 at Liverpool reads rather drolly to-day: 'As to the project which is announced in the newspapers of making the voyage directly from New York to Liverpool, it is, I have no hesitation in saying, perfectly chimerical, and they may as well talk of making a voyage from New York or Liverpool to the moon.' Leaving the moon out of the question, British steamers have sailed in all the navigable waters of the globe.

AT FONTE AVELLANA.

In Italia peregrina.—*Purg.* xiii. 96.

Sunset rose-pink gleamed on Catria's height,
While from the vale the shadow of the day
Crept slowly up the darkening slopes, away
To meet the purple coming of the night;
And, in the hush, the monastery white
Slept in its girdle of acacia spray,
That filled the dusky road with scents of May
Commingled in ineffable delight.

Through gray-green olive-groves a pilgrim came,
Who over Styx had journeyed with the dead,
His wondrous eyes dim with a dream's surcease.
Awe-struck, the Prior asked, 'What is thy name?'
'Dante,' in sweet, low voice he humbly said.
'What seekest thou?' The poet answered, 'Peace!'

James Bowker.

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THE SCHOOL IN WILD LIFE.

IT is quite a common thing for the bird-fanciers to take the eggs, say, of the rose-linnet and put them under a canary. There are those who would expect the song of their kind to come as naturally to the young birds as the flush on their breasts or as the pink-and-white blossoms and sweet odour to the dog-rose transplanted into the garden from the country lane. The breeder will tell you a different story. The cage linnet sits on the perch listening to its foster-parent. And when at some five weeks old the desire to try its own voice awakens, it imitates the canary—for all the world as an English child brought up in France would talk as the French do. Of course it cannot sing like the canary; its chords have been strung to the low and sweet melody of the linnet's song. Its range is fixed, but it does as best it can. One thing it does not try, and that is to sing what it has never heard. Its own song is for ever lost.

What is the cage but a school? And what does this show if not that the bird owes all it knows to its teacher? It copies what it hears just as we do; it picks up more quickly—that is all the difference. The singleness of eye and ear may well shorten the discipline of years into days or even hours. It evolves nothing; it supplies only the aptitude. If, as in this case, it is not on the road nature meant it for, and is therefore not so apt, it is helpless of itself to get on the right one.

The hint supplied by these captive birds interprets wild life. One goes out to look for a school in nature, and when he hears the young birds among the yellow whin-blossoms singing the linnet's song, he knows it is because the old linnet is singing to them. They sing it more readily, certainly better, than they would sing any other song—better than the alien linnet sings the canary's song. Their chords are strung for it; they inherit the aptitude if not the song.

Listen in the summer woods. The chaffinch's song is short, repeated, loud, almost clarion-like. The characteristic of the song is a wave or curl of sound at the end. In these latitudes it sings from about the beginning of March till nearly the end of June. By the second week of April the young birds are out on the branches. The old cock caters, and in the intervals of feeding sings to them. Whether he means to teach them or not may be put to one side. I think he does. He choses a perch close to theirs, nearer than any other bird, as if he would say, 'Pay heed to me.' If he flew to a distance, as he might do if he were simply pleasing himself, it is not easy to see how the young birds would pick out his song from the many others filling the wood.

A fortnight later they start on their own account. Then occurs an interesting duet. The old bird sings his song and then half-turns his head, as though to listen. After an interval of deeper quiet—for the robustness of the song seems to deepen the quiet when it ceases—a fainter imitation awakens, as of the young striving to follow. So, from morning to night, strong pipe and weak pipe alternate. After a week the pupil wanders more securely through the turns of the melody. In a fortnight it gets some of the clarion quality in—not much, as that belongs rather to a second season.

The chief difficulty is the curl or wave at the end. Only when they are sure of the undulating ground do they make the attempt to climb the hill. They go on alike that length, but part there. All try some finishing up, but not the same. It is funny to be present at the practice. Some of the differences persist. Lines are drawn among the chaffinches, according to the end they put to their song.

If we imagine the old bird not to be there at all, or not to sing in the intervals of feeding, but, say, the willow-warbler—found in numbers wherever chaffinches are—to be repeating his song on the next tree: then the listening young bird would practise what it heard, and try to tame the robustness of its chords to the plaintive melody of this second wood-bird; certainly it would never sing the chaffinch's song.

After the old birds have ceased, the young ones go on perfecting their newly acquired gifts. Many

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of the late singers are birds of the year. There would thus appear to be three gradations in the songs of a season: the old birds singing to please their mates, the old birds singing to teach the young, the young birds singing to air and perfect their part. I notice that the young willow-warblers come in about the garden toward the end of August, when the song is no longer heard in the woods, and trill low, as they turn over the leaves of the rose-bushes for aphides.

One evening toward the end of last summer I passed along the shallow, winding course which a burn had cut for itself out of the bare scene. Patches of wood, here and there the great white-willow leaning over the current, bramble-brakes interlaced with long grasses on the slopes, attracted birds of diverse habits. The greenfinch was trilling softly its lesson in the deep shadow of the hawthorn-bush. The whitethroat was jigging above its observant young in the bramble-brake. The sedge-warbler was croaking, over and over again, its long rigmarole of a lesson among the water-reeds. From all sides came half-songs, broken songs, songs with characteristic parts left out—songs, be it whispered, often a little out of tune. I found myself wondering what these songs meant; and then I knew that I was in a school at lesson-time.

The chief singer on that night was the yellow-hammer: he is increasingly the chief singer as the season waxes late. They seemed to be everywhere, unseen yet heard, piping from the hawthorn, from the whin, from the fence on the other side of the stream. Nothing but empty nests were there in all the place. The courting-days were past. And the first and surface impression was of an evening palaver, in which they were talking and answering all round.

The songs were not all the same length. Some of them were not complete. Every one knows a yellow-hammer's song. It is the essence of simplicity, and yet with an arresting character of its own. It stands out in grave contrast to the merry rodomontade of the whitethroat; a certain number of notes in a monotone end up in a single higher note of a different quality. So strange is this closing note as to puzzle even a musical ear to tell its pitch.

Some of these songs were complete; some were carried on the length of the closing note, to stop there; while others uttered a lessening number of the seven or eight monotones. It was easy to distinguish the robuster pipe of the older birds from the less certain one of the young. This was not only a school, but a school of different grades; and with a little trouble I could separate out and concentrate my attention on one of them. In class number one the old bird was teaching the monotones. A moment or two of silence, and the young bird repeated as many as it could—some three or four, according to its ability. Say there were two young cocks in the nest, one might manage more or fewer than the other. So on through the lower classes.

These elementary lessons were all without the final note. Therein lay the chief difficulty—the last thing to be attempted. A young bird was sitting on the maple-tree which half-shaded me. Obviously he was listening. I could see him with his head slightly turned to one side to catch the perfect song. He could go over the monotones to the full number, and had got to the critical stage. He was at the last note. The old bird went over it for him—clear, high, with that undefinable quality. It was enough to take the fingers to the ears or set the teeth on edge, the crude attempt at imitation, so shockingly out of tune and pitch it was, so vile a pencil-scrape.

Faintly from the distance, barely within earshot, came the song of yellow-hammers. Between the maple and the farthest bird were at least a dozen different groups, a vast school, and yet only a part of a mightier whole. I am assuming that the old birds teach consciously, and have given my reasons for thinking so. But if the young birds are only present at the palaver, as children at a talkee-talkee of their elders, listening and imitating, the lesson is the same.

Nest-building is not so easy to explain. The site presents no difficulties. The nestling chaffinch, reared in a fork of the spruce some twenty feet from the ground, when its turn comes will chose such another fork; and so will the willow-warbler down among the shadows where the wood-sorrel nods over the dried leaves of last fall. It will nest on the ground. Site and nest are one with birds like the plover, which simply scrape a hole or at most scatter down a few straws. And in colonies, like those of the rooks, there is no lack of teachers.

How does the young chaffinch learn to build such a lichen-adorned wonder of nest-architecture as that it was reared in? Something must be allowed for its natural sharpness. There are long summer days when the nestlings have little else to do between their frequent meals than look round the inside of their house. And for a fortnight longer they sit on some branch hard by in full view of the outside. Ere this time has passed, and while they are yet feeding the last brood, the parent birds may be patching up and rehanging the old nest or building a new one.

Apart from their own circle, the wood abounds with chaffinches. The cock and hen of the next family are picking up building materials from the wood-floor below or stripping the lichen from the trees around. The wood abounds with lessons, and is a great and busy school for the observant.

Nor do the nestlings when they are beginning to find the use of their wings keep to the same branch. They circle the wood, answering the call now from this tree, now from that. For hours they may sit looking on where a pair are building. The majority of the tree-nests—nine out of ten—are chaffinches'. Less aptitude than these young birds possess is needed to pick up a few hints, and when their own season comes they may still copy their elders.

There is only one thing which those who have

watched nature most closely will very seriously question: that the birds evolve a structure so skilful in design, so admirably fitted for the uses to which it is put, so strong and light, demanding the most careful selection of material, out of their own consciousness. There is a need for pupilage longer or shorter, and lessons being given or at least taken; hence the necessity for the young birds spending a time in school.

The matter of migration remains. It is that which appeals most forcibly to the imagination. Some theory or explanation might serve to clear the way. In this, as in other things, the simplest rendering is probably the best; and, where observation fails, a little common-sense or sane imagination may serve to bridge the gap.

Near the Arctic Circle a not very broad wave of emigration passes to and fro. On the approach of winter, when the first leaden snow-clouds gather, the birds go south, and they go because the snow will cover up their food. Many of them pause at the first open grounds, where they spend the winter, returning north when the snow disappears in the spring.

Here is an easily comprehensible motive for migration. May it not serve as a key to much longer flights? The only puzzle about it is why they return north at all, seeing that in many cases their winter home would make a very excellent summer home as well. There may have been a time before the snow crept so far down when they spent the whole year farther north, and being very much creatures of habit, they still return to the old home whenever the way opens. The tradition has never yet been weakened through disuse. I have no respect for such statements as that birds have a tendency to nest in the coolest part of their range. If for some reason the journey were abandoned till the last who entered on it had passed away, it seems to me unlikely that it would ever be resumed.

What of the longer ranges — of birds which leave the edge of the eternal snows and do not stop till they sight the coast of Africa? For a solution the mind goes back to the Ice Age, when the hard conditions extended so far that a winter in Europe, except in the extreme south, was as cold as within the Arctic Circle now. The agent and the motive remain the same; the difference is only in the length the birds were driven. For the rest, unbroken tradition and yearly practice should be a sane and sufficient account of the matter.

No more wonder is left in the going to and fro than in the confidence with which a man who visited some foreign part last year sets forth to reach it again this year. There may well be less in a creature of such quick perception—one, too, which can command a bird's-eye view from any height it chooses to rise to, far beyond our horizon. Probably the migrant is never out of sight of some coast or landmark with which it is familiar. We have yet to learn that a bird consciously embarks on the featureless sea, or when, through wind or wandering, it does, that save by the merest chance it reaches the shore it was bound for or any other shore. Instinct does not serve it then, and the old birds are too wary for any risky experiment.

But we are told of a strange thing that brings all the wonder back again. The young birds of the year essay the journey on their own account. Having got their moult over before the parent birds, they stretch their wings south. If so, it is very imprudent indeed, and may account for so few of them coming back; for I imagine there is something in migration besides knowing the way, and that is knowing the weather.

There are those who have seen a flight of young birds—at least they thought the birds were young—well in advance of the old ones. They had already covered several stages of the journey, were on the direct line of migration, and proceeded on their way with every sign of confidence. I, too, have seen a flight of chaffinches which seemed to have come across the sea—rather a long and trying journey—light in the winter field; and in the absence of cocks they might have been all young. For the life of me, though they were just over the hedge, I could not have told how many old hens were among them. I remembered that the birds of the year were hard to distinguish, even at this little distance, from their mothers, and concluded that in their open passage they would be none the worse of maternal guidance.

I am of opinion that in no single instance do young birds start without leaders. They may or may not have the migratory instinct as a legacy, and show it in restlessness when the time for leaving comes. I should like to hear the experience of those who keep them in captivity. Much of that even they may borrow from watching the preparations of their elders. Between the migration and the luck to reach the other side there is a great gulf fixed.

The nightingale comes no farther north than Yorkshire. Many years ago a gentleman conceived the idea of introducing it into Scotland. So he got the eggs from about Sussex and substituted them for an equal number in a wild robin's nest in Caithness. In due time they were hatched. Without incident the nestlings were reared, and for many summer weeks young nightingales were seen flitting about the hedges.

Many of the more interesting details are awanting: whether, for instance, the young birds tried to sing. If they did, we know it would not be the nightingale's song, since they never heard it. About the back-end they disappeared. The migrating fury may or may not have possessed them; perhaps not. One thing they had inherited from their parents, and that was a constitution not fitted to withstand a northern winter. That alone would be sufficient to account for their absence. If they tried to go they would be quite as likely to turn north as south, and quite certain to perish by the way.

One thing very noticeable in migrants is a love

of place. So far as we can make out, the same birds come to their old nesting-quarters year after year. Had these young birds survived it is likely enough that they would have returned to Caithness—much more likely than that they would have gone to Sussex. What knew they of nightingales that had not even heard their song?

If they had appeared they would have been a disappointment to the good Caithness people, for they must have trilled like robins, where were robins enough already. It might have taught the lesson that to get an all-round nightingale so far north some other plan would have to be hit upon. If it was the song they were after, it must not be learned in a Scots school. Only the birds did not come.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXI.—WE MAKE PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION.

WYMAN, although mysterious and full of dark hints regarding the woman who had come so suddenly into my life, would, however, explain nothing definite. He tantalised me with prophetic utterances and warnings, but refused to explain all he knew.

'What I have discovered is a personal matter, my dear fellow—facts that concern myself alone,' he said. 'The conspiracy regarding The Closed Book is certainly a most extraordinary and far-reaching one; but if we are shrewd and fearless we may outwit these people, who appear to have found the secret just as we have—the secret of the existence of a valuable treasure.'

'I thought buried treasure only existed in books,' I remarked, recollecting *Treasure Island* and other such romances. 'Certainly I never anticipated that I should be actually engaged in a real treasure-hunt.'

'Nor did I, until I saw the gravity of the whole thing, and how deeply in earnest are these people.'

'They have no idea that The Book is again in my possession?' I asked.

'None whatever. The volume was stolen from Harpur Street, of course, and they are puzzled to know into whose hands it has fallen. All the chief dealers in manuscripts in London—Quaritch, Maggs, Tregaskis, Dobell, and the others—have been warned that if the Arnoldus is offered them it is stolen property.'

'Well, it is not very likely that any of them will have the offer,' I laughed. 'It will be kept in a safe place now I have it in my possession again, you may depend upon that.'

Walter Wyman had turned over the many folios of my transcript, and was reading the portion concerning the hidden treasure of the Abbey of Crowland. I think the list of gold and silver objects so plainly set out appealed to him.

'We'll go back to Peterborough to-night,' he said, 'sleep at the "Angel," and visit Crowland, as it is now spelt, to-morrow. I've heard that the ruins of the abbey are very fine. It will be an interesting outing, if nothing else.'

'Before we go we had better take a tracing of the unnamed plan,' I suggested. 'It may assist us, and yet it may, on the other hand, be a plan of an entirely different place. One thing is certain—namely, that it had been drawn there with some distinct object, just as the plan marked "Treyf."'

With this he agreed; and going downstairs, I obtained the packet containing the book from the hotel manager's safe, and together we carefully traced the rough plan in question. It was merely an arrangement of lines and numerals which told us absolutely nothing. Still, we both felt half-convinced that it must somehow concern the Crowland treasure, which was hidden from the king's men at the time the abbey was dissolved and destroyed.

Later on we walked together up the promenade, while on the way I endeavoured in vain to obtain some information from Wyman concerning Lady Judith; and at seven-thirty, after an early dinner, we left by the London express for Peterborough, arriving back at the old-fashioned 'Angel' just before eleven. In travelling I carried the precious Arnoldus myself, fearing to lose it; but on our arrival I again transferred it to the hotel safe, with injunctions to the landlord to be careful of it, as its value was considerable.

Next morning was bright and sunny, and, taking a carriage from the hotel, we drove out to Crowland, a fen-village distant some seven miles.

Perhaps you may have visited it, an old-world, straggling place clustering about the time-worn, blackened ruins of the ancient abbey, a venerable pile which even in its present gaunt decay displays mute evidence of a long-past glory.

As we stood before its restored tower and great ruined, roofless aisles, where arches still remain that are the wonder of the modern builder, we could not help reflecting on the vicissitudes through which the grand old place had passed from its foundation, A.D. 713, as a memorial to the Saxon Saint Guthlac, down to its complete dissolution and overthrow by Henry VIII. Because of its isolation in that great marsh, it was for centuries a place of refuge, where the monks were engaged in a noble and great work, employed in prayer, writing manuscripts, building bridges, making roads, or constructing by degrees that noble monument to the glory of God, the great abbey, the nursing mother of Cambridge University, and the very

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centre of Christian life in the fens of Lincolnshire. Though those venerable aisles are roofless, and the wonderful Early English life-sized statues in the western front of the nave are blackened by age and crumbling to decay; though all trace of the original dimensions of the place are lost in the ill-kept and weedy churchyard surrounding it, the old pile is still one of the noblest buildings in England, wonderful in its station, unique in its beauty, and a valuable relic of Christian devotion, interesting to the architect, the historian, and the antiquary.

The guide-book which we purchased of the sacristan told us that the vast structure, consisting of the porch, western tower, and north aisle, with the ruins of the nave, did not represent one-fourth of the original abbey church. Indeed, the gray, time-stained building which we stood before was little more than the north aisle of the church attached to the abbey, and therefore conveyed no more adequate idea of the extent of the monastic building than the ruins of a domestic chapel will of the castle or mansion to which it was attached. At the time of the dissolution it was standing in all its glory, with the wooden roof of the now ruined nave richly gilt, the great windows full of fine stained glass, two grand organs, and an altar blazing with gold, silver, and gems.

The north aisle still remains roofed over, but uninteresting, to do duty as the parish church; but the magnificent nave is stripped, mutilated, and open to the four winds of heaven, for what sacrilege the commissioners of Henry VIII. did not commit in old Godfrey Lovel's day, Oliver Cromwell's soldiers completed when they stormed the place and shattered the remaining walls and windows in 1643.

Together we strolled into the space enclosed by the nave, wandering among the gray old ruins, where the quiet was broken only by the twittering of a bird. The morning was bright, with a warm sun; but its very light seemed to render the venerable pile, rich with deeds long since forgot, the more bare, solemn, and imposing.

We were alone, for the sacristan had returned to her cottage, allowing us to roam there at our own sweet will. Therefore, when we were in a spot where we thought we should be unobserved, I drew forth the transcript I had made of the old monk's record, and re-read it aloud to my companion in order that my memory might be refreshed, and that he should know the exact wording of what was written.

We smiled at the simplicity of the old Abbot John sending Thomas Cromwell a present of his fen-fish in the hope that he would be appeased and pass by the abbey without seizing it; yet, as I afterwards discovered, the original of that very letter is still preserved in the British Museum, and I have had it in my own hand, thus showing that old Godfrey must have possessed the entire confidence of his abbot.

In front of where I stood, let into the ruined wall and beaten by the weather, was a gray slate which I knew to be of fifteenth-century workmanship. The incised marginal inscription, in Lombardic characters, read as follows:

'PETRE : PRECES : P : ME : PETRO :
PASTOR : PIE : P : ME.'

This, being translated, reads:

Peter (offer) prayers for me. Peter,
Pious Shepherd, (pray) for me.

In the centre of the slab was a floriated cross and the words, 'Orate p. aia Johanis Tomson.' In 1423 John Tomson gave ten marks for the building of the abbey tower, and it appeared that the marginal inscription was a prayer addressed either to the Apostle St Peter or to John Tomson's father-confessor, named Peter.

Those great bare walls and high pointed arches, gray and frowning, rudely broken, yet perfect in grace and symmetry, surely furnished a striking instance of the uncertainty of all human labours. In the day when the soldier-monk Godfrey lived there it was the seat of devotion and learning, the abode of luxury and ease, possessing riches in abundance, and vessels for its use of the most costly description; now, except in that portion fitted as a church, it scarcely afforded shelter to a rook or daw, and the last remains of its once almost unparalleled magnificence were mouldering silently and mingling with the soil on which they stood:

Whilst in the progress of the long decay,
Thrones sink to dust, and nations pass away.

We turned again to the old chronicle of the monk who had lived there and actually seen those massive walls torn down by Southwell's men; the monk who, with the abbot himself and his friend the Scotch monk Maxwell, had at midnight on the 1st of December 1538 concealed the greater part of the abbey treasures. They had taken the historic altar of silver that Henry, Emperor of Germany, had presented to the monastery, together with other magnificent jewels and pieces of plate, and hidden it, besides three iron-bound chests full of valuables from the treasury. Hidden where?

According to Godfrey's statement, Malcolm had kept watch at the south door while the abbot and himself had carried the three chests out and sunk them in the centre and at the deepest part of the fish-pond. They were hidden in the same pond as he had previously concealed the Borgia jewels in—namely, in the lake at a spot indicated, being one hundred and thirty-one paces south of the grand altar. The pond was never dry, it appeared, even in the hottest summer, and, like all other monastery waters, contained carp for Fridays. The Borgia treasure he managed to secure before leaving Crowland with his friend Malcolm Maxwell, but the abbey plate and jewels and the silver altar he had been compelled to leave, the two others who alone knew the secret in addition to himself, having died. He had recorded the existence of the treasure from a sense of religious duty, feeling that the Catholic Church should not suffer by entire loss of

such a magnificent property. His directions were by no means explicit, but in eagerness we resolved to investigate as far as possible.

Passing up what was once the nave, but where great trees now flourished and bushes grew in tangled profusion, we came to the high round-toothed arch and two massive piers which were all that remained of the central tower. Beyond, although the abbey church extended just as far eastward as the ruins ran westward, all had disappeared. There was no sign of the whereabouts of the grand altar from which to take our bearings. The whole of the eastern side of the church had been swept away, and converted into a modern churchyard.

'Perhaps the guide-book will tell us something,' Wyman suggested, and at once began to scan its pages, while we stood in the rank grass beneath the shadow of that magnificent arch which is the admiration of all modern builders.

Presently he pointed out to me the original measurements, showing that the nave had been one hundred and forty-four feet long by twenty-eight feet wide and seventy-five feet high, which, after careful comparison with other calculations, made it clear that the grand altar must have been situated eighty-six feet from the broken pier of the central tower where we stood.

We had fortunately purchased a measuring-tape in Peterborough; therefore, without delay, we marked out eighty-six feet in a direct easterly direction towards the open fen-pastures straight before us, and, looking round, discovered to our satisfaction some broken stone foundations hidden in the grass and weeds—evidently the lower stones of the grand altar mentioned by the monk Godfrey.

Some twelve feet farther on there were some similar moss-grown stones, which struck me as being the remains of the rear of the demolished altar; therefore from this latter point we determined to take our bearings.

We stood and glanced around to find the monastery fish-pond. Southward in the direction indicated, in the centre of a grass-field filled with mounds where old foundations had been overgrown, was a deep dip in the ground, a small pond quite unlike the deep lake full of old carp that we had imagined.

'That's it!' I exclaimed, much disappointed. 'There certainly isn't much water there. I suppose we had better measure the hundred and thirty-one paces, so as to be certain that it really is the spot.'

'Come along,' cried my friend. 'Let us do it separately;' and, turning our faces to the south, we paced on, each counting silently, and being compelled to scale the churchyard wall in our progress.

At one hundred and nine paces, however, I arrived at the edge of what had no doubt once been a big pond, for the grassy hollow was some thirty feet wide and sixty long, divided into two, and in each remained a few feet of muddy water which the cattle drank.

The discrepancy in the distance puzzled us. Was it possible that the celebrated silver altar of Crowland and the three chestfuls of treasure lay buried in the centre of the slime of that half-dried pond?

Surely the lake must have been of much larger dimensions in Godfrey's day; and, if it were, then the distance between its edge and the grand altar would not be so great.

I produced the tracing of the mysterious plan contained in The Closed Book, but failed to comprehend it in any detail. The shaky lines, intended to be straight, were mostly numbered, as though denoting paces distant. But there was no number 131 or 109 as I had found it; hence we were utterly mystified, and both inclined to believe that in imagining the plan to concern Crowland we had been mistaken.

We both stood at the edge of the muddy pond and glanced into its green, stagnant water.

Was it possible that the great treasures of that half-demolished abbey, whose high ruined walls and buttresses cast their shadows behind, had been hidden deep in the mud below by the same hand that had written The Closed Book, the hand that had envenomed its pages and thus preserved the great secret from age to age?

It seemed almost incredible in these matter-of-fact times, and yet we both felt confident that the treasure enumerated in the list lay cunningly concealed somewhere in that vicinity.

ROME AS IT IS TO-DAY.

SOME REMARKS ON HAWTHORNE'S 'ROME' AND ON PRESENT ROME.

By GEORGE PIGNATORRE, late British Vice-Consul at Messina.

WHEN Hawthorne penned his fanciful and fascinating tale of *Transformation* in the early fifties of the just defunct nineteenth century, Rome was still 'the poor old city' he terms the once splendid metropolis of the ancient world; she was truly a maze of narrow, unclean lanes, a congeries of evil-smelling, squalid dwellings, interspersed with gloomy, medieval palaces in sad disrepair. In short, Rome was an ill-drained, ill-lit, unsavoury old town, teeming with beggars, models, and thieves, and, to cap all, the acknowledged headquarters of the malignant malarial fever. Hawthorne has probably nowise overdrawn the picture of Papal Rome at the time of his visit, as he certainly has not darkened those salient traits of the Roman

character which are faithfully reproduced among the contemporary generation.

Even in those passages of his weird tale in which he may be suspected reasonably of unwitting exaggeration, as in his graphic and poetical description of the beautiful Borghese Park, 'where fever walks arm-in-arm with you, and death awaits you at the end of the dim vista' (a passage which has always been quoted for its exquisite beauty), we may rest satisfied that the truth was only exaggerated, not belibelled, albeit happily the claims of these glowing phrases of word-painting on the reader's attention rest henceforth on their literary merit alone. The squalid city of yore has changed since into the fine, well-built capital of a United Italy. Its population has doubled within the last forty years; with the entrance of the Italian troops into Rome through the breach of Porta Pia on the memorable 20th of September 1870, a new era commenced for Rome and Italy. Whole quarters have sprung into existence; the site of the vast Ludovisi Gardens, the Cœlian, Viminal, and Esquiline Hills, have been covered over with buildings; wide streets, spacious squares, broad pavements, have replaced in the new town the crooked alleys, small courts, and narrow, cobbled streets of old Rome: these exist still, though their area has been diminished, but are only or mainly visited by a few rabid antiquaries. Even the famous Triton Street is threatened with destruction by modern improvement, which its slushy centre and constricted slabby pavements have rendered urgently necessary, despite its picturesqueness, which is only rivalled by its slimy mud in wet weather. Its narrowness strangles traffic, and is a grievous obstacle to the free circulation of the endless train of carts, carriages, omnibuses, and now tramway-cars, which thread their way up or down or across this congested channel of communication between the upper and lower portions of the city.

Good hotels, boarding-houses, and furnished apartments of all sizes and suitable to all purses afford that comfortable accommodation which was lacking or overdear in Hawthorne's time. Artists are now boarded and lodged like ordinary mortals; they no longer dwell in marble halls or in the equivalent, surrounded by medieval dust and dirt like Miriam, or in a lofty tower like Hilda. The foreign visitor is no longer menaced with fever, for malaria (thanks to greater cleanliness, better drainage, more space, and higher ground occupied by the new quarters) has practically vanished. The occasional cases of malarial or marsh fever which do occur are of a sporadic nature, and are generally imported from the Maremma or salt-marshes of other districts; and even the few imported outbreaks are limited mostly to the low-lying riverain parts of Rome, where a fouler atmosphere and deficient sanitary arrangements favour the fever-fiend. The best evidence of the present healthy conditions of the Italian capital lies in the official returns of the registrar, which show that the death-rate in Rome was lower than that of many other foreign and Italian cities even in 1895. The figures were then as follows: London, twenty-one; Rome, twenty-two; Paris, twenty-three; Berlin, twenty-four; Vienna, twenty-seven; and Naples, thirty-five (its supply of excellent spring-water notwithstanding). The death-rate had fallen in Rome since then to eighteen per thousand in 1902. Nor are the changes in other respects less momentous. During the first half of the nineteenth century, and in a measure up to the seventies, when Hare wrote his admirable *Walks in Rome*, a great portion of Romagna, especially the deserted Campagna, had an evil repute which was certainly not wholly undeserved; nor were matters better within the city itself, which was infested by cut-throats and banditti, who lived in a most congenial atmosphere and throve accordingly. The streets after dark were very insecure for all respectable persons, whether foreign or native; the police were powerless or unwilling to protect. It is only of very recent years that any improvement is observable in the maintenance of public order; it is only since the collapse of the papal autocracy that real efforts have been made to check the display of lawlessness in the capital, to ensure the safety of the citizens and of foreigners against the night-hawks within and the brigands without.

The withdrawal of the French garrison from Rome in 1870 put an end for ever to the existence of one of the most debasing and despotic theocracies that has ever enslaved the minds and bodies of a people. But let us not mistake: no sudden upheaval of a people, however spontaneous—as no single ruler, however great—can sweep away at once the baneful results of over fifteen centuries of almost continuous misrule and tyranny. The seeds of vice and crime planted and fostered by long ages of misgovernment were too deeply embedded to be easily torn up; and they are very apparent in the brutal, crafty Roman of to-day, whose sanguinary instincts will break out on the slightest provocation, and whose surliness is only matched by his cunning and superstition. Thirty years even of the most enlightened rule could hardly have raised perceptibly the moral standard of a people so long debased; and the present Italian Government, though a vast improvement on the late régime, and doubtless full of good intentions, is still very far from being perfect.

Nevertheless, the Roman, albeit intrinsically nearly the same as he was thirty or forty years ago, has been compelled to conform, outwardly at least, and particularly with regard to organised brigandage and nightly assassination, to the altered conditions of the times. The extension of railways, the organisation of the carbineer force throughout Italy, and the ever-waxing number of foreigners who make Rome their head-quarters during their tour in Italy, or make the city their winter residence, are some of the causes which have contributed to this transformation, which is very marked in the additional security guaranteed to foreign visitors and residents; for, dependent as so many in Rome are for their

livelihood on the attractions the city now offers to strangers, every effort is made to maintain order and security, and not without success. Hence an Englishman may stroll about at any hour of the twenty-four with perhaps only the same risks as he incurs in roaming about the London streets; he is certainly as safe as he would be at home, and owing to his nationality and to the coin he puts into circulation, and, to be fair, also to a certain amount of self-respect which induces Italians to wish to stand well with strangers, he will be specially protected by the authorities, and any bodily injury to his person inflicted by violence will be promptly avenged. The Roman ruffian knows this, and refrains with commendable prudence and self-restraint from using his knife on an outlander against whom, moreover, he bears no grudge, and whom possibly some of his less truculent but equally dishonest *compari* may have already robbed politely as cicerones or as pickpockets.

But if Hawthorne and other worthies of the same period are no authorities on the actual conditions of public health and public security of up-to-date Rome, their estimate of Italian character is often remarkably correct. Thus Hawthorne, like Dickens, has made some very pregnant remarks which are true to the letter at this very day; and no one has excelled Hawthorne in his rich word-pictures of Rome, no one has depicted more vividly those beauties of art and nature which have combined for centuries to draw to the Eternal City all cultured minds. For these two reasons, if for no other, Hawthorne remains a text-book on Rome, and should be read by all who are desirous of understanding certain national traits and of fully appreciating the varied attractions of the national capital. Nor need those who now visit Italy, and especially Rome, be deterred from prolonging their stay beyond the usual winter season, which closes towards the end of April, by the fear of excessive heat, which is very bearable even to northerners up to the end of June, and is never continuously or for any length of time oppressive: sultry nights and mosquitoes are almost unknown in Rome, and the evenings are invariably cool. Perhaps the greatest surviving nuisance in Rome is the miserable chicanery and haggling which meet you at every step, the extortionate demands of porters and drivers who are the prosaic modern representatives of the bravoes and desperadoes of yore. Cabmen are especially obnoxious, and the only practical course to take when the driver insists on an overfare is either to make him drive you to the nearest police-station, or, if he refuse, to take his number and apply for redress at the proper quarter—which will be promptly given. This is the most prudent course, by which you avoid standing several volleys of abuse without being able to reply in a style befitting the occasion, and which is always the most advisable when ladies are concerned. Unfortunately in most cases travellers prefer to submit to extortion, and thus the system goes on unchecked; but, apart from this petty cheating and double-dealing, there is, I repeat, nothing to fear from malefactors or malaria. To quote an instance in point illustrative of the greater respect paid to the persons of foreigners. Some three years ago a Scotsman named Hamilton was assaulted in a most dastardly manner by a man to whom he had declined to sell ice at a certain price, and who for this sole reason gashed the Scotsman's cheek with a razor with the view of disfiguring or marking Mr Hamilton for life—a favourite mode of vengeance corresponding to the vitriol-throwing in France. Though even this savage and cowardly aggression on an unsuspecting man might have been leniently viewed by a sympathetic jury as an act of revenge for a grievous wrong, and doubtless the assailant bore a deep grudge against Mr Hamilton, on whom he had merely wreaked his vengeance in the customary way; still, grudge or no grudge, he was made to feel that such misdeeds are punished as they deserve when committed on Britons. Notwithstanding sympathetic jurymen who durst not give way to their feeling, or indulgent judges, he was convicted and condemned, to the great surprise of his friends, to four years' imprisonment with hard labour, instead of as many months to which he might have been sentenced had he gashed a national face with his national razor.

Organised ruffianism having disappeared and endemic malaria having followed suit, there is no valid reason against a foreigner making a prolonged stay at all seasons of the year, or selecting that particular season which he may happen to prefer from motives of health or taste. Rome presents such a variety of attractions suitable to all pursuits and to all characters that every season has its charm and every point of view a particular interest. In the first place, Rome is no mere ancient, half-buried town of tombs or palaces like Thebes or even better-known Athens; it is not a mere medieval city like Florence, Pisa, Venice, or Perugia; it is not either and solely a bright new capital like Berlin or Melbourne. It is a blending of all three characteristics. Rome is at once a renowned city of antiquity whose noble remains fill us with wonder for their size and magnificence; a wonderful medieval town, with its frowning, gloomy old palaces, its wynds and battlements, together with the broad streets and squares of the new town. To crown all, Rome enjoys the blessing of a climate which has few rivals even in the sunny South. Its winters are clear, windless, and mild; its summers less oppressive and less enervating than those of most other Italian towns; the mornings, evenings, and nights never sultry, and often very cool and pleasant, and, above all, exempt from that universal mosquito-pest which prevails for so many months in Sicily and Naples down to December. The fall of the year and early spring up to the beginning of June are the most delightful seasons, and foreigners are beginning to realise the fact. The cloudless, deep-blue skies and windless sunny days are only matched in my experience by some of the warm winter days

you may occasionally enjoy in Attica or in the Ionian Islands. Our American cousins, with their customary acuteness, having arrived sooner at the right conclusion, come over in shoals at all seasons of the year, many preferring a relatively cool, mosquitoless, and almost flyless summer; for, strange as the fact may appear, both these interesting insects, whether they were included, as is asserted by some, in the excommunication specially launched against the more practical if less malevolent locusts, or whether they have all become professionals as malarial mosquitoes or flies, the fact remains that they seem to enjoy the Pontine Marshes and the suburbia better than the city itself.

The spring and autumn, though the two best seasons for visitors, are not equally so. The former is superior on account of its greater brightness and longer days. That those extremes of heat and cold observable in other cities not only of foreign countries but of Italy itself are absent from Rome will appear from the following figures showing the average range of the thermometer in some of the chief Italian towns:

In Rome the winter temperature is 46·58°, in summer 74·58°; in Turin the winter temperature is 33·6°, in summer 71·24°; in Milan the winter temperature is 35·42°, in summer 71·96°; in Venice the winter temperature is 39·38°, in summer 74·12°.

In conclusion, I wish to state that although merely expressing my private opinion on the actual conditions of public security in Italy, I have also repeated it in an official form during my tenure of office, and these opinions are to be found under the heading of 'Public Security' in my yearly reports from 1891 to 1900, and are quoted and accepted in the Blue Book as the most likely hypothesis. The character I have given is simply typical of the ordinary and more salient traits of the modern Italian, and only differs in degree in its aptitude for good or evil. Moreover, notwithstanding the greater civility, goodnature, and orderliness of the Messinese as compared with the Roman, these undoubtedly good qualities do not affect materially the public security of the provinces, which is maintained by the same causes as are operative in Rome, thus rendering wanton outrage and personal aggression of very rare occurrence.

AUNT MARY.

CHAPTER V.

DR ROBERT EVANS partook of his breakfast with the meek and contrite air of a man who knows that he thoroughly deserves the lecture to which he is being subjected. Usually the doctor was accounted rather a terrible person, except to his housekeeper. The rest of the world he rather bullied. He was a small, round, bald man, exceedingly neat and clean-shaven and old-fashioned. His knowledge of archæology and entomology was international; beyond that, his fellow-practitioners whispered that Evans was an old woman, and he was darkly suspected of such exploded practices as cupping and bleeding.

The doctor had personally attended a call in the middle of the night, a thing absolutely forbidden by the housekeeper, Mrs Allnutt. In vain the little man pleaded that his assistant was quite tired out, and that it was an urgent case.

'Don't tell me,' Mrs Allnutt replied vigorously. 'If you ain't wise at seventy-one, when do you expect to be? And, of course, to make matters worse, you must go off without your flannel waistcoat.'

'Bless my soul! so I did,' the doctor said meekly. 'I'm very sorry.'

'Yes; and it's still sorrier you'll be when you're lying in your grave with pneumonia,' the housekeeper went on relentlessly. 'Here's Miss Bentley coming up the drive to ask your advice about something or another. She'd get a deal more sense if she consulted my scullery-maid, I'm thinking.'

With which parting shot Mrs Allnutt went out and Miss Bentley came in. Dr Evans wiped his heated face hurriedly. The mingled distress and relief of his features conjured the ghost of a smile to Aunt Mary's lips.

'Mrs Allnutt is in a militant mood to-day?' she suggested.

'A most excellent woman,' Evans said hurriedly, 'and absolutely devoted to my interests. The fact is, I was called out last night and I forgot to put on my—er—um. There's a meeting of the Field Club at Ambermouth this afternoon, and Mrs Allnutt insists—I mean suggests—that I should not go. But there! How is the patient?'

'The patient is no better and no worse. Dr Evans, my dear old friend, I don't want to hurt your feelings, but isn't it just possible that you have made a mistake in your treatment of the case?'

'Bless my soul! no,' Evans said. 'Why?'

Miss Bentley gazed absently round the room. Her eyes were turned from a large case of butterflies to the cleanly pink of Evans's cheeks.

'James Whitworth is absolutely certain of it,' she said.

'James Whitworth! My dear Mary! You *don't* say—you don't really say—that fellow is at Grey Gables?'

'Indeed he is, Dr Evans.'

'And knowing that you were in the house all the time?'

'He was ignorant of that. He was quite distressed about it. And, with all his faults, I never knew him to tell a lie.'

'Um!' Evans muttered, with plentiful lack of enthusiasm. 'You were very angry with him, of course. You informed him that it was impossible for both of you to stay under the same roof. After that he withdrew, with many apologies. Of course that is exactly what happened.'

'Dr Evans, if you are going to be sarcastic I shall ring the bell for Mrs Allnutt.'

'Don't; please don't. There was another alternative. It was to make Jim Whitworth welcome, and give him the tulip-panelled bedroom.'

'That's exactly what I did do,' said Aunt Mary, pinkly defiant.

Dr Evans replied, with shameless change of port, that he should have been frankly disappointed if Aunt Mary had acted otherwise. She was the kindest and dearest woman in the world; also, Walter Whitworth was a fine young fellow.

'But I am quite right as regards Kitty,' he said firmly. 'I stick to my guns there.'

'And I entirely agree with you,' Miss Bentley replied. 'There must be no change, though James Whitworth insists upon it.'

'Oh, he insists upon it!' Evans said blankly. 'Why?'

'Because he says your treatment is all wrong. He declares you to be old-fashioned and hopelessly out of date. He wants to have all the doors and windows open. Kitty is to have a bedroom in the corridor.'

'And he'll get his own way, too,' Evans growled. 'He always did have his own way—confound him!—ever since he was a boy. Does he want to murder the girl? Not that he cares a scrap about that so long as he gets his own way. I tell you that open-air cure is a dangerous fad. I never saw anybody who benefited by it. Didn't we cure Lucy Stiles exactly as I am trying to cure Kitty?'

'James says the Stiles family merely have weak lungs.'

'Much he knows about it! But I am firm; I am resolute. Once roused, and James Whitworth will find me a difficult man to deal with'——

'And he wants you to call Dr Partridge into consultation.'

Dr Evans's jaw dropped. If he was a man of iron will and resolution, his looks very much belied him. Dr Partridge belonged to the modern neck-or-nothing school that Evans heartily despised; but then more than one poor body clad in the purple had passed through the hands of that eminent specialist with magnificent results. It was all very well to pooh-pooh the methods of the great surgeon who made Ambermouth his holiday-resort.

'It appears that James once saved Dr Partridge's life,' Mary went on; 'but that has nothing to do with it. I want you to stand firm'——

'To the last ditch, my dear Mary.'

'James is coming to see you. You have only to be resolute.'

'Oh, he is coming to see me? And I have only to be resolute? My dear Mary, if you had put your foot down firmly at first you might have saved me—I mean after that there would have been no more to be said.'

'My dear doctor, James Whitworth is not shaken off so easily. You know his ways.'

Evans nodded. He did know those ways by painful experience; and however elaborately he might lay his plans, Whitworth was certain to carry his idea into effect.

'I shall convince him that he is mistaken,' he said.

Miss Bentley sincerely hoped so. All the old-fashioned prejudices in the little gray body were aroused. It was easy to see that she belonged to a bygone generation. Change, reform of any kind, was absolutely painful to her; and she was sincerely impressed with the idea that any alteration in the treatment of Kitty would only hasten the end.

'I'll do all I can for you,' Evans concluded, 'if you'll send that impetuous fellow here'——

'Mr James Whitworth to see you,' Mrs Allnutt said as she entered the room with no suggestion of ceremony. 'He is in the consulting-parlour, and he's just as good-looking and impertinent as ever he was.'

The woman's face glowed with pleasure; she might have been a mother who had announced the return of a favourite son.

'Now, what do you think of that?' Evans cried indignantly. 'That woman in my hearing scores of times has vowed and declared that if ever Jim Whitworth came this way again she'd throw a bucket of dirty water over him. And she's as pleased as Punch.'

'I'm afraid it will be a trying interview,' Aunt Mary said, gathering up her skirts for flight.

'Oh, it will,' Evans said with pathetic melancholy. 'I will be firm—*firm!*'

CHAPTER VI.

THE wind had gone round to the west; there had been rain during the night, so that the beds of hyacinths gave out a subtle perfume. The jonquils were nodding in the borders; under a lichen-strewn apple-tree was a carpet of yellow daffodils. It was so mild and warm after tea that Kitty had begged for a little turn outside.

She was walking up and down now, leaning on Walter's arm. In the strong flush of sunshine she looked terribly white and fragile. She had to walk slowly, to pause every now and then with her hand on her heart. The exertion of breathing parted her lips and showed the little white teeth within. Just for a moment Walter looked across to the wide sweep of landscape beyond the garden, but he could see nothing but a blurred gray mist. It seemed so hard, such a useless mockery without Kitty.

'You are not so well to-night,' Walter said gently.

'I don't know,' Kitty replied. 'I fluctuate so terribly. This morning I felt splendid, as if new life came to me. I was going to have a long day at the organ, my mind was full of lovely melodies, my oratorio was to grow apace, and your father actually found me two of the fugues that Uncle Colin left unfinished. Then the room seemed to grow suddenly oppressive, and I could only lie down all the morning.'

Walter nodded in sympathy. He had worked all the morning in an atmosphere that seemed to take the life out of him. For Kitty's sake he had endured it. And if old Dr Evans proved to be wrong after all!

But Walter did not dare to think of that; the mere suggestion set his heart beating painfully. No; he must brace himself up for the inevitable. Kitty would be with him for a few months longer; then she would pass away into a beautiful, tender memory. He would work, and forget the past in his labour. Yet he would cheerfully have forfeited everything and started again with nothing but hope and ambition to know that the girl by his side would be with him always.

The little gray figure of Aunt Mary came into the porch presently, and gently reproached Kitty for her imprudence. She begged for one more turn round the garden, for the evening was mild and balmy, and the air eased the pressure on her lungs. A big figure in a loud check loomed over the little shadow in the gray silk; there was a smell of a cigar on the air.

'If you would keep this poor child out in the fresh air for a month right away,' James Whitworth said in his strong, confident voice, 'she would be well on the way to recovery. If something isn't done I shan't be able to stay here.'

'We are not disposed to hamper you,' Aunt Mary said coldly.

She stepped out on to the gravel with her head in the air. Whitworth walked mildly by her side, whistling softly to himself. Presently the small gray figure shrank a little and the clear face began to flush.

'I am sure I beg your pardon,' Miss Bentley said. 'I am very, very sorry. I can't imagine how I came to say such a thing.'

'Never was there a woman like you in the world before!' Whitworth cried. 'And what a blackguard I have been! It would have been less cruel to knock me down out of hand. But I should never have made you happy, Mary.'

'I don't think you would, James. But a woman in love rarely thinks of those things; and the past is buried.'

'And flowers grow on its grave, planted and lovingly tended there by you, Mary. I hurt your feelings just now, and I'm sorry for it; but I honestly meant what I said. I am a man of action. I simply can't sit down here and see that poor girl die without doing something to avert the tragedy.'

'Everything possible has been done. If loving care counts for anything'——

'Then Kitty would be the strongest girl alive; but everything possible has not been done. I say that Evans's treatment is entirely and utterly wrong. With the very best intentions, the poor child is being slowly done to death. My dear Mary, I have seen cases of that kind cured.'

'Not similar cases to Kitty's,' Miss Bentley said with gentle obstinacy.

'There you are! You won't be convinced. I have known men in South Africa who have come out as a last resource to see what open air will do for them. They came with death written on their faces. A few months later and—well, you should see them!'

'Tom and Albert Cotton went to Canada for the same reason, and they were both dead before they had been there a month.'

'Because they waited too long. You can't expect Nature to perform miracles. Kitty has not gone too far. If so, she wouldn't possess so much nervous energy. That fine spirit of ambition would have been quenched long ago. I love that girl as I love my boy. It is only since I came down here that I have realised how shamefully I have neglected Walter. I met two big painter fellows in London the other day, and they were loud in praise of my boy. Now that he has money behind him his fortune is made. I've nothing of my own, but I shall not touch a penny of his. And I thank God for giving my boy the great and glorious chance. By every moral right the money ought to have gone to Kitty. Up to a certain point my brother intended her to have it.'

'He never really changed his mind,' Aunt Mary said quietly.

'I suppose not. It was that affair in Spain. It was nothing wonderful either.'

Whitworth put this aside with contempt. His sanguine nature was full of Walter's future. It seemed to dominate all his ideas, to rob him of all the selfishness that had ever been his besetting sin. And he was going to save Kitty. Walter's good fortune would be as nothing unless he had Kitty by his side. He did not care a jot for the opinion of a thousand of the Evans type. He had seen Evans that morning, and he had very soon put that individual in his place.

'All the same, I shall not allow it,' Miss Bentley said. 'I *cannot*. If Kitty came to premature harm I should feel like a murderess.'

'Well, it's going to be done,' Whitworth said coolly, 'and the sooner you make up your mind to it the better. Those young people have gone in, I see. Come along—I promised Kitty to overhaul some more of that old music for her.'

But Miss Bentley elected to remain outside. She was anxious and disturbed. She was going to fight for her old tenets to the last gasp. At the same time she fully realised the strong mind that was bending her. In her heart of hearts she knew that

sooner or later she would have to yield. But when the little woman in gray felt that she had right on her side she could go far.

Still, she was troubled and uneasy. All that James Whitworth had said came back to her now: his sanguine hopes, his new-found pride in his boy, his breathless, eager interest in Walter's career. And he had spoken with tears in his eyes of Kitty. Aunt Mary's love for James Whitworth was dead and decently buried years before. She had forgiven him as she had forgiven everybody, but she had never respected the man quite as much as she did to-day.

The mellow notes of the old organ stole into the garden. Walter was singing. Out of the mists a rotund figure absurdly wrapped up loomed largely by the side of the little lady in gray.

'Dr Evans!' Miss Bentley cried. 'Why, what does'——

'Had to,' Evans said with resignation. 'Mrs Allnutt insisted upon it. Otherwise she would have assuredly spoilt my dinner.'

'And so you braved her wrath to come and see me. That was very good of you.'

'Not at all; not at all,' Evans gasped. 'Do you think anybody could see from the road if I took this muffler off? I was anxious in my mind. I had a most exhausting interview with Whitworth to-day.'

'I was afraid of it. Still, so long as you were firm'——

'But, my dear lady, I wasn't. To begin with, I was dignified. I sheltered myself behind my superior medical knowledge. I said I was quite prepared to answer any questions, but I could not—I really *could* not—open a discussion upon my treatment of the case with a mere layman.'

'And what did he say to that?'

'He laughed, simply laughed in my face. He implied that I was a greater ass than he had taken me for. My views on butterflies and on old Gothic architecture he respected. And then he bullied me. He actually called in Mrs Allnutt to back him up. Oh, it was a dreadful time!'

Dr Evans wiped his heated face from a fine perspiration not entirely due to the closeness of the evening. Aunt Mary was duly sympathetic.

'So long as the argument was general it didn't matter,' she said.

'But, my dear Mary, the argument was not general,' Evans cried. 'That man has been reading up his facts. He quoted cases against me. He seemed to know all about what the new school call the consumptive bacillus. Then I really had to stand upon my dignity, and ask him by what right he interfered on behalf of Miss Evershed.'

Miss Bentley drew her breath quickly. A more observant man than the doctor would have noticed her trembling agitation.

'And what did he say to that?' she murmured.

'Why, as her guardian. Under the will of Colin Whitworth, you know. Of course he had me there, and he was not slow to see his advantage. Never was there such a man before. I never meant to yield; I was going to be quite firm. And yet, before I knew what I was doing, I had actually promised about Partridge.'

'Oh, indeed,' Miss Bentley murmured. 'And, pray, what was the promise you made?'

'Why, to see him in consultation, of course. Naturally, I shall have to be exceedingly firm with Partridge. It will be my duty to point out to him that, with all his great skill and with all his wonderful cures, there are cases where humble men have made a critical study of patients.'

Miss Bentley cut this tirade short coldly.

'You have made a great mistake,' she said. 'Dr Partridge may come—indeed it is inevitable now; but nothing shall induce me to follow a different course of treatment. And if it comes to the worst, I shall be able to prove that—— But I am talking nonsense. Good-night, Dr Evans.'

She turned on her heel and walked slowly and thoughtfully towards the house.

EARLY IRONWORKS IN AMERICA.

A MOVEMENT is under way among the iron manufacturers throughout the United States and members of the Leonard family of New England to erect a monument which will be one of the most notable memorials of the United States, since it will celebrate what may claim to be the oldest successful ironworks constructed in America. Initial steps in the project have been taken by the Old Colony Historical Society, and the design prepared by Mr Charles H. Niehaus of New York. The monument will be of granite, while the fixtures illustrating the primitive story of the ironworkers and other cognate subjects will be cast in bronze. The monument is to be erected at Taunton, Massachusetts, the site of the ironworks referred to.

The followers of Raleigh discovered ore-beds in North Carolina in 1585; but nothing was done to develop the deposit, although a report of the discovery was made to the mother-country. A year after the Jamestown Colony was founded in Virginia (1626), one of the company's ships left that place with a cargo not only of lumber but Virginia ore, which was smelted in England—the first iron manufactured from raw material procured in America. This fact encouraged the construction of several plants by English companies in the south; but owing to various misfortunes none were operated longer than a few years. In New England, however, the

ore-beds were exploited at various points, the deposits along the Saugus River attracting special attention. The ironstone was known to exist as early as 1629, and in 1642 specimens were taken to England, which resulted in the formation of 'The Company of Undertakers for the Ironworks,' consisting of eleven English gentlemen, who advanced one thousand pounds to establish the works. John Winthrop, junior, had previously gone to England, and he appears to have assisted in securing the organisation of the company, becoming a member of it, as did others of the colonists. Mr Endicott of Salem, in a letter to Governor Winthrop dated 1st December 1642, says: 'I want much to hear from your son's iron and steel.' Thomas Dexter and Robert Bridges, both of Lynn (Mass.), were among the original promoters of the enterprise. A foundry was erected on the western bank of the Saugus River. The village at the foundry was called Hammersmith by some of the principal workmen, who came from Hammersmith in England. The ironworks are said to have been located near the site of the present woollen factories in Saugus Centre, not far from Lynn, where large heaps of scoria are still to be seen. This iron-foundry was undoubtedly the first to be established in America.

The metal industry has since developed into very large proportions in this section of the United States, for in and about Lynn are foundries as well as wireworks, nailworks, and other plants of a smaller character. There is no question but that the industry at Lynn included not only the foundry but the refinery forge. The term foundry was long a synonym for furnace, castings being made directly from the furnace. This usage continued in America down to about the middle of the last century. That the furnace was in operation in May 1645 is certain, and that the forge was in operation in September 1648 is equally certain. These dates may be accepted as definitely determining respectively the first successful attempts in America to make 'sowe iron' and other castings in a blast-furnace, and to make bar-iron in a refinery forge from 'sowe iron.'

Joseph Jenks, who became the founder of a noted New England family, was a machinist at the Lynn works who had come from Hammersmith, and a man of much skill and inventive genius. He prepared the moulds for the first castings that were made at Lynn. 'A small iron pot, capable of containing about one quart,' was the first article cast at the furnace. It has been handed down in the Lewis family ever since. It is of the old dinner-pot pattern, and although holding only a quart, is heavy enough to make about three in the hands of the modern founder. The first iron utensil cast in America is now in the possession of the sons of Alonzo Lewis, residing at Lynn.

Joseph Jenks in 1647 purchased from Richard Leader the privilege of building a forge at the Lynn ironworks for the manufacture of scythes and other edge tools. This enterprise was also successful. In 1652 he made at these ironworks for the Mint, which was that year established at Boston, the dies for the first silver pieces coined in New England, known as 'pine-tree shillings,' and in 1654 he built for the city of Boston the first fire-engine made in America. In 1655 the general court granted him a patent for an improved scythe. Mr Hawkes says of the scythe which he invented: 'This improvement consisted in lengthening the blade, making it thinner, and welding a square bar on the back to strengthen it, as in the scythe to-day. Before this the old English blade was short and thick like a bush-scythe.' Jenks died in 1683.

The Leonard brothers, who have been called the pioneers of successful ironmaking in New England, acquired much of their experience at Lynn, although they were forgemen in Monmouthshire, England, before coming to America. Undoubtedly the family name is the most noted in the annals of American iron industry. A well-known writer has said: 'Where you can find ironworks, there you can find a Leonard.' The first plant of which the Leonards took charge appears to be the one which is claimed to be the oldest successful iron industry in the colonies. This enterprise was undertaken in 1652 by a company composed of citizens of Taunton who employed Henry and James Leonard as practical ironworkers. At a town meeting at Taunton, held 21st October 1652, 'it was agreed and granted by the town to the said Henry Leonard and James Leonard his brother, and Ralph Russell, free consent to come hither and join with certain of our inhabitants to set up a bloomery on Two-mile River.' The works thus projected were put in operation in 1653. Thomas Leonard and his brother James succeeded their father in the works, and the family name was connected with the Taunton forge for many generations. Bar-iron was made directly from the ore, the works turning out from twenty to thirty tons annually. In 1793, nearly a hundred and fifty years after the fires were first lighted, Taunton forge was in operation, being kept in good repair. In 1851 it was reported that it was running full blast, although it had been in constant use for over two centuries, except when it was necessary to shut it down for repairs and improvements. It was still held as the property of the Leonard family, being owned by Theodore Dean, a direct descendant of the Leonards. During the latter part of its career the plant was devoted largely to the manufacture of anchors, and hundreds of vessels sailing out of New England ports were equipped with anchors bearing its stamp. Until 1865 it was being utilised, and at that time contained four forge fires and two hammers. The buildings were unassuming frame structures situated on the border of the sheet of water from which power was secured by the mill-race. The works were notable for the quality of the iron produced.

The statement made of the Leonard family that they were found wherever ironworks were established was made on good authority, as the history of

the metal industry of New England shows. Henry Leonard was the founder of the ironworks located at Raleigh village, twenty-five miles north-east of Lynn, in 1668. Later the works were managed by his sons. Henry Leonard was also identified with the Braintree works, where pots, mortars, and skillets were cast. James Leonard built the Whittington ironworks on Mill River in 1670. He was senior forgeman, while his sons, who had learned their trade at the Taunton plant, worked the forge. The Chartley works (1698), constructed on Stony Brook, in what was called the Taunton North Purchase, were promoted by Thomas and James Leonard, and afterwards owned by George Leonard. Zephaniah Leonard was identified with the Hopewell plant, built on Mill River in 1740.

SETTING THE CLOCK BACK;

OR,

THE REJUVENATION OF PROFESSOR WENTWORTH.

By Mrs ISABEL SMITH, Author of *The Romance of Mutby Workhouse*, *A Renegade*, &c., &c.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

THE Professor sat in his study 'in musing mood,' and his meditations were not cheerful. He had just remembered that it was his birthday, and when one is on the shady side of fifty, birthdays are not particularly conducive to cheerfulness of spirit. Two or three trivial things had also conspired to impress his advancing years upon the Professor. He had had his hair cut that morning, and the hairdresser had brutally called his attention to the increasing number of gray hairs on the Professor's head. 'If you go on like this, sir,' he said, 'you will soon be quite white. You had better try a little of our celebrated Restorer.' But no, the Professor would have none of such adventitious aids; if he were to be white, he must be white.

Then on his way home he had encountered a medical friend, and to him confided that he was half-thinking of trying a bicycle; but instead of the encouraging commendation he expected, the doctor, with the modern medico's unflinching frankness, advised the Professor not to forget his age!

To crown all, when he reached the rather dreary house near the college at which he was Hebrew and Greek Professor, he found his study fire had been allowed to go out; and on his complaining to his housekeeper, she had promptly replied, 'Oh, sir, it's you who feel chilly this lovely spring morning; but then, of course, sir, you're not so young as you were, but getting up in years like myself!'

All these were little enough vexations, but it only takes a small blister to irritate one, and these, added to the fact of the Professor's birthday, had considerably depressed him.

He was suddenly roused from his sombre reflections by a ring at the front-door, and the next minute the maid brought him a card inscribed: 'Mr Horatio Merrymouth, Bully-Wanga, Nr. Melbourne.'

'Mr Horatio Merrymouth!' he repeated blankly. Then recollection came rushing over him. 'Why, it must be old Rats,' he cried, going back at a bound to his school-days. 'Show the gentleman in at once, Mary.' His hand quite trembled. Old Rats! he had not seen him for—well—no need to add up how many years—it was a great many.

'Hallo, Wentworth! Hallo, "little Billee!"' cried a stentorian voice on the threshold, and in came a big, burly man with curly, grizzled hair and an eye as keen and bright as a hawk's. He nearly crushed the Professor's hand in his mighty grasp. 'Do you recollect me?' he continued, a little huskily. 'Do you recollect Rats, who went to Australia soon after he left school? How are you, old fellow?'

'Oh, oh, very well,' faltered the Professor; 'but I feel rather staggered at seeing you so unexpectedly. But very glad—very glad!' he added.

'Why, you've grown smaller, Wentworth, haven't you?' said the Australian, eyeing his friend critically.

'You've grown—er—bigger,' returned the Professor, looking up enviously at the Australian, whose attire bore the stamp of Antipodean taste—a vivid green-and-yellow necktie, startling waistcoat, and tweeds with enormous checks.

Rats laughed good-humouredly, and the Professor went on. 'Well, you must stop and have dinner with me, Rats. Fortunately I have no lectures on to-night, and I am free. Excuse me one moment;' and he hurried out and interviewed his housekeeper, who received his orders grimly, inquiring, with quiet sarcasm, how he supposed his modest cutlets would suit the visitor. 'For I've heard as these colonials will think nothing of a couple of pounds of rump-steak at a sitting,' she said.

'Get it, then; get it. Steak does not take long to cook, does it?' replied her master, looking half-appealingly at her out of his near-sighted eyes.

'I suppose I must do my best,' was the reply, accompanied by an injured sigh, and the housekeeper bustled off.

After dinner the two friends sat long over a bottle of the Professor's choicest port (a luxury he seldom indulged in when alone), talking over days gone by. Rats appeared to have got on in the world; he had a wife and family, and was generally flourishing.

'I've worked hard, you know, my boy; I've worked hard to get it all,' he said.

'I have worked hard too,' said the Professor, 'in a different way, and it does not seem to have suited me as well as you.'

'Ah, you live a too sedentary life,' replied the visitor emphatically; 'you don't get enough air and exercise. Why should you spend your life "poring over miserable books," as the poet says? You should go out.'

'Oh, in my leisure I prefer to study,' replied the Professor.

'Stuff and nonsense! Study nature. A good kangaroo-hunt would do you all the good in the world. I wish I could have had you a couple of years up at the station. I'd have made another man of you.'

The Professor sighed. 'It is too late now,' he said.

'Too late for what? To improve? Fiddlesticks! Pull yourself together, "little Billee." Have you got a bike?'

'No. I did rather think of it, but my doctor told me this morning when I mentioned it to remember my age, so I don't think he quite approved.'

'Rot! That's just what you want to forget. You learn to bike, Wentworth, and I'll stake my bottom dollar that in another month you'll feel ten years younger at least.'

'I think I will,' said the Professor. Already he felt cheered up.

'And did you never have a hobby when you were young? A man only half-lives who has no hobby.'

'Well, yes. I used sometimes to take brasses,' replied the Professor.

'Humph! Brasses! That's rather a mouldy sort of recreation,' said Rats. 'However, it's better than nothing. By all means take brasses. It'll send you out of your own house at any rate.'

'I will,' said his friend quite enthusiastically.

'And another wrinkle, Wentworth: just throw off the idea that you are getting old, and determine instead that you'll get young.'

The Professor smiled and shook his head sadly. 'I am afraid that's impossible,' he said. 'There is no elixir of youth to be obtained.'

'Isn't there? Have you ever tried the effect of a strong will? Have you ever *willed* you will be this, that, or the other, and found that you became what you willed? Now, why not will that you will be young? Tell me that.'

The Professor looked up at the burly Australian glowing with health and vitality, 'with muscles and sinews of iron,' and then down at his own shrunken figure, and heaved a prodigious sigh. 'Ah! if it—it were—practicable,' he said wistfully; 'but you cannot take away the years.'

'Can't you? Doesn't the Scripture tell us "all things are possible to him that believes," and isn't old age in a very great measure a matter of temperament alone? Are we not all of us more or less just as old as we feel? Will you will to be young again: say, thirty while you are about it? A great difference between thirty and sixty? So much the better. But you aren't sixty yet, and at our age, my boy, we make the most of a year. Besides, as my poor old governor used to say, it's no use crossing a bridge until you come to it. *Set the clock back*, Wentworth—that's what it is after all; and if you can (it will help the cure), get into a little old society.'

'Old?'

'Yes, old! You are always with young men in your classes, and no doubt they look upon you as an old fogey, and you have got to meekly accept their verdict. Go to some folks older than yourself, and in their eyes you will still be young.'

The Professor smiled acquiescence. Already he felt as if his youth was beginning to be renewed.

CHAPTER II.

THE very next morning the Professor commenced his bicycle lessons. With figure inclined obliquely and affectionately towards his instructor, and hands grasping the handle-bars with a despairing grip, he patrolled up and down a secluded lane at the back of his house, while his housekeeper watched him from an upper window, and murmured, with a pitying smile, 'Poor old gentleman!' It took him a long time to master the machine, but the exercise and the fact of having a new interest did him so much good that his tutor's frequent remarks to the effect that he could not expect to learn as quickly as a *young* man did not depress him.

In the early summer he could ride anywhere; and, reviving his old hobby of taking brasses, he coursed the country armed with heel-balls and transfer-papers in search of these treasures of the antiquary. On one of these occasions, at a little out-of-the-way church, which probably owed its richness in brasses to its secluded position, he found a young woman of a kindred spirit with himself in possession of a Crusader's tombstone.

Mutual amenities followed, and before the Professor left the musty old church they had got to be quite like old acquaintances.

He rode home full of anticipation of the morrow, when more impressions were to be taken.

'If I were only a young man,' he sighed as he neared home and thought of his desolate hearth. Then he remembered his promise to his old schoolfellow, and cheered up. After all, was he not thirty in spirit, with only occasional lapses into fifty-eight?

There was a letter awaiting him at his home. It was from an octogenarian uncle who lived somewhere in the suburbs of London, and ran as follows:

'Pall Mall Club, *June 6th*, 19—.

'My Dear William,—The lease of my house in which I have lived for fifty odd years is now expired, and I am anxious to find another to my liking. In the meantime, can I come and stay with you for a few weeks? I shall be no trouble; I am outdoors

most of my time, and have my own amusements when in.—Your affectionate uncle,

'HENRY WENTWORTH.'

The Professor felt rather taken aback. Like all old bachelors, he had a rooted dislike of things being put out of their ordinary course. But he could not be so unkind as to refuse his uncle; and, after he had written off to welcome him, recalled as the reward of self-sacrifice that a little elderly society was to form part of the scheme of his rejuvenation.

Uncle Henry duly arrived, accompanied by three dogs, a parrot, two Japanese guinea-pigs, and a tame rat. He was a jovial, hearty old fellow, on the upper side of ninety, and as full of spirits and energy as a youth.

'Why, William my boy, how gray you have got!' was his greeting to his nephew, who stood watching the unloading of the pets with mute dismay. 'You've no business to be gray at your age,' continued the old gentleman, and the novel assertion quite took away the vexation the Professor was experiencing at the idea of his house being turned into a private menagerie.

'Oh, I'm not very young, uncle,' he replied, smiling.

'Nor very old, are you?' retorted his uncle blithely. 'Look at me, Bill, as lusty as a trout and as brisk as a four-year-old. Not young! Well, then, all I can say is, you ought to be.'

The Professor felt ashamed of his chimney-corner ways before Uncle Henry had been twenty-four hours under his roof.

The old gentleman was so cheerful and active, so full of solicitude for the welfare of his live-stock and of interest in up-to-date affairs, that his nephew realised as he had never done before what an old fossil he had been all these years.

'Fancy your having had to take to glasses,' remarked Uncle Henry one day. 'Sad thing for a lad like you.'

He wrote a clear, clerkly hand himself without the aid of spectacles. 'But you pore too much over your studies; that's what it is, depend upon it. What a pity you haven't got some pets to amuse you! Why, you haven't even got a dog or a cat, have you?' he added pityingly.

'Not even a dog or a cat,' replied his nephew.

The old gentleman was up at unearthly hours in the morning, trotting about all day, in and out, seeing after his *protégés*. And the Professor was not surprised that his housekeeper gave him notice very soon. Nor was he so dismayed as he would have been a short time ago.

The bicycle progressed amazingly. Now and then Uncle Henry would come to the gate to see him start, and say warningly, 'Don't overdo it, Bill. Don't overdo it. You young fellows are so heedless. Take it steady;' and the Professor, who had been persistently willing himself to be thirty years of age, would wave his cap jauntily and spin along with spirits light as air.

Already Rat's cure was working wonders.

'William, my boy,' said Uncle Henry one day when he had been dilating on the advantages of a new house he had taken on a lease which suggested a patriarchal length of days—'William, you should get married. It must be precious dull for you when I am not here.'

'It is rather,' was the reply.

'Choose a nice wife, laddie; but take time and consider, and I'll come and dance at your wedding. Seems to me you haven't lived out half your days, poking along here by yourself.'

'I don't think I have either,' replied the Professor, and he went quickly to oil his bicycle previous to brass-taking expeditions in the country.

. . . . . .

Uncle Henry left soon after with all his appurtenances, and his nephew felt the house very dull without him. He went brass-hunting more assiduously than ever, and one day on his return was met by his housekeeper with a request to speak to him.

'Certainly,' answered her master, who looked twice the man he did when his old schoolfellow discovered him moping in his study. His eye was clear and bright, his complexion ruddy, and he had a general air of alertness.

'I've been thinking, sir,' said the housekeeper respectfully, 'that now that your uncle and all that "happy family" of his is gone, I might stop on if you was willing.'

'Thank you,' said the Professor. He stroked his chin thoughtfully and grew exceedingly red. 'You are very good, Mrs Pickforth; but I shall not require your services. The fact is,' he added, coughing rather nervously, 'I am about to get married.'

'I'm sure I wish you joy, sir!' replied the housekeeper, curtsying. But as she turned away in dudgeon she muttered, rather louder than she intended, 'There's no fool like an old fool, after all.'

The Professor heard her; but as he unrolled his latest impressions of a sepulchral brass that had taken an extraordinary time to accomplish, he smiled happily to himself.

Whatever he had been in the past, he knew he was a wise man now.

MEMORY AWAKENED.

As a deep cavern'd pool that the great sea
But rarely reaches with its incoming spray,
My thoughts of thee are still, from day to day,
Emotionless and calm, from anguish free.
But, lo! one starlit night in early spring,
With awful fury rush the crested waves,
Filling the shallow pools in hidden caves
And rocky barriers fiercely conquering.
Thus surging in upon my quiet breast
Come memories of passion and of pain,
Of throbbing joy, of anguished prayers in vain;
Hopes that enraptured, terrors that oppressed.
But after tumult comes a blessed rest,
The waters sink, and there is calm again.

HOPE LETHBRIDGE.

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TALKS WITH GIRLS.

By KATHARINE BURRILL.

THE GARDEN OF FRIENDSHIP.

WHAT will you plant in your garden? If you have just left school it will probably be a vast wilderness of Forget-me-nots, very pretty, very sentimental, and—very unlasting. If the soil is well prepared for real Friendships, you can look out for a few good-growing, hardy, reliable plants to take the place of the poor little Forget-me-nots when they, their 'Mizpah' rings, their undying devotion, and their interminable letters written on exercise-paper, fade and fade, and finally dwindle into a Christmas card once a year if you can remember where they live! You cannot remember Sally's married name; but what vivid recollections you have of the day when you were told that you could neither stay with her nor invite her to pay you a visit! The Olympians had so decreed it, and like wise Olympians kept their reasons to themselves. How inconsolable you were; how you wept; how intensely you loathed the Olympians; with what even greater intensity did you love Sally! If only misplaced affection and wasted energy could be stored up and let out in judicious quantities when we wanted them! If we could only tap a keg of energy, and say, 'Please, let me have the amount of force I expended in misery the day I was not allowed to go to tea with the Perkinses!' Did you ever have an extra day and when you did not want it? If you sail across the world by Cape Horn you will have a day at sea over and above what you bargained for. Like most things in this life, it comes just when you least care for it. But ever afterwards, when working hard against time, or packing up to go to the country, how vainly you will long for that one extra idle day!

I suppose affection really is not misplaced nor wasted even if lavished on what appears to be an unworthy object. The old lady who sat up for several nights with a sick parrot undoubtedly sacrificed her own comfort and her nights' rest, and it is certainly better to love a parrot, a pug-dog, or a Persian cat than to care for nothing at all. Every time you think of others and care for others you are educating your own heart in the art of Loving; so, after all, schoolgirl friendships are not without their uses. Indeed, some of them last through a lifetime, and instead of the little Forget-me-not patch dying and being rooted up, it strengthens and grows till it is a great, tall plant. A great deal is said nowadays in favour of schools where girls of rather different social standing mix together, though no one would care to see a return of the 'Select Seminary for the Daughters of Gentlemen,' I rather doubt it being a good thing for girls to make great friends *in school* and not to be able to continue their friendship *out of school*. A friend of mine who *did* go to a school where, though the education was excellent, the company was varied, well remembers the tortures she suffered when told a certain child could not come to tea. Alas! she had given little Miss Snips the invitation without consulting the powers that be. What was to be done? Covered with shame and humiliation, not daring to say that the invited one was even now almost at the gates, the unfortunate child tore down the avenue, and when little Snips, gorgeous in curled ringlets and its party frock, appeared ('all eager for the treat'), gasped out, 'Oh, please, please, go away! Oh, do go away; you can't come to tea!' After more than twenty years that afternoon is a miserable memory. Childish sorrows are very real at the time, and when later the Snips Family left the neighbourhood for Australia, my poor friend was again most unhappy, quite thinking the departure on a perilous voyage for a strange and far-off land a direct outcome of her frustrated hospitality. Had these children been as friendly in their homes as at school this tragic episode could not have occurred.

When you tell a girl she is not to make friends with this or that school companion because she is in a different social position, or not in the same

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'set' (hateful word!), you lay an early foundation of snobbishness that may take years to eradicate. Girls, especially little girls, are only too ready to be snobs. It's a harmless, honest form of snobbery, chiefly connected with clothes, none of the subtlety of advancing years about it; Lady Adeliza in a shabby hat is not nearly so impressive as Miss Grits the grocer's daughter in a 'confection' of velvet and feathers. If any girl feels particularly uppish and pleased with her *hochwohlgeboren* little self, let her read Hans Andersen's story, *Children's Prattle*. Perhaps in the future she would remember that it was not the well-born daughter of the Chamberlain, nor rich Miss Petersen—nay, not even the daughter of the author who could 'put everybody in the newspaper,' who became great and famous, but the little boy who was 'so poor and mean' that he could only peep at the happy, gaily dressed children through a chink in the door. We never know what we miss by being too grand, nor how often we flatter nobodies in the parlour and leave Thorwaldsen standing in the passage. Listen to what Mrs Chapone says about friendship—Mrs Chapone, the correspondent of that Semiramis of Hammersmith, whose parting gift to her pupils was *the* 'Dixonary:' 'In the choice of your friends, have your principal regard to goodness of heart and fidelity. If they also possess taste and genius, that will still make them more agreeable and useful companions.' I rather doubt genius being a 'useful companion;' Pegasus is an uncomfortable animal for an ordinary stable, though of course it is most agreeable if a genius takes any notice of us. However, we are not to look out for genius and taste first; there is something else that matters more, something that will last when the other things fade away.

A fair face will wither, a full eye wax hollow,
But a *good heart*, Kate, is the sun and the moon—
Or rather the sun and not the moon, for it shines
Bright and never changes, but keeps his course truly.

Many charming, brilliant acquaintances you may have—the tulips and hollyhocks of your garden; but remember to have at least one good-hearted friend, honest, upright, and true, who 'never changes,' who will stand by you in a rainy day and rejoice with you when the clouds disappear and the sun shines out once more.

I sometimes think it is easier to find a sympathising friend than a rejoicing one. People are more ready to produce the Walrus's pocket-handkerchief than to take down the fiddle and the bow and accompany our Pæans of joy and thankfulness. It is wonderful with what equanimity we can support the troubles and sorrows of other people. When Dame Fortune, after persistently passing your door, comes to *them* with both hands full, it is just a little difficult to be in an entirely jubilant frame of mind. 'Wretched Meritorious B.' can hardly help being slightly envious of 'Happy Undeserving A.' I think your real friends show up better when your luck is good than when it is bad. There are some people who seem to adore you as long as the world is kicking you. Get upon your feet, no longer want them to shake their heads over your misfortunes, and they seem to have nothing left to say. Fair-weather friends have a bad name. Poor dears! they are not nearly so aggravating as the friends who are only really happy when they are holding an umbrella over you. They are like those other excellent people who are always telling you how they stood up for you. 'I wasn't going to hear you run down, dear; I said you were my friend, and I should stick up for you. You can't help losing your temper, I know; but I wasn't going to let those Brooks girls say so.' Well-Meaning takes her departure quite pleased with herself, and leaves you, if you are at all human, foaming at the mouth.

Then she said, 'If you had heard me yestereve, I'm sure, my friend,
You would say I am a champion who knows how to defend.'
And she leaves me with the feeling—most unpleasant, I aver—
That the whole world would despise me if it had not been for her.

You ought never to repeat an unkind thing, but if you hear something kind and pleasant and nice, then certainly tell people. It's very grand to say you do not care what any one thinks of you, or whether you are liked or disliked. Certainly, if you prefer it, climb on to a nasty, cold, lonely pillar, and sit proudly on the top by yourself, but—it's a chilly performance! Much better join the circle of Good Folks round the fire, be pleased if they welcome you, and make them like you. I have the very greatest sympathy with Old Man Kangaroo who wanted Nqong to make him 'popular and wonderfully run-after by five this afternoon.' Did we all tell the truth, I believe every single one of us wants to be popular and liked and made much of; some of us may even go the length of wishing we were 'wonderfully run-after.' Alas! I do not know Nqong's address, and it is already half-past four! We all know The Miller of Dee was jolly, and that he sang from morn till night; probably that is the reason he had the place to himself, for the poem does not tell us *how* he sang. I never think it was his want of friends that made him so fearsomely cheery; he particularly tells us that he never expended a groat on lawyers, doctors, or surgeons. Think of it: no doctor's bills! No wonder he was jolly! Small blame to him that he was blithe and gay. A friendless, *unhealthy* Miller would have been a very different thing! Besides, he may have felt rather lonely on long winter evenings; only, of course, having once taken up the 'Care for Nobody, no not I,' attitude, he had to stick to it; the more he longed for some one to come in and have a pipe with him the louder he would shout and sing, just to keep up his reputation.

Young girls are much given to falling deeply in

love with women years older than themselves. They *schwärm* over them, copy their dress and manners, and as far as they can—poor little faithful Copy Cats—make themselves look like the object of their enthusiastic admiration. An immense responsibility lies with the woman who has inspired this affection. She is generally a clever woman, for the stupid rarely collect a crowd of satellites, and she may influence young admirers for great good; on the other hand, she may do them infinite harm. In the dear, far-off 'salad days,' when our judgment is so extremely green, we are rather apt to be attracted by the tawdry, the meretricious, and the flashy. We drink in everything the adored one says as absolute truth, and we are so immensely flattered by the 'boofer lady' (our first-loves are always beautiful!) taking any notice of us that we are ready to go through fire and water for her. We tell her so, seated at her feet in her comfortable drawing-room, almost wishing that the house would go on fire or the pipes burst that we might prove our devotion. The day she asks us to call her by her Christian name we are so uplifted that we tread on air instead of solid Macadam.

As a general rule parents and guardians look upon all this with a good deal of disfavour. Sometimes they are right and sometimes wrong; at the worst it is only silly, and girls must have somebody to 'enthuse' over—only, please, Girls, don't turn your dearly loved friend into a Missis Harris. Of all people she is the most tiresome; no wonder that in her exasperation Betsy Prig arose and said she did not believe there was 'any sich person.' Nearly every one *has* a Missis Harris; but do keep her a little in the background; people get so very tired of hearing one person continually quoted: what they said, what they did, what they wore, even down to what they had for dinner. Some people have a *smart* Mrs Harris; then whatever you do she goes one better: you have a velveteen gown, she has velvet; you set up a one-horse brougham, the Harris family have bought a pair and 'a barouche-landau;' you contemplate a week at Brighton, Mrs Harris has gone to Monte Carlo! Save me not from my friends, but from my friends' friends. It must have been a very amiable Frenchman who wrote, '*Les amis des nos amis sont mes amis.*' Don't expect everybody to love your particular friends as much as you do yourself. I have seen the saying somewhere that if you want to have a friend you must be a friend. Is it easy to be a real good friend? It means thinking of your friend before yourself, and it also means taking a certain amount of trouble. Many people lose their friends because they are either too lazy or too stupid to write letters. I can quite imagine a friendship being broken by book-borrowing. Oh, the books that are never returned, what a big, big shelf they would fill! A certain haziness and mistiness—to call it nothing worse—about money matters may 'lead to a breach.' Absolute accuracy about even stamps should be taught to every girl. If she borrows a penny, make her pay it back; you may give her a shilling next day if you like, but that particular penny should be treated as a business transaction. If you can afford it, give money to your friends should they really require it; don't lend it—'for loan oft loses both itself and friend.' Polonius was a 'rash, intruding fool;' but he talked good sense. 'Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice.' I sometimes wish girls were not so very talkative and given to pouring out confidences indiscriminately. It does not matter when it is their own twopenny-ha'penny secrets and silliness; but very often they talk of family affairs, home troubles and difficulties, things which they have no business to speak of unless to a really old friend, one of those whose 'adoption tried' makes us 'grapple them to our souls with hooks of steel.'

There are old friends whom we love more as the years go on: the oaks in our garden against which we can firmly lean, knowing they are goodly trees that will neither bend nor break. But we must be oak-trees also; we must love our friends really and truly, love them through thick and thin, through good report and evil report, feel towards them as David Copperfield felt towards Steerforth. I know Steerforth was a very ordinary stagey villain, that his conduct to poor, flute-playing Mr Mell was that of a cad; and yet—and yet—isn't it rather pathetic? 'Daisy, if anything should ever separate us, you must think of me at my best, old boy!' Think of me at my best: is not that what we want every one to do, to think of us when we were touching the heights, not when our feet were in the mire? Ah! let us think of the best in people, and believe that in every one, sometimes hidden, sometimes overgrown with weeds, there is a best—a lingering flash of that glory we bring with us 'from God, who is our Home.' And when we love, let it be with no reservations but with our whole heart. Let us say with David, 'You have no best to me, Steerforth, and no worst. You are always equally loved and cherished in my heart.' The day came, we know, when Copperfield was very glad he had made that answer. Surely, surely we are always glad and thankful when our last words have been those of love and friendship. And, oh! why—why, in this little, little life should they ever be anything else? 'Be Pitiful, be Courteous,' be very, very loving. Give all the time of your best—your sympathy, your love, your consideration, yourself. I once read somewhere a little Booklet called, if I remember rightly, *Respect the Burden*. We all carry Burdens, a load on our shoulders that can be seen, or a load in our hearts that can *not* be seen; of your charity give us a smile and a kind word.

In your beautiful Garden of Friendship that you all wish to have, find room for the common little weed-plants that no one takes any notice of, that are gasping and dying for one little drop of the water of gentle kindness and encouragement. It costs so little to be kind to people; if you even

smile instead of frowning it means a great deal. 'A Happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note.' Be happy and make others happy. If you are lucky enough to make friends easily, spend a little time with the people who are difficult to know and who are shy and diffident. Such a big heart sometimes lives in a very dull, shy body! If your friends are to mean a great deal to you, you must mean a great deal to them; you must be worth loving before you are loved. Sometimes people care for us whom we can't be bothered with; you cannot make friends with every one, but don't repulse them unkindly. Surely you can spare them a few minutes.

Sad as it may be to think of, there are those who were once friends whom we no longer care for. You cannot help it. People grow away from each other; their outlook becomes wider, their sympathies greater; how can they still feel the same to the small-minded? The narrow views, the hopeless impossibility of making people understand! You wonder how you ever could really have been friends. It is no pleasure to meet; you have nothing in common; your patched-up affection does not ring true; you can be very kind, glad when good fortune comes to them, but—you cannot love them.

What shall we do with our dead—
The dead who have not died—
Who meet us still in the very paths
Where they once walked by our side?
Not those that we love and mourn,
At rest on a distant shore,
But the lost yet living women and men
Whom we loved—and love no more.

There are shroud and flower and stone
To hide the dead from our sight;
But these are the ghosts that will not be laid,
They come 'twixt us and the light;
And the heaven loses its blue,
And the rose has worms at the core,
Because of the living women and men
Whom we loved, and love no more.

To think of any one you no longer love is sorrow indeed. How different the feeling we have for those whom we still love so dearly, so truly, though we can no longer shake the kind hand nor hear the kind voice! We cannot always mourn, but I do not think we forget. There are some of the dear dead friends who are always with us; who help us with an invisible presence as truly as they did when they were here. Do they know when we are battling with the waves or when we are safe in calm waters? I like to think they do, and that in all their happiness they spare a thought for the Toilers in the Plains. Sometimes it takes twenty years for the young to realise what they have lost, and then the dear, great-hearted, patient men and women we were not old enough to understand grow very near and very dear. We cannot always go to their graves with wreaths of flowers, and they would not wish us to always weep—but—we can remember.

You come not as aforetime to the headstone every day,
And I who died I do not chide because, my friend, you play,
Only in playing think of him who once was kind and dear,
And when you see a beauteous thing, just say 'He is not here.'

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXII.—WHAT HAPPENED AT CROWLAND.

THE long hollow in the field, with the small quantity of muddy water in the bottom, was by no means the kind of place where one would expect to find a treasure concealed.

The fields around that neglected churchyard were uneven, where the foundations of the monastic buildings were now overgrown with rank grass and nettles, and in the centre was this hollow where undoubtedly the pond had once been.

Facing us there ran across the eastern boundary of the field a line of beeches, and then, beyond, the broad, bare, misty fenland, treeless almost as far as the eye could reach, flat, inhospitable, and uninteresting. Like the Maremma, with which I was so familiar in Tuscany, there lay over everything a light mist—that miasma which in Italy is so deadly to the peasantry—and yet even more barren and more cheerless was it than the wide marshes on the road to Rome. The old windmill, with broken sails and roofless outbuildings, stood forth, the most prominent object in that flat, unbroken landscape, a pitiful relic of the days when it paid to grind corn, before the advent of steam machinery; while clustered on the north side of the abbey were rows of old-fashioned cottages, mostly built of the stones of the monks' houses thrown down by Cromwell. The quiet old village of Crowland is still far from the railway, and modern progress has therefore been slow in reaching it.

As I stood beside that weedy hollow with my companion, I was bound to admit that although old Godfrey Lovel might have inhabited the monastery for eighteen years or so, and that although his chronicle might be proved to be correct on comparison with contemporary history, yet his statement regarding the distance of the fish-pond from the grand altar was incorrect.

Walter pointed out that we had measured from a spot where we merely surmised the altar to have

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been, and therefore we might have mistaken the distance. Nevertheless, we gazed about us in uncertainty. We alone knew the existence of treasure there, being in possession of a secret lost to the world ever since the year of grace 1538.

Was not that in itself sufficient incentive to cause us to make a search?

'This is evidently where Godfrey Lovel hid the Borgia jewels,' remarked Walter Wyman, referring to my transcript of the secret record, which he held in his hand. 'But he apparently dragged the casket out of the pond on the night before his departure for Scotland.'

'Leaving the abbey treasure still hidden,' I added.

'Certainly,' he said. Then rapidly referring to my transcript, he added: 'As far as I can make out, the silver altar and the three chests full of treasure hidden from Cromwell's men were not placed in the same lake as the Borgia jewels. Old Godfrey was clever enough not to suggest that, fearing that the casket he himself had secreted might be discovered by some prying person. You see he says that the abbey plate and jewels were buried "at the opposite end to where, through many years, my own treasyre lay well concealed." Again he says: "Once I heard rumour that Southwell intended to pump out the lakes." He speaks in the plural, thus showing that there were more than one fish-pond at this place. Of course, they've since been filled in, and this ground made comparatively level over the old foundations.'

I glanced at the passages he referred to, and saw that his surmise was correct. There were certainly more than one pond there in Godfrey's day, and although the Borgia jewels were hidden in the water one hundred and thirty-one paces south-east of the grand altar, yet the record did not actually allege that the abbey plate was submerged in the same lake, but at the opposite end. That would be south-west of the grand altar.

I pointed this out to my friend, and, both turning at the same moment, we saw the glint of sunshine upon water at the opposite corner of the rough and broken field, level with the clock-tower, and abutting upon the road which skirted the village itself.

Together we eagerly approached it, first, however, returning to the spot where we had fixed the whereabouts of the main altar, and counting the paces towards it. I counted them as one hundred and twenty-nine, while Walter made them one hundred and thirty-two.

The pond was big, full of dark water, and weedless, showing it to be of considerable depth. It had escaped our notice when we entered the abbey grounds, and we both saw that although it was now bounded on one side by the high, black tarred fence of a cottage-garden, and at the end by some red-brick farm outbuildings and hayricks, it had nevertheless once been of considerable dimensions — undoubtedly the fish-pond of the monks from which they caught their Friday fare.

Once it had undoubtedly been well kept and cared for, but to-day the cattle grazing on that weedy ground drank from it, for round the mud were prints of hoofs.

'This is it, no doubt,' exclaimed Wyman, again referring to the record. 'You see it says "the pond was deep and dried not in summer, being fed by several springs." This one is of fresh water, while the other is stagnant. If the treasure has not already been found, it is most likely sunk deep in the mud here.'

We both gazed upon the unruffled surface of the water glittering beneath the sun, wondering in which part had been the centre of the original pond. At present the pond was not more than twenty feet across and perhaps fifty feet long. Its previous dimensions had, of course, been much greater, for it must have extended nearly the whole length of the abbey if, as seemed so probable, the depression on the east side of the field had been in connection with it.

Of course, we had at once seen that the abbey and monastic buildings had originally spread over all the fields southward, eastward, and northward; but we had here sufficient evidence of the existence of the ponds, the hiding-place of the treasure.

A flock of rooks were lazily circling around the tower, and as we stood there in silence at the edge of the pond the deep-toned abbey bell rang out the hour.

'I cannot see how we can search here without its being known,' Wyman remarked at last. 'How are we to pump out this pond and dig out the mud secretly? Why, the whole village would be here in half-an-hour if we attempted it.'

'I am quite of your opinion,' I answered. 'And I would point out further that until we are aware of where the *centre* of the pond was it is no use searching at all. My idea is that the spot where the treasure lies is not beneath the water, but in another place midway between here and the other pond—a place that has since been filled up with the débris when the abbey was destroyed. As you see, the ground has practically been levelled, yet at one time nearly the whole of this field was a deep pond. Recollect that there were sometimes as many as seven hundred monks here; therefore they required good-sized fish-ponds. No; I feel confident that if we ever do discover the treasure, we shall find it somewhere about the centre of this field.'

'Which means that we've a lot of excavating to do, and that we must disclose our secret to the whole countryside—even if we were successful in obtaining permission from the lord of the manor, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, or whoever owns the land.'

'It means all that,' I said, 'and more. It means that if we do go to work without knowing the exact spot where old Godfrey and the abbot con-

cealed the silver altar and the three chests full of plate we may continue our investigations until Doomsday, and achieve nothing except the inevitable reputation of having made arrant fools of ourselves.'

'But how can we know the exact spot?' inquired Wyman, who was nothing if not practical.

'By this plan, most probably. The other plan undoubtedly refers to Threave Castle, in Scotland; therefore, what more likely than that this one should record the exact spot where the chests were submerged?' and I glanced at the tracing of the roughly drawn diagram with its crooked lines and puzzling numerals. 'If we could only discover the key!' I added wistfully.

'I think it would be wise, seeing that we can carry our investigations here no farther at this point, to ascertain who is the proprietor of this land and other facts for our future guidance. I notice that the writer of this guide-book is the rector, the Reverend Henry Mason. Why not call on him and make some antiquarian inquiries?'

To this I at once assented, and a quarter of an hour later we were seated in the rector's cosy study under the shadow of the abbey walls. He was a short, elderly, spectacled gentleman of very affable manner, and full of information upon the subject which interested us.

Finding us interested in the history of the abbey, he produced from his bookshelves several rare volumes, including Felix's *Life of St Guthlac*, Histories of Crowland by Gough, Nicholls, and Canon Moore, and a volume of Cole's collection of manuscripts which contained many notable extracts from the abbey registers. These interested me most of all; and while Wyman chatted with the rector I scanned the pages, finding references to the silver altar and the golden cups and chalices of which we were now in search.

My friend made some casual inquiries regarding the field which we had just been over, whereupon the rector said:

'The old fish-ponds were originally there, but have since been filled in with rubbish and fallen stones. Traces of the ponds, however, still remain. You may, perhaps, have noticed them. In that field, too, at the beginning of the century, a fine silver cup was dug up by a workman while getting out some of the old stones with which to build a cottage. It was claimed by the lord of the manor, and is now in the possession of the Marquis of Exeter at Burghley.'

'There may be some more,' I suggested, laughing.

'More than likely,' replied the clergyman. 'According to a popular legend, a great treasure is buried somewhere hereabouts, but no one has yet been able to find it.'

'Have they tried?' I asked.

'Oh, of course, the place must have been searched and dug over many times without success,' was his response. 'Not, of course, of late. I have known Crowland for the past sixty years, and no search has been made in my time.'

'Whose permission would have to be obtained if operations were commenced on a serious scale?' I inquired, as though suddenly interested in this popular legend.

'My own,' was his response. 'The paddocks outside the churchyard wall are my private property. The last time search was made appears to have been in 1721, for in the register there is an entry of nine shillings having been paid to four men for digging in search of the supposed treasure. A note is added that nothing was discovered of any great value.'

'Well,' I said, 'the legend is certainly interesting, and I for one would like to make investigations some day, if you would allow me.'

'You are quite welcome, providing you replace all that you excavate,' he answered. 'Of course, it will require time, money, and a good deal of patience. Besides, it will not do for the villagers to know your object, otherwise you 'll have a constant crowd of onlookers. When would you suggest making a start?'

'Ah! I must consult with my friend Captain Wyman here,' I said. 'At present I have a good many engagements. A little later—perhaps. But, of course, this is in strictest confidence.'

'Very well, Mr Kennedy,' he said. 'If you really intend to investigate in earnest, I shall be most happy to render you assistance.'

We remained with him a short time longer, and then walked back to the George Hotel, a small, old-fashioned place, where our driver had put up the horse, and took luncheon together in a cosy, old-fashioned room overlooking East Street, the narrow thoroughfare leading from the curious triangular bridge to the abbey.

This hotel was, we found, one of the very few in England which had not been spoilt by modern progress. The dishes were excellent country fare; but the one fact that impressed itself upon us was that the plate on the table was all early Georgian silver.

As far as we had gone everything had turned out well. The local legend appeared to bear out what was written in The Closed Book, and the fact that we had made a friend of Mr Mason, the rector, was also highly gratifying.

We had been consuming cigarettes with our glasses of old port—served in the old-fashioned style on the bare polished table—and I had risen to glance out through the wire blind into the sunny street prior to going forth into the ruins again, when of a sudden I heard the voice of some one approaching, and next instant two persons passed the window, and were lost to view almost before I was aware of their presence.

But in that moment, as they passed, I recognised in one—tall, thin, and gray-haired—the Earl of Glenelg, and in his companion—short, ugly, and hobbling—none other than Francesco Graniani, the

hunchback of Leghorn, the man whose strange connection with The Closed Book was such a profound mystery.

'Look!' I cried to my companion. 'Lord Glenelg has passed with the old hunchback antique-dealer who first told me of the existence of the Book. Why are they here—why has Graniani travelled all the way from Italy if not to seek the abbey treasure?'

'If you're not mistaken, Allan,' answered my friend, jumping up and joining me at the window, 'then you may be certain that the missing page from the Book contains directions for the recovery not only of the casket up in Scotland, but of the hidden gold here. They have no idea we are here, that's evident. But that they know more than we do is equally clear.'

'But why is Graniani over here?' I queried.

'He has been brought over, no doubt, because he possesses some key to the hiding-place. The whole affair seems to grow more and more bewildering.'

ONE ASPECT OF THE RUSSO-JAPAN WAR.

THERE can be little question that most prominent among the criticisms passed upon the situation in the Far East is the one that may be summed up in this question: What ultimate advantage does Japan stand to gain? And to those who know the Far East the inquiry is none the less sapient because they recognise that the Japanese Government had really no choice but to fight for pre-eminence in Korea, since that is an imperative factor in mere existence for the people of the Island Empire. Nevertheless, the problem does present difficulties. If Japan should prove victorious on land as she has, so far, done at sea, or even, attaining the seemingly impossible, succeed in hurling Russia out of Manchuria—what then? The defence of the extensive Manchurian and Korean frontiers would necessitate the maintenance of the army at full fighting strength, because Russia, working on interior lines, would, when her preparations were complete, be still able to pour a far superior force upon her opponent. Japan's none too elastic finances could ill afford so prolonged a strain as this continual provision for her whole army must entail.

The point, therefore, of real moment in the Far Eastern struggle is future rather than present, though in the clash of arms and the roar of guns this is not easy to realise. What does Japan look to gain eventually? The answer is known to Russian diplomatists for the simple reason that, following the long-established but oft-neglected rule that in the making of history measures count for less than men, they have made it their business to understand the men in whose hands lie the shaping of destiny.

It is many years, in fact before the war of 1894, since the idea of a China-Japanese alliance first found its way into the unpublished, but not altogether silent, programme of Japan. In the lifetime of the retrogressive and pro-Russian Li Hung Chang it was clear that no such policy could reach fruition. And when that veteran on his deathbed dictated a message to the Empress recommending her to appoint Yuan Shih-Kai in his stead, there were not wanting those who believed the Japanese alliance to be indefinitely postponed. For at Tokio it was remembered that Yuan, then Chinese Resident at Seoul, had urged upon his Government to send troops to Korea at a time when Li still hoped to stave off war by compromise and negotiation. But this very natural fear soon disappeared as Yuan in his new position began more and more to give evidence of the disinterested patriotism which would have none of Russia's bribes, and to indicate with increasing precision his own progressive views and his intention to act with the great Viceroys for the reform of China. The remarkable ability which advanced Yuan to his present exalted position as first statesman of the Celestial Empire at the unprecedentedly early age of forty-eight is all too little appreciated among Englishmen. Combined with tact of such high order that he was able to retain friendly relations with the late reactionary leader Yung-Lu, with the faction of that unprincipled scoundrel Li-lien, and also with the Yangtse Viceroys at one and the same time, this ability has advanced Yuan to a position of power and influence in the Far East greatly exceeding that wielded by any other single individual. At the present time he possesses the complete confidence of the Progressive party, the friendship of that somewhat uncertain old lady the Dowager Empress, and the trust of the young Emperor, who may one day become a real factor in the problem. What is hardly less important, though very much less appreciated, is the influence which he is said to have acquired with the little-known tribes and brigands of Manchuria, whose doings under Tulensan, the De Wet of the East, are likely to become presently an even more considerable thorn in the Russian military side than they already are.

Now, this account of Yuan Shih-Kai, though apparently in the nature of a digression, is really entirely germane to the initial question: What does Japan look to gain eventually? She looks to alliance with China against the Power whose aggressions constitute an increasing menace to them both. In the character of the Chinese statesman she finds the strongest encouragement for the fulfilment of a policy which unlucky circumstances and adverse

personalities have hitherto combined to postpone. Something like eighteen months ago—more rather than less—Japan's leading journalist, Motosada Zumoto, was at pains to place before his countrymen the arguments which went to show that China might prove the most useful of all allies in the not distant future. He dealt chiefly with the indications of Chinese revival, because the general public of Japan, taking its cue from European opinion, was inclined to suppose the Chinese Empire a hopelessly effete and decaying Power, devoid in any case of the capacity for recuperation. Mr Zumoto's article attracted no attention at home, and even in the Orient was passed over among Europeans as an interesting, thoughtful disquisition indeed, but of no immediate concern, and a trifle over-optimistic. But the points it emphasised are worth recall. They may be grouped under four heads:

1. The growing ascendency of Yuan Shih-Kai the reformer, which tended to shake the Chinese Government out of its dependence on Russia.

2. The creation of 'the army of Yuan,' some twelve thousand strong, which proved what a single masterful administrator could make out of Chinese 'braves' in a short time. This body of troops, now stationed in northern China, is regularly paid, properly equipped, disciplined on European lines, and very fairly efficient. Most remarkable of all, corruption seems unknown.

3. The experience of Japan herself of the impossibility of stopping short at modernising military things. Western methods entering by that route, perhaps by reason of necessity, inevitably compel progress in allied directions, till in ever-widening circles they touch the whole national structure. Mr Zumoto was careful to point out that but for faith in the universal application of this theory, Japan would be the last nation to encourage the westernising of the Chinese army, which, unchecked by other civilising agencies, would only become a serious menace to Japan.

4. Educational reforms. White people are apt to underrate the progress that is being made in this direction. The bulk which has to be leavened by progressive ideas is so enormous that the results, after a decade of effort, remain almost imperceptible. Nevertheless, gather together all the isolated steps actually taken, and it will be seen that way is really, if slowly, being made. Western science, arts, and literature are included in the curriculum of Peking University and the 'temporary' schools. Japanese and other foreign instructors and textbooks are increasingly employed. Admission to the Civil Service, once rigidly closed to all but the classic *literati*, is now open, though grudgingly, to the graduate who passes moderately in the classics and brilliantly in modern knowledge. These things, it is true, amount to comparatively little; but they do indicate educational reform among a people who, it must be remembered, are, though slow-moving, particularly intelligent.

These facts form the basis of the Japanese opinion that China will presently become an eminently desirable ally. Towards the accomplishment of that end the Island Empire hopes and expects to be entrusted with the reorganisation of the Chinese army and navy.

This plan is favoured by Yuan Shih-Kai, who employed a few Japanese officers in the training of his before-mentioned special force; but the fact that Russia, all-powerful in Manchuria, would actively oppose any such scheme has hitherto paralysed his efforts. By the war, therefore, Japan, in causing Russia to 'lose face' with the Chinese, has weakened this objection, and by the exhibition of her own prowess has emphasised her capacity to assist China. Neither lesson is thrown away; while at the same time the authority of Yuan, who has always favoured Japan rather than Russia, is considerably augmented by what is accepted as proof of his prescience.

Given a Japanese-trained Chinese army of practically unlimited numbers, the policy which dictated the advantage of alliance with the Continental Empire becomes fairly obvious. If the Mikado's Ministers succeed in fulfilling their expectation of compelling the retrocession of all or a part of Manchuria, the boundary will be held by an efficient Chinese garrison when the army of Japan returns to its own land. Peace would never be assured if Cossack and Japanese continually faced each other across a narrow dividing line; but the irritation would be obviated if a third party occupied the place of the victors. The two Oriental nations have immense advantages, both political and commercial, to offer each other by alliance, a fact long ago recognised by Japanese statesmen and leaders of public thought, though Mr Zumoto was perhaps the first to familiarise the man in the street with this ideal. The advent of Yuan Shih-Kai has done the rest. Russian diplomatists have all along realised that in this remarkable man they were dealing with the one individual able both to understand the possibilities of the Japanese *rapprochement* and to master the many Chinese factions, which, mutually opposed in all else, were united in the one theory that Russia was the friend, not Japan.

Half the success of the Czar's diplomacy arises from the intimate knowledge acquired by His Majesty's representatives and agents of the men with whom they have to do. This point, previously emphasised, has been but recently comprehended by the Japanese; but, with their usual adaptability, they already recognise the personal equation in foreign politics at something much nearer its true value than do European diplomatists, and the present promising relations with China is the result.

It is quite true that if Russia wait to retrieve her position till her military preparations are perfected and genial summer is on her side, Japan by sheer weight of the enemy's numbers may find it impossible to retain on land the advantage

she will be able to keep at sea; but with the prospect of other developments, such as the determination of China to garrison her own country of Manchuria (which would not, of course, be a declaration of war against Russia), the end of the struggle may be awaited by the friends of Japan with less anxiety than the Continental press thinks possible.

Incidentally it may be remarked that no man knows better than Yuan that it is not always necessary to act if the power and the will to act when necessary are assured.

AUNT MARY.

CHAPTER VII.

THE family party at Grey Gables had assembled in the studio. James Whitworth could smoke his strong cigars there without let or hindrance. He was the kind of man who liked plenty of space.

The candles were lighted on the organ; a large shaded lamp stood in one of the high window recesses; another one glowed on a big oak table. There were flowers everywhere. The artistic beauty of it all—the mellowed oak, the pictures, the carved rafters, the slender figure before the organ—appealed to Whitworth with a strange new force. For the first time in his life he realised what home meant.

And the life and light of it was Kitty. It would all be as the earth without the sun when she was gone. She looked so bright and well this evening! It seemed hard to realise that the red of her cheeks was the flag of death. James Whitworth swallowed a hard lump down.

The soft melody died away in the carved rafters. Miss Bentley declared aloud that Kitty had played enough.

'But I feel so particularly well and strong to-night,' the girl pleaded.—'Uncle Jim, where is that fugue you promised to find for me?'

'My dear child, I am one of the finest promisers in the world,' Whitworth cried. 'I'll go and look at once.'

He went off in his bustling, imperious way. A solitary lamp glowed in the dining-room. Colin Whitworth's musical library lay dully behind the brass trellis-work of the bookcase over the Dutch bureau. With characteristic energy Whitworth tumbled a score of the bound manuscripts on the table. It was also characteristic of the man that he found what he desired. As he bundled the volumes back again a paper slipped out of one of them, a letter in the neat handwriting of his dead brother.

There were words here and there that he could not fail to see. Whitworth's face was very grave as he read. Then he carefully placed the letter where he had found it, and made a mental note of the volume. He puffed mechanically at his cigar, utterly unconscious that it was extinguished.

'Well, here's a pretty discovery!' he said, addressing a stately Romney on the opposite wall. 'Here's a puzzle for a Puritan! Well, the truth must be told, cruel blow as it will be to poor Walter. Still, that lad is certain to make his way in the world. And if I tell the truth? Stop.'

He frowned hard at the serenely unconscious Romney.

'Stop. If ever there was a case of the end justifying the means, it is here. If I speak now, I lose my grip on Mary and Kitty. The dear little gray lady will be in a position to defy me. And Kitty? Well, Kitty must be saved. Yes, I'm pretty sure I'm on the side of the angels in this business.'

He sauntered back to the studio, dangling the faded manuscript in his hand. He did not look in the least like a dark conspirator. With a pleased little smile Kitty began to play. Aunt Mary, by the light of one of the big lamps, was knitting industriously. Whitworth drew up a chair to her side.

'Why are you looking so preternaturally grave?' he said.

Aunt Mary's lips moved for a moment. She was counting her stitches. Whitworth had to repeat the question before he got any reply.

'I am in great trouble,' she said. 'Dr Evans came up just before dinner. I find that you have been bullying him unmercifully.'

'Nothing of the kind. I went to his house to-day, as I told you I should, and gave him a piece of my mind about Kitty. He was disposed to be obstinate, but I soon knocked that nonsense out of him.'

'You found him very firm?' Aunt Mary asked, with a slight smile.

'I found him very pig-headed. But, of course, he hadn't a ghost of a chance with me from the very first. He consented to a consultation with Partridge. I've written to Partridge to come over here to-morrow afternoon, being Saturday. By this time to-morrow we shall have started the new treatment.'

Whitworth spoke as if the whole thing was settled. He might have been the head of the universe. The little gray lady's lips grew rigid.

'I think not,' she said. 'Of course, I shall be deeply interested in hearing what Dr Partridge has to say. But I go no further. From the bottom of my heart, I firmly believe that the best possible means for prolonging Kitty's life are being taken. To make a change now would be nothing but murder. James, I am forced to forbid it entirely.'

'Then you push me to extremes,' Whitworth replied. 'The happiness of two people is at stake. I don't want to be brutal; I don't want to remind you that our little Kitty is doomed to die, because you already know it. The whole thing is in the nature of a delicate and dangerous operation on an expiring patient. If it is successful, she lives; if not, then she dies in any case.'

'You are too strong and wise for me, James. But I object. If God wills it'——

'Well, the retort to that is obvious to any one besides an illogical woman. Now, listen to me, Mary. A few years ago my brother made his will. For the moment his heart was soft to me because he was pleased to consider that I had done a creditable action. He left everything to Walter, and I was to be his trustee till he came of age. He is of age now, and his own master. But Colin also left me guardian to his dear young relative Kathleen Evershed. That puts you out of the count, Aunt Mary.'

Miss Bentley gasped. The smooth melody of the organ softened the voices. The cruel power of the man was gradually unfolding itself.

'You can't do it,' she said. 'There is no reason why. I can prove to you by—— James, James, you are never going to use this cruel advantage?'

'Indeed I am. Call me a brute if you like. It is the only way possible to save the life of that dear little girl opposite. It seems a brutal thing to do after you have so carefully tended her all these years; but I must be firm.'

'I am quite certain that Dr Evans'——

'Will throw you over. Indeed, he has practically done so already. Partridge will turn him inside-out in ten minutes. Try and discount your disappointment, Mary. When that conference comes to an end to-morrow, Evans will be against you. He may be pompous, but he will be plastic.'

Aunt Mary urged her case no further. She knew the resolute nature of her opponent. Her lips were tightly pressed together; she had all the aspect of one who is conquered. And yet her lips were tightly pressed together to guard the secret that struggled for words and freedom behind them.

She was not quite sure yet whether she ought to speak or not. She could not fight off the impression that James Whitworth was acting for the best. There was a terrible element of doubt as to whether he was right and she criminally wrong. But the old-world prejudices of the little gray lady were not to be swept aside like that. And she had a terrible weapon behind her.

Should she unmask her battery? The silver-throated organ had ceased; Walter was talking to Kitty, who looked up radiantly into his animated face. He was speaking of Rome and the wonderful things he was going to do there.

A few words and Aunt Mary could have stripped the happiness from that glowing young animated face, she could have tumbled down the house of cards. But for what end? Merely to bolster up what might prove to be a stupid prejudice. And before long Kitty would be no more. Aunt Mary's lips closed together; the secret was conquered.

'Really, it is dreadfully late,' Kitty cried. 'I can only justify myself by saying that I feel so well this evening, I am afraid that when Dr Partridge comes to-morrow he will decline to regard me as an invalid.'

'So you have heard all about that?' Aunt Mary asked blankly.

'Walter told me. I promised him I would not get excited. But, all the same, it has given me hope. If you only knew how I want to live, what a pleasant world I find it *now*'—— She stopped and smiled unsteadily.

James Whitworth huskily proclaimed the fact that he must have caught a cold somewhere. Walter looked steadily at a picture that he could not for the moment see.

'Go to bed,' Aunt Mary said with amiable ferocity. 'Don't you see it's nearly eleven? We are all silly people together, and I am the silliest of the lot.' She took her candle from the old chest in the hall and marched stiffly upstairs. The silent tears were running down her cheeks. She was beaten and baffled, and yet she was not in the least angry. Nobody could possibly have believed it, but Aunt Mary looked as if she had been doing something to be ashamed of.

CHAPTER VIII.

A PLUNGING horse in a high dogcart cut up the gravel in front of Grey Gables, and a jolly-looking, well-built man clad in tweeds stepped out. He looked more like a prosperous gentleman-farmer than anything else, only there was something about the keen eyes and clean-shaven lips that suggested a successful barrister. But he had a very pleasant mouth, and the gray eyes had a twinkle in them. Dr Partridge brought an air of cheery confidence with him; he was a good doctor to have in the house. Day in and day out he grappled with death, but ever with a smile on his face and a serene confidence in the future.

'Well, Whitworth?' he said breezily.—'Miss Bentley, this is a pleasure I have tried to anticipate for a long time. Do you know, that fellow Whitworth once saved my life.—Dr Evans, I am very glad to meet you. I am taking up entomology. Would you mind imparting some of your learning to a willing pupil?'

Evans went over to the enemy at once under the eyes of Aunt Mary. James Whitworth caught her suggestion of disdain, and winked openly. For the next hour or more the local practitioner did no more than look wise, throwing in an occasional 'Um' and 'Ha!' as dignity required. Walter and his father paced up and down outside for the best part of the hour. It was a trying time, but it came to an end at last.

In the dining-room Partridge was telling a professional story. Kitty was laughing merrily at it with not the slightest sign of the fluttering fear that had poisoned her a while ago. The thick silk scarf had gone from her neck; the three latticed windows were wide open.

'Got a good report?' Whitworth asked with a fine assumption of indifference.

'Of course we have,' Partridge cried. 'Part of one lung is gone, and the other is badly affected; but that 's nothing, bless you!—nothing at all. Still, I 'm glad that my friend Dr Evans decided to call me in. He quite agrees with me that there must be a change of treatment. Before the summer is over Miss Evershed will be a different girl. I 'll pledge my professional reputation on that.'

'Dr Partridge is right,' Evans murmured—'absolutely right.'

'The great thing is plenty of fresh air. Wet or dry, rain or shine, Miss Evershed must be out in it all. She must always be in a room with the windows open; night and day this must not be neglected. Late in the autumn she must go to St Moritz and stay there till the spring. And if she doesn't come back then absolutely cured, why—— Well, I 'm quite sure she will.'

'We are absolutely convinced of that,' Evans said crisply.

Partridge bowed himself out cheerfully, taking the plastic Evans along with him. The little man was none too loath to escape the cold, displeased eye of Aunt Mary. Never had an ally so basely deserted his consort before. From the very first he had made no show, no kind of fight at all.

'It was absolutely disgraceful!' Aunt Mary cried.

'It was amusing,' Kitty laughed. 'Dr Evans's dignity was splendid at first. Then that subtle stroke about the butterflies finished him completely.'

The girl laughed unsteadily. Her eyes were gleaming with unshed tears. Outside, the sun was shining gloriously; there was a cool touch in the air. The reprieve had come, and their hearts were overflowing with gladness. Walter would have said something to Kitty, but she put him aside.

'Not yet,' she whispered. 'I cannot grasp it all yet. Go into the garden and wait for me. To think that I shall always be able to breathe the air in future! I must be alone in my room for a time, Walter. I am going to have a good cry. And then —then I am going down on my knees'——

She turned and was gone. Walter fumbled his way into the garden, across the neat geranium-beds, without the least idea where he was going. Aunt Mary watched quite unmoved the desecration that at any other time would have stirred her to the depths. With an assumption of indifference, Whitworth was trying to light a cigar. It was a long time before either of them spoke.

'Dr Evans'—— Whitworth began. 'I fancy that Dr Evans'——

'James,' Miss Bentley said formally, 'I beg you not to mention that man's name again. In future he and I must be as strangers.'

Whitworth smiled, a slow, exasperating, irritating smile.

'At least, I am very angry with him, James. He was either right or wrong. And the way he deserted me was simply abominable.'

'My dear Aunt Mary, are you sorry or glad that he has deserted you?'

'James, may God send the day when I shall be glad! Fate has taken the matter out of my hands; though, if I had been perfectly honest, I might—— Still, they say Dr Partridge is a great man. It will be an anxious time for me. But that St Moritz trip is out of the question.'

'Why? When Walter and Kitty are man and wife'——

'They will not be so until Kitty is pronounced absolutely cured. And this St Moritz business is part and parcel of the cure. I am absolutely poor, and Kitty is poorer still.'

Whitworth was laughing quietly to himself.

'I shall find a way,' he said. 'When you discover the part that I have been playing in this business you will cut me off with a shilling. At the same time I am going to show you how this trip can be accomplished without loss of dignity to any one. My dear Mary, you would be the happier for the loss of your stiff-necked prejudices.'

Aunt Mary made no demur. She was crying softly to herself. She had been baffled and defeated in all directions; but there was a warm feeling at her heart to which she had long been a stranger.

'I am going to my room,' she said. 'I am not quite myself.'

'Ditto to that,' Whitworth murmured as he looked dubiously at the cigar that he had tried to light in the middle. 'I fancy that a five-and-twenty-mile walk would be about the best cure for my distracted feelings.'

Kitty came down into the garden presently. Her eyes were red and swollen; her cheeks were flushed with the marks of recent tears; but the dark shadow was no longer there. She was going to live and be happy, to be strong and well and buoyant like others of her years; the whole shining world lay before her.

A great weight seemed to have rolled from her shoulders. She had something more than hope to carry her forward. In the kitchen-garden, where the apple-blossoms glowed pink and tender, Walter was patiently awaiting her.

. . . . . .

The days were running their smooth course along. June had come and gone, and the first virgin green of the trees had departed. And as the days passed, so had the white, wan shadows fallen from Kitty's face; the languor had departed from her limbs; there was a healthy flush on her cheeks.

The new cure was progressing splendidly. Long before the summer was over Kitty was walking

with the best of them; she could sit at the organ now without the slightest sense of fatigue. She slept peacefully as a child; the distressing cough was no more than a painful memory.

Autumn had come at last with a touch of frost, followed by warm weather. And still Kitty was going back from the shadows in the valley. Dr Evans openly plumed himself upon the success of the experiment, much to the indignation of Aunt Mary, who had long ago made her peace.

'It's positively shameless of Dr Evans!' she said. 'To hear him talk, any one would imagine that he and not Dr Partridge was responsible for the change.'

'All the same, Kitty is not quite so well to-day,' Whitworth replied. 'I am afraid she is feeling the fog. A year hence it won't matter at all. I telegraphed to Partridge to-day asking his advice.'

Aunt Mary waited anxiously for the reply. It came at last:

'No cause whatever for alarm. In present state of case, dry air essential. Take patient to St Moritz at once, and stay there till April.'

Aunt Mary frowned at the offending telegram, and dropped it amidst the confused artistic litter of the dinner-table.

'It is out of the question,' she said. 'There are no funds. I know what you are going to say, James; but I can't hear of it.'

She swept majestically out of the room towards the studio, where the young people had preceded her. With a slow smile, Whitworth crossed over to the music library above the Dutch bureau.

'Now to explode my little mine!' he murmured. 'It will come in quite dramatically at this point. Now, where did I put that letter? I'm certain it was in Fugue 45 of this volume. I'm sure'——

He paused, and dropped the ubiquitous cigar from his lips.

'Gone!' he cried. 'Stolen! Is it possible that—— No, she could not do such a thing!'

PHOTOGRAPHIC PROGRESS.

PHOTOGRAPHY may be truly described as the favourite pastime or hobby of the times, and one which is unique in attracting the attention of all classes. Its popularity is due, in the first place, to the great convenience presented by the dry-plate and film system, the introduction of which caused quite a revolution in the manner of taking camera-pictures about twenty years ago; in the second place, to the easily manipulated apparatus which has been placed on the market by manufacturers. In the old days, when the photographer was encumbered by heavy apparatus, glass plates, a supply of water, and bottles innumerable, there was much to learn before a man could produce a picture worth looking at. He had to serve an apprenticeship and learn his business step by step. At the present time a photographic aspirant applies at a shop for a camera and a roll of sensitive film, and after five minutes' instruction, which resolves itself into directions to turn a certain handle here and press a button there, issues forth a full-blown sun-artist. He turns his little camera in every direction and takes 'snap-shots,' as he calls them; and it is quite possible, especially if he has a steady hand and a not wholly untrained eye for artistic effect, that he may at his first venture produce a passable picture.

Those who are quite ignorant of photographic matters may be under the impression that a visible picture is produced there and then when the fateful button is pressed or the lens uncovered by some other mechanical device; but it is not so. The sensitive film undergoes no alteration which can be discovered by the eye; the change is quite an invisible one, and has to be made evident by the operation called development; but even in this, which used to be regarded as a somewhat difficult chemical operation, matters have been reduced for the benefit of the amateur photographer to the simplest possible terms. He buys a bottle of ready-prepared developer, swills it over the exposed plate as it lies in a dish under the light of a ruby lamp, and watches the appearance of the image as it automatically peeps forth on the sensitive surface. From a negative thus easily obtained he can by equally simple operations, conducted either by daylight or gaslight, secure as many prints as he may require to distribute among his admiring friends. Sometimes he may have secured a curiosity in the way of a photograph, something unusual or the representation of some episode of common interest which may be worth sending in for the prizes offered by certain manufacturers and others for specimens of work taken by the aid of goods in which they deal. Should he win a few shillings in this way he is apt to be as proud of the distinction as a soldier is of his hard-won medal.

If an experienced photographer were asked whether this kind of pastime contributed in any way to the progress of photography as a branch of science and art he would laugh at the idea. Many of the people who take up photography do so simply as an amusement; it does not with them reach the position of a hobby, for a hobby is generally ridden to death, and its follower gets all he possibly can out of it, and very often this includes a valuable stock of fresh knowledge. The man or woman who rides the photographic hobby-horse will insensibly acquire a knowledge of optics

and of chemistry which, if followed up, may prove eventually to be somewhat more than superficial. The ordinary snap-shottist has no such aim. His camera is a toy, which he has bought because other people have them. When some other toy presents itself he will put his camera on the shelf and buy the new thing.

To meet the modern demand for photographic apparatus which shall be light in weight, extremely portable, pretty in appearance, and requiring in its operation the least expenditure of thought or trouble, inventors and manufacturers have put their resources together with the happiest results. A modern camera designed for the use of a tourist bears very little resemblance to the square mahogany box-like contrivance which was called by the same name. The camera-makers of a bygone period were masters of beautiful cabinet-work, and each instrument would receive the personal attention of the man whose name it bore; and it was a hand-made thing. A very different rule prevails to-day, for the business of camera-making has changed in its methods like nearly all other manufacturing trades. New materials, new metals and alloys, the introduction of machinery for working both wood and metals, have wrought extensive changes, and the new products are totally unlike the old ones. In former times a camera-maker would probably make a dozen instruments at one time, and they would be made of much the same pattern as had prevailed for some years, although little improvements would doubtless be introduced here and there. To-day, if a manufacturer be shown a new pattern or design of instrument, his first thought is to calculate the expense of laying down plant to turn out its various parts automatically. The outlay on these tools may run to several thousands of pounds, so that he must rely upon an output of hundreds of grosses to repay him; and he must sell his goods at a moderate price, bearing only a small profit on each instrument sold, for keen competition meets him at every turn. Beautifully made cameras from Germany and America flood the British market, and the native manufacturer, whilst undoubtedly he has profited by foreign patterns and methods, finds it difficult to hold his own.

Let us examine one of these modern instruments and compare it with what used to be called a camera. It is, to all appearance, a flat leather case which can easily be carried in an outside coat-pocket. But it has a leather handle at one end by which it can be held if preferred. Touch a spring at its side, and a little door opens, which, pulled forward, becomes rigid and forms the floor upon which a bellows-bodied box can be drawn out. By this simple action the camera is made ready for taking a photograph. At the forward end of this floor, or baseboard of the camera, is an ivory scale upon which is marked the length to which the camera must be drawn out to take pictures in good focus at various distances, from ten feet to one hundred. At the same time the details of the picture in front of the camera can be seen in miniature in a tiny appliance at the top of the camera, called a view-finder. At the back of all is concealed a long ribbon of sensitive material, which by a few turns of a handle can be unrolled, so that picture after picture is taken upon the successive portions of it which are brought under the influence of the lens. As to the actual operation of taking the picture, it merely consists in the touch of a button or trigger. One button secures what is called an instantaneous exposure; another controls a time-exposure, one touch opening the lens and another closing it.

So the tourist on photography intent, by the help of this little instrument no more than two pounds in weight, can secure a dozen pictures; and if he carries in his pocket an extra spool of film, which can be exchanged for the exhausted one in daylight, he can take a dozen more. He can send the film so exposed to the dealers to be developed, or he can by the help of another piece of apparatus develop it for himself. There are machines by which a long length of film can be so turned about in the developing fluid that uniform results are brought about. One of the most recent of these can be manipulated in daylight, so that there is no need for the operator to retire to a dark room or use a red light.

As we have indicated, what is generally known as snap-shotting is not conducive to good photography. This is not due to any fault in the apparatus, but rather to the careless work which easiness engenders. Under the old conditions the worker had to think for himself and even prepare his own plates. Under the new he finds that others have done all the thinking for him, have manufactured plates or films ready for his use; he merely has to point his camera in a certain direction, touch a stud or button, and the thing is done. If any one were wishful to take up photography as a serious study, possibly to help him in some other branch of work, we should advise him to obtain a camera of the old-fashioned—not too old-fashioned—pattern, and to make himself master of it. He will then obtain a knowledge of the why and wherefore of its various movements, and will learn much that is valuable regarding the working of a lens under varied conditions. The snap-shottist does not care a rap about such things; he wants to obtain pictures with the least possible trouble; and as to the mystery of their production, it is a matter of no moment to him. His camera is a toy, and a toy is designed to amuse its possessor; he must be amused with it, or he will throw it away and take to something more attractive.

We must not place all amateur photographers in the same category, for among such workers may be found serious students who have helped to introduce valuable improvements into the art-science which they love. All the great advances have, in fact,

been made by amateur photographers. The greatest improvement ever known to photography, the substitution of the dry plate for the wet one, was certainly due to amateur labour. Any one taking the trouble to turn back to the photographic literature of that time would find that the great change was foreshadowed by experiments made with all conceivable substances for holding the sensitive salts in suspension. At last gelatine came to be tried, and it was only after several amateurs had adopted it, and demonstrated its wonderful possibilities, that the professional photographer was, as it were, forced to follow suit.

In the use of celluloid as a support for the gelatine image instead of glass the amateur worker stands almost alone. Celluloid is so much lighter and less bulky than glass that it at once commends itself to tourists and those whose photographic work is out of doors. The professional man in his studio still prefers to use glass plates, which are much cheaper than films, and which possess some advantages which he values. There are other descriptions of films in use besides those of celluloid, and some of these are very highly spoken of. One has the curious property of expanding when wetted to nearly double its former area, and this virtue is much valued by those who, working with a small camera, wish to enlarge their pictures by an easy method. The same result is secured by the cresco-fylma system, in which a solution of fluoric acid is made to detach and expand a gelatine film so that it can be transferred from its original glass plate to a larger one. Enlargement by optical means is also within reach of the amateur; and such enlarged pictures, which can be readily toned by chemical means to a rich brown or red colour, are now made by many, and often find a place on the walls of photographic exhibitions.

The question of permanence is one which has been a serious consideration ever since photography was practised, and the old complaint that camera pictures are ephemeral productions has ceased to trouble workers since the carbon process and the platinum method of printing have placed in their hands the means of securing pictures which are as lasting as the paper upon which they rest. The platinum process has long ago earned the confidence of photographers in this respect; but the carbon method is perhaps not so much practised by amateurs because the impression has existed that its employment is fraught with too many difficulties. This is in reality not the case now that manufacturers supply reliable tissue, ready prepared and sensitised for use, in small quantities suitable for the amateur's needs. By this system a permanent picture in any colour can be obtained, and there is no inherent difficulty in executing the work.

Amateurs far more than professional workers are interesting themselves in the production of photographs in the varied tints of nature, and processes are now available by which such pictures can be obtained both on glass and on paper. Some of these three-colour methods are most attractive; but we must confess that this particular branch of photography is at present in its infancy. The conditions under which the pictures can be obtained are now well understood, and earnest workers have devoted much skill and study to their production. Professional men have mostly turned their attention to the application of the trichromatic method to the printing-press; but as yet, for reasons it is not necessary to enter into here, it has by no means superseded chromo-lithography, to which we owe the coloured poster, the picture post-card, &c. The principle upon which the three-colour method depends is briefly as follows: Three negatives are taken of the original object, each through a differently coloured screen of glass. Positives from these are obtained, and, after being each stained with a suitable aniline dye, are placed together, and the commingling of the three colours reproduces the tints of the original. The process in no way solves the much-discussed problem of photography in the colours of nature; but it can be said that the intensity of the colours used depends wholly upon the action of light. The method as at present practised is open to improvement; but cameras are already made which will take the three negatives simultaneously by the action of one lens. The process is now used by scientific men for the preparation of lantern-slides of natural objects, which before its introduction had to be coloured by hand in a more or less unsatisfactory manner.

Improvements in lenses have kept pace with other advances in the manufacture of apparatus, the most notable being the introduction of the telephoto lens, which gives a much-magnified image of a very distant object. Modern lenses are also made, the component parts of which can be separated so as to give pictures of different foci. One lens can thus be made to do the duty of three; and this, of course, tends to reduce the weight of apparatus carried and to simplify the work of the photographer.

The dry plates which twenty-five years ago were being made experimentally by a few amateurs now represent a very important industry, and there are several large factories each of which has an output which hardly keeps pace with the demand. This was, perhaps, not the case in a summer like that of 1903, in which the wet days far outnumbered the dry ones, and when, therefore, photographic operations were to a large extent impossible. But in a normal season these factories are at work night and day to supply both professional and amateur workers with their first requisite. Most of the factories also coat celluloid films, for which, as we have seen, there is an enormous demand on the part of those who take up photography as a mere pastime and by tourists whose first consideration is reduction of weight in their impedimenta. A large proportion of these plates and films are orthochromatic—that

is to say, they reproduce colours in their true tone-relation to one another. The factories also do a very large business in the preparation of different kinds of sensitive printing-paper for the use of photographers, of which many kinds are made. The most generally used is P.O.P., which means printing-out paper—that is, paper used for ordinary printing in daylight, and made with a coating of sensitive gelatine like the plates and films, only much slower in action. Another paper of somewhat similar character is made for printing by gaslight; but in this case the image is coaxed out by development. Bromide paper is another variety, used mainly for enlarging purposes.

Altogether, we may say that the modern photographer, whether he be a professional or an amateur, is extremely well catered for by various manufacturers, to whom is due in great measure the popularity which this most fascinating branch of pictorial art has attained.

OLD SURVIVALS IN ATTIRE.

IN these days we, meekly and often with some small sense of stupidity, acquiesce in the charge which is so frequently brought against us that in the matter of our dress and the niceties of our attire we are as fickle as the wind, that we invent a new fashion one day and are ready to change it on the morrow; and yet we maintain, on the other hand, that we have a very good reason, so practical are we at all times, for all that we do, and are prepared to allow each item among our habiliments, general and special, to give a reason for its existence. So, then, it will be to the point to take stock of a few of our garments and see to what extent they are really capable of supporting the position taken up. And, to be fair, we will leave out of our consideration a few such sartorial paradoxes as the silk hat, for the which its greatest admirers have a difficulty in finding any excuse save the somewhat feeble one that a gentleman with one upon his head always looks a gentleman, and even the man who has to strain the definition in order to make it fit him has a fair chance of passing with a foot or so of glossy black silk surmounting him, and other things to match.

The two buttons at the back of the waist of every frock and tail coat worn by man to-day will serve as a fit illustration of the assertion that in the matter of dress we know not what we do. Every man would notice the omission at once, and register an immediate complaint, if his tailor sent him home a new garment minus those buttons; but it is ten to one that without such an omission he would hardly know that they should be there, and there is certainly not one man in a thousand now who can tell how they came there or what purpose they serve. Your portly city man, then, with something of the Falstaffian bravado and conceit about him which in these prosaic days he has little opportunity of displaying, will be glad to know that these buttons are affixed to his coat for no other purpose than that his sword-belt may hang securely upon them and not slip along his smooth coat to the ground. This at all events was their original purpose when they were first stitched on to our garments more than two hundred years ago; and, though we no longer carry swords to guard our honour and shield us from attack, neither the tailor nor his customer has been willing to reject these little tokens of the martial spirit which still lingers in our breasts. But having this little display in mind, it is odd to reflect that on the only occasion on which the ordinary city man ever has any use for the steel, which is when he participates in a bout with the foils, he puts on a dress which makes no provision in the way of buttons for the uphanging of the weapon.

Nor can many of us who affect the spat as a covering for our boots tell why we do so, especially as the plea of extra warmth is so weak that it is seldom urged. The spat is a fashion—there can be no doubt about that. How, then, did it come about, and why does it survive? We got the spat from the Highland soldiers, and unconsciously we wear it still in token of our vast admiration for their bravery in general and for the display of it in the Indian Mutiny in particular. When the news came to England of the gallant deeds of these men at Lucknow and elsewhere we were all in a moment anxious to imitate them in some manner which, as according to the old proverb, would sincerely flatter. The kilt was palpably impossible in our English towns and cities, and in a scrutiny of the Highland dress there was nothing so suitable for adoption—so it seemed—as the spat, and so the spat we took. For a time it was quite the rage in the city of London. Every man and every youth made his display of them, and even when the novelty and the remembrance of its origin died away the wearing of the spat continued to this day.

There is a little of English history, again, in the costume of our sailors; some of the most glorious pages of it are written, as it were, on the costumes of every tar in the Royal Navy, though there are few indeed of the officers who are aware of the fact. The black kerchief which the sailor knots about his throat was worn for the first time as mourning for Nelson. Such mourning was not to be quickly or lightly discarded in the navy, and so it was retained from week to week and from month to month, till in the end it became an established custom, and it was thought better not to discard it.

Jack's broad blue collar is older than the famous Admiral, and was worn at the time when sailors plastered their hair into a stiff pigtail with grease and powder; but Nelson and his glory come in again in the bright stripes around this collar, the meaning of which must occasionally have puzzled the close observer. These stripes commemorate the great victories of Trafalgar, Copenhagen, and the Nile.

It puzzles us often, too, to know how it is that for so many different occasions black is considered to be the most fashionable shade for our masculine attire, and not merely fashionable but the only proper one, for which in our society there is no alternative. It may be argued, as it is with the silk hat, that it is so severely respectable; but, if we could accustom ourselves to the idea, the same might be said of white, which would have the advantage of being much less gloomy. Clearly the black is an old fashion; and as for its application to evening-dress, in which it is most of all *de rigueur* now, whilst there was a time when our ancestors might tastefully dress themselves in almost all the colours of the rainbow for the evening, the adoption of black simply came about through a paragraph in a celebrated novel, and it is the latter we have to thank for the fact that we are not now permitted to wear aught but the most solemn garments at the time when we feel, to say the least, more satisfied with all about us and the world in general than at any other period of the day. Bulwer Lytton's novel *Pelham* was the culprit, and it is a letter in this book, purporting to have been written by Lady Frances Pelham to her son, that set the fashion. Lady Frances writes: '*À propos* of the complexion, I did not like that blue coat you wore when I last saw you. You look best in black, which is a great compliment, for people must be very distinguished in appearance to do so.' The man of the day read these lines and weighed them carefully, and what more natural than that he should straightway come to the conclusion that black was the one shade which for evening wear suited him perfectly? As soon as he could, he discarded all his colours and took to it, every man of him.

And why should the clergy always be in black, or at least the rank and file, when their attire might be made so much more to resemble the beauty and purity of a religious life? Martin Luther himself set this fashion, from which there has been no breaking away. When he cast off his monk's clothes the Elector of Saxony sent him a piece of black cloth, black at the time being the fashion of the Court. Luther had a suit made of it, all his pupils followed the example set by their master, and from that day to this black has been the clerical shade. In this connection it is appropriate to mention that the red hat of the cardinal traces its origin back to the Council of Lyons in 1245, when Pope Innocent IV. granted this striking headgear to his cardinals that they might hold it as an emblem that they were always ready to shed their blood for the Church, which was then passing through an anxious period.

Again, nobody can deny that the majesty and dignity of the law are fairly indicated by the wigs of judges and counsel. But they are strange survivals of fashion, all the same. Once upon a time the velvet cap, the three-cornered hat, or the coif sufficed the judge for wear upon the bench; but in 1660 the periwig was introduced from France, and both judges and doctors, appreciating its points, at once adopted it. The judges would never let it go again; but what a terror would be added to the visits of the doctor in these days if he had been so faithful to the fashion! The barristers wanted to copy the judges at once; but the latter resented such a thing, and it was a long time before they were permitted to wear the wig.

À propos of the judges, it must be mentioned that the black cap which they don is absolutely the very oldest survivor of fashion, for it comes from the text 2 Samuel, xv. 30, where it says that David wept, and had his head covered.

The butcher and his boy wear the blue smock because the Guild of Butchers adopted this colour in the Middle Ages, when all trades had their distinguishing colours. The fact that blue was the cheapest of dyes at that time may have had something to do with the choice.

So we see how from the highest to the lowest there are some quaint survivals in our attire, and that we are perhaps less matter-of-fact in such concerns than we imagined ourselves to be.

THE STATUE OF MEMNON.

I sat beside the lordly Nile,
Its pulses beating through the dark;
I watched the ibis, stayed a while
To catch swift twilight's music. Hark!
'Mid changeful tints—blood-red, pale-gold—
Tithonus stirs, Aurora gleams;
'Tis daybreak, and his song half-told,
Now Memnon's magic stills his dreams.

What mean these waves of gorgeous song,
Re-echoed from another world?
Why wait we when our journey's long?
Why linger with our sails unfurled?
Life points us onward, but we stay;
Mysterious murmurs still we hear;
For Memnon's harp-strings blithely play
The waking notes we hold most dear.

When bright day draws toward grateful night
We seek again the hero's tomb,
Low, mournful, sweet—these strains delight,
Fresh born from Harmony's rich womb.
These melodies still soothe the heart,
Bring back old battles fought round Troy,
Even and morn to fresh life start,
And fill the stranger with deep joy.

M. G. Watkins.

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RUSSIA'S DRINK MONOPOLY.

By J. Blake Harrold.

THE almost entire disappearance of the importation of clarets and other foreign wines (excepting, perhaps, champagne) into the Russian Empire—a disappearance due in great measure to the Customs tariff now in force, which, so far from being merely protective, has become practically prohibitive—draws attention to the derangement of a trade through Government competition.

What may be termed the financial-social policy of M. Serge de Witte, the founder of the Government *vodka* monopoly, which has practically killed all competition in the Russian Empire, was a great departure from the fiscal methods of other countries; and whether it has been successful or not is even now a matter of dispute. His objects were, first, to increase the national revenue, which was then a matter of the utmost importance; secondly, to regulate the liquor consumption of the empire. The first object has undoubtedly been effected, and the second is in a fair way of being, if it is not yet quite, realised.

When it is considered that the Russians, as a whole, have but two drinks, tea and *vodka* (spirits), it can be easily seen that it is quite possible for the Government to check excessive drunkenness by controlling the manufacture and sale of the one intoxicant—a course which would be impossible in this or any other country; and to more clearly understand how such a check is possible the present social conditions in the empire of the Czar must be described.

There are now in reality but two classes in Russia: the aristocracy, who are a very small percentage of the population; and the peasant, who before 1861 was merely a serf or slave, but who is now a full-blown citizen. The nobility are impoverished, and are now for the most part broken and ruined, with no hope of a change in the future. The democratic tendency has so developed of recent years that the nobles have no longer the monopoly of the highly paid official posts; for, with a very few exceptions, the highest posts in the land are now equally open to the peasants and to the members of the nobility. The Russian peasant still commands, as in the past, much sympathy; but it is very questionable whether he deserves it. The Russian peasant is everywhere. In other countries one goes to the village to find the peasant; in Russia one cannot get away from him. He works in the factories, docks, and at any trade in the towns. But he does not change; he is still a member of his village, although from choice or force of circumstance he may work in a town. If he stays in his village his children can be taught in the village school. If they migrate to the towns he looks after their lands; their wives live in his house and are under his authority, and if his sons do not contribute to their support he can force them to return and work in the fields. If the family is provident it can often combine and purchase the estate of an impoverished noble. The children, if studiously inclined, can gain scholarships and enter the universities. They can become officers in the army, debarred only from certain expensive regiments where caste is still strong. The examples of Gorky the novelist, almost as renowned as Tolstoi; of Theodore Schaliapin, the greatest Russian singer; of Kovelin and Effimoff, scientists, &c.; and of many others, all of whom are sons of peasants—slaves until 1861—show to what heights members of peasant families have risen. Although the average peasant works hard and for long hours, yet holidays are numerous. These are all unfailingly observed, and often an extra day or two are taken, even if their work suffers. These holidays are often simply times of drunken orgies; and it will be shown below what action the Government has taken to stop this national disgrace. No other peasants in the world, perhaps, have so many advantages. If they keep from *vodka* none need be poor. In winter the peasant has his own wood, and need never be cold. If no work is obtainable in the towns he can return to his home. The peasant is, to start with, a small landed proprietor. The Government does much to aid him in many and often diverse ways.

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For instance, he can use hospitals and enter many theatres free of charge. He is adaptable and intelligent when he likes; but he is generally lazy and dirty in his person, and has too great an appetite for *vodka*, for which he is often willing to barter his all. To restrain this latter failing as far as possible was one of the reasons which caused the Government to take over the control of the liquor-trade.

Vodka is generally made from potatoes, though sometimes from maize or wheat; and after the first process of manufacture contains about 85 per cent. of what is termed 'raw absolute spirit.' By the next process this is rectified, which brings the percentage of the raw spirit up to about 95 per cent. M. de Witte's scheme was for the Government not to take over the spirits until after they had been distilled and rectified by private firms, who would have their output limited by the Government demand. The rectified spirit would then be sent to the Government factories, and there thoroughly purified and diluted. Such an enormous undertaking could not be carried out at once over the whole of the Czar's dominions, and it was decided to experiment on a small scale at first. So in 1895 the old excise laws were repealed in certain eastern governments or provinces, where Government factories and retail shops were started, and all legal trade in *vodka* and other spirits was taken out of the hands of private persons. In 1896 this system was established in the southern, western, and south-western governments; in 1897 in the north-western; in 1898 in the northern (including St Petersburg), and in Poland. On 1st July 1902 it was established in Western Siberia, and will be gradually continued over the remainder of Siberia in 1904. The introduction of the Government monopoly in country districts, where the retail shops are far apart, has led to some illicit distilling; but it is ruthlessly stamped out as far as possible, and comparatively little is now carried on.

The Government has at present about four hundred factories, all built to much the same pattern, and managed on the same principle in the most up-to-date methods. Each factory employs about three hundred men and four hundred women. The men are paid from seventeen to thirty-five roubles a month, and the women from fifteen to twenty-five—generous wages when one considers the standard of living. The employés are well looked after: they can obtain a dinner on the premises, consisting of soup, *kvas* (a drink made from black bread), tea, and meat, for the sum of ten copecks (twopence halfpenny); they receive free medical attendance, the loan of books from the library, and other benefits.

The work in each factory is divided into departments. In the first the raw spirit is received, measured, and poured into huge tanks holding some thousands of gallons each. Then the spirits go through other departments, where they are mixed with water, purified by means of charcoal to reduce the percentage of amyl—the poison present in strong liquors—to as small an amount as possible; until finally the finished *vodka*, which is practically colourless, and contains 60 per cent. of water, flows into the bottling-room. This is the particular feminine department, for the whole of the female employées work at washing, filling, and sealing the bottles, and in printing and pasting on the labels. Not a drop of *vodka* can be legally sold in Russia which is not inside a bottle bearing the Government label and seal, on which is impressed the Russian double-eagle. The bottles are of all sizes, the smallest selling for three-halfpence, of which the halfpenny is returned for the 'empty.' Two qualities are manufactured, and the colour of the label on the bottles denotes the difference.

In addition to the factories, the Government has now some thousands of retail depôts established for the sale of *vodka* and to abolish the old drinking-saloons, or *traktirs*, where excessive drinking was encouraged. These shops are very bare and uninviting, with no place where the customers can sit down, as drinking on the premises is absolutely forbidden. They are closed at night; and, to stop as far as possible the drunken orgies in the holiday-times, they are then open but for a short while. It must be remembered that, with Sundays, the holidays take up about a fourth of the year. When a man is absolutely drunk no liquor must be supplied to him. The strangest fact, perhaps, about these depôts is that the majority in the large towns are managed by women, who have proved themselves to be generally more reliable and honest than the men. These women are paid (in addition to lodgings, fuel, and light) from seven to nine hundred roubles a year, and the situations are much sought after. A large number of collectors are employed to gather in the accounts from these depôts and from the few remaining licensed taverns.

Whether the second object aimed at by M. de Witte when he introduced this monopoly has been accomplished is still a moot point, although on the whole the evidence available seems to indicate that the plan has been successful. The Russian peasant is generally supposed to be always more or less in a state of chronic drunkenness; but this is not so. It is an undoubted fact that more liquor is consumed per head in England than in Russia. The effects, however, are not so apparent, because the Russian is often for weeks a total abstainer; but when he does drink, he drinks to excess and remains drunk indefinitely. That is the main difference: the Russian does not drink more on the whole, but he drinks more at a time. The great holiday seasons of the year, when whole communities drink to excess, have given the Russians the unenviable reputation of being the most drunken people in the world.

These holidays are, as before pointed out, unfailingly observed. No one will work if he can help it. Although the delay of a few hours may in harvest-time be fatal to the crops, and their owners (if sober themselves) recognise it, yet they

are powerless to hire any help. Still, sometimes out of 'neighbourly kindness' a community will assist one of their number who is in urgent want of labour —if they can have as much *vodka* as they like free of charge. Both men and women then drink to excess; but, strange to say, while the latter drink as much as the men, they very seldom become intoxicated. By closing the depôts in holiday-times the Government hoped that the peasant would buy his amount of *vodka* and drink it quietly at home instead of indulging to excess in the public taverns. It is said that in districts where the monopoly has been longest established the drunkenness is less and the people's savings in the Government banks are larger, and that there is less absolute ruin; for, as no credit is allowed, the peasant cannot, as formerly, obtain drink on the security of his capital—say a cow or a horse—when his ready money is exhausted. In many places the peasants, on hearing that the monopoly was to be established, spent all their available means in buying up large stores of the *vodka* from the licensed houses—a characteristic attitude of a nation which is entirely subjected to and very suspicious of a Government's parental control!

One point the Government has placed to its credit: it has replaced a spirit which, when manufactured privately, was generally poisonous by one absolutely pure, and at a lower price—a doubtful advantage in itself, for the peasants are recognising that the impress of the double-eagle on the seal of the bottle is an absolute guarantee of the quality and purity of its contents.

Also, in the governments where the monopoly is in force temperance societies, which are encouraged by the Government, are being formed; and since 1898 they have been financially aided by grants from the *vodka* revenue, for out of the enormous amount of over two hundred million roubles annually received from this source about five million are given to these societies. With this, and with money derived from other sources, tea-rooms and cheap temperance restaurants are opened, libraries and evening schools are formed, and some hundreds of places of amusement such as theatres and dancing-halls and tea-gardens are conducted. One of the most famous of these establishments is the People's House—or, as it is called, the Narodny Dom—in St Petersburg. This is a large building, with spacious grounds, which was originally erected for an exhibition, and now belongs to one of these societies. Admission to its attractions—concerts and theatrical performances, with various other entertainments—can be obtained for ten copecks (twopence halfpenny), and here all classes meet, from the *moujik* to the rich merchant; and better seats can be hired on payment of an extra twopence halfpenny or more by those who wish for greater comfort. These large pleasure-houses, where healthy amusements can be obtained for such a very modest outlay, could not probably exist without the Government subsidy. The benefits they give are obvious; and as these places practically depend for their existence upon, and certainly in great measure owe their origin to, the *vodka* monopoly, they provide a good argument towards its continuance.

[Since this article was written it is rumoured that owing to the amount of theft practised in this department and to its management proving too costly, the Government is considering the question of supervising in future the depôts and distilleries only and entrusting to dealers the sale to the public, thus saving the cost of the numerous 'brandy bars.' Since the beginning of 1903 two hundred bars have been closed in St Petersburg alone, as the profits did not cover expenses.]

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXIII.—TACTICS OF THE ENEMY.

WALTER WYMAN, a thorough-going man of the world, was quick of resource. Indeed, it was his shrewdness and clever ingenuity that had more than once extricated him from a tight corner during his long journeys of exploration. More than once had he carried his life in his hand on that perilous trip from the Albert Nyanza up to Darfur and Kordofan which he boldly undertook for the Intelligence Department of the War Office prior to Kitchener's march to Omdurman; and more than once it was his quick foresight and promptness of action that had saved him.

The picture of health, he was an ideal British officer, well set up, well groomed, and well clad; and as he stood there in a suit of gray tweed and wearing a Panamá hat, a thoughtful frown crossed his merry countenance reddened by African suns.

'I'll tell you what it is, Allan, old chap. We ought to ascertain how the enemy intend to start their campaign. There's something decidedly funny about your old Italian hunchback being over here. Are you quite certain you've made no mistake?'

'Absolutely. Graniani has gone past with the Earl.'

'But the latter is believed by every one in town to be still in India. His own servants must, of course, be in the know, but the whole circumstances are suspicious. Now, the hunchback doesn't know me; therefore I shall have a much better chance of following them than if you came. They mustn't know that you are here.'

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'No. Go and see what their game is. I'll remain here and wait for you. They've evidently gone through into the abbey, and will be poking about there. Keep a sharp eye on them, and we may learn something from their movements.'

'All right,' he answered, and without another word went out, closing the door after him.

The maid came in and cleared the table. Then I was left alone standing at the window, the wire blind of which fortunately prevented me from being seen from the street.

An hour passed, tolled out by the musical bells in the tower, but my friend did not return. Something important was happening, no doubt.

To pass the time I took from my pocket the transcript of the old record, and again read it from beginning to end. It was a strange chapter of personal history—very strange.

I made a note of various books to obtain in the reading-room of the British Museum in order to verify the statements both regarding the doings of the Borgias and the events in Galloway in the middle of the sixteenth century as recorded by the old chronicles. My own antiquarian tastes told me that in order to properly pursue this investigation we must be armed with historical facts and data, and that in all probability these might be obtained either at the British Museum or at the Record Office. In the history of the Borgias I had been interested for years, and had read many works dealing with that celebrated family of prelates and poisoners; but of the history of Galloway I confess that I was in almost total ignorance.

True, I had been in Galloway shooting with my old friend Fred Fenwicke of Crailloch, when my eyesight was better than it now is, on several occasions, and had admired the wild beauties of the country—a district of hills, streams, and lochs, and full of charming spots as beautiful as any in Scotland. I had crossed the purple heather of Lochenbreck, had traversed the giant solitudes of Carsphairn and the boulder-strewn plains of Dromore, and had shot grouse at Shirmer's (the locale of my friend Mr Crockett's charming story *The Lilac Sunbonnet*), and fished the Dee for salmon at Tongland Bridge and in the murmuring Garpal where it runs over its gray rocks through the deep wooded glen in front of Fred Fenwicke's fine old mansion of Crailloch; yet as to its historic associations I had never before had occasion to trouble myself.

I knew the titles of several books which, however, I thought might assist me, and put these down for reference.

But through it all—indeed, through all the day—thoughts of Judith Gordon, that beautiful yet tragic figure that had stood close to me on the cliff beside the summer sea, haunted me continually.

That she had reached Saxlingham I had no doubt, for I had left her in good care; yet I could not forgive myself for my carelessness in not removing those gloves before taking her hand. Yet, indeed, it had never occurred to me that the gloves could absorb venom from those faded and forbidden folios.

Sitting there impatiently awaiting Walter's return, I reflected upon her attitude towards me, and saw that she held me more in terror than in abhorrence.

You may dub me a fool for this piece of folly of the heart. Nevertheless, I tell you that, past master as I was in detecting feminine arts and wiles, this was no mere idle fancy based upon a sudden admiration, but a deep and genuine attraction, such as men experience only once in their lives.

I had never lived before that hour. All my days—those long, weary, youthful days of work and worry in London, and those years of lazy, idle lotus-eating by the Mediterranean—had been passed in striving and in longing, and my ideal had ever fled from my grasp, leaving me tantalised, athirst, unblessed. But everything had now altered. Here, in the midst of this storm and stress of mystery, one woman had suddenly come to me, and I had stood by her side enchanted. I was not sorry now that the plenitude of happiness had so long been denied me; I was glad that fate had kept me unsated.

And Walter Wyman had warned me against her by mysterious hints, as though he were aware of the existence of some barrier to my happiness!

But these pages are simply pages of record, not of argument.

Could my old friend's warning be founded upon actual knowledge? It seemed impossible; nevertheless, I knew full well that Walter Wyman was a man who did not lie, and, further, that he was my friend. What could I think? What would you have thought?

When Walter re-entered the room, his clothes dusty and his face perspiring, I saw from his countenance that something curious had occurred.

'I've watched them the whole time,' he said breathlessly as he closed the door behind him. 'They've put up at the "White Hart," opposite the old bridge, and have been over the fields round about the ruins with a plan drawn on tracing-paper. They evidently know what they are about, for they haven't been in the ruins proper at all, fortunately perhaps for me, for I concealed myself there and watched all their movements. The old hunchback speaks English quite well.'

'Speaks English!' I cried, surprised. 'Why, in Leghorn he always feigned ignorance of any single word of English.'

'For his own purposes, no doubt,' laughed my friend. 'Ten minutes ago I overheard him talking English with his lordship quite fluently. It seems as though this old Italian has a plan—a tracing no doubt—and from it they are locating the whereabouts of the treasure. They have a measuring-tape with them, and have taken a lot of measurements, all from the southern buttress of the central tower. Their measurements, however, extended

much farther than ours—indeed right away into the field beyond the one where are the remains of the fish-ponds. You recollect where a footpath crosses, and which, it appears, leads to a place called Anchor Church House, whatever that may be. Well, they measured, took angles by the buttress of the tower, and here and there stuck into the grass little pieces of whitewashed wood like labels gardeners use. They've evidently been marking out the ground in a long oblong patch, and both were exceedingly careful that their measurements should tally exactly with what was given upon the plan. Lord Glenelg went about sounding various spots by tapping the earth with his cane. The latter, I discovered, was a bar of iron painted dark brown, and hooked to represent a walking-stick—a clever contrivance to escape attention. He evidently expected to find some hollow spot.'

'But that is not borne out by the record left by old Godfrey, is it? Why should they expect to discover a hollow?'

'Ah! that's a mystery,' he responded. 'I merely tell you what I've just seen—namely, that they have some plan from which they are working in a slow, scientific, and methodical manner, not in our field, but in the one beyond, in what I've ascertained is called the Great Postland. They have a compass with them, and have taken proper bearings.'

'Well, they'll have to get the permission of the owner of the land before they can dig, that's certain. I wonder to whom it belongs?'

'To the Church, no doubt. If we warn our friend the rector we'll no doubt be able to stop their little game, at least for the present,' remarked Walter. 'Unless, of course, the magic of an Earl's name carries more weight than ours. Recollect that Lord Glenelg is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and a well-known archæologist.'

'But why is he investigating a spot that is not mentioned in The Closed Book?' I queried. 'This seems to me an independent search altogether.'

'Perhaps; but it is directed towards the same end—namely, the discovery of the abbey treasure. Yet, where the hunchback obtained his plan is certainly a mystery. They marked out an oblong on the grass about twenty feet long by ten feet broad, and then gauged the centre of it. At the exact spot the old Italian placed a piece of newspaper under a big flint which he found on the footpath, and then took up the whitened pieces of wood with which he marked the ground.'

'And then?'

'They went back to the inn together, and as soon as they were out of sight I cut down a big bunch of nettles at the spot with my stick, and then moved the stone and bit of newspaper about fifty feet westward.' He laughed.

'So, if they make any attempt at investigation, they'll be entirely out of it,' I remarked with satisfaction.

'Of course. We don't intend that they shall make any find, even if they possess the missing leaf from The Closed Book, which seems more than possible.'

What possible connection there could be, first, between old Graniani and the Florentine Prior, and, secondly, between the Earl of Glenelg and Graniani, was to me an entire enigma. Every one knew the Earl to be a man who had made archæology a profound study, for he was author of the standard work upon medieval domestic architecture, and possessed at his seat, Twycross Hall, in Staffordshire, a very fine library of early printed books, including a splendid copy of Caxton's *Mirrour of the World* and of *The Boke of the Hoole Lyf of Jason*, besides such treasures as *The Booke named Corydale*, *The Proffytable Boke for Manne's Soule* (1490), and a copy of the first book printed in England, purchased at the Perkins sale; truly a magnificent collection, and unique, as every bibliophile is aware.

I listened to my friend's description of how, concealed behind the crumbling ruins, he had watched intently every movement on the part of these two men so widely different in social standing and even in nationality. His opinion coincided with mine that they had returned to the inn to await the darkness before setting to work to excavate; whereupon the question arose as to whether it were best to warn the rector of their intentions, or to allow them to proceed and watch the result.

To me it seemed probable that his lordship, patron of twenty odd livings as he was, would not deign to ask permission to make the search, but just make it in secret as he felt inclined. Certainly, neither of the pair had any idea of my presence there, or they would never have gone openly to work to take those measurements. As matters now stood, we had the spot marked, while the scene of their investigations had been transferred some distance away. Even if the treasure were concealed in that farther field, they certainly would not secure it.

'Well, is it worth while seeing Mr Mason and making an explanation to him?' I asked. 'For my own part, I think not. We have only to watch their failure.'

'And if they have retained the missing leaf they may post up to Scotland and forestall us there,' my companion remarked dubiously. 'Without doubt the search about to be made here is the outcome of the curious conspiracy which is puzzling us.'

'But why did the Prior and his accomplices sell me the Arnoldus if they wished to retain it in their possession?' I asked. 'Why did Graniani follow me to Florence, and watch me through the church window? Why did my servant Nello warn me against possessing the forbidden volume, and why did that dark-eyed woman, the confidante of the Prior, steal it and carry it post-haste across

Europe, transferring it in Paris to a second woman who carried it to London? To me the whole thing is an enigma.'

'And to me,' Wyman admitted. 'This is certainly no ordinary affair. We have, however, at present to remain in patience and watch in secret the development of events—a development which I feel confident will bring with it some almost unheard-of revelations.'

(To be continued.)

THE HERON.

By Captain J. H. BALDWIN.

IT is a matter of regret to all lovers of ornithology that so noble a bird as the heron, once common throughout the kingdom, has now become scarce—even rare—in some parts of the country; and certain it is that but for the public spirit shown by some of our noblemen and landed proprietors in still preserving the bird, and keeping up heronries in their parks or private grounds, it would soon become extinct like the great bustard, the ruff and reeve, and many others. Some of the old heronries have disappeared altogether; others, though still existing, are frequented by fewer birds. It is the old story. Gamekeepers who have charge of trout-streams in these times of dry-fly-fishing, unless strictly ordered not to destroy herons, will assuredly take every opportunity of shooting them; and this is hardly to be wondered at, for it cannot be denied that a pair, or even a single heron, constantly frequenting a trout-river, does mischief, and, if permitted to continue for any length of time unchecked, will assuredly thin out the stock of fish. Moreover, the heron is a provoking bird to those in charge of a preserve, for having once discovered a spot where he can fish successfully, the bird will return again and again in spite of being scared away by man or dog. I am also inclined to think that the heron prefers a tender young trout for his dinner to 'leathery' tench or coarse roach, and this is not to be wondered at.

During the spring, from the middle of March or early in April, when herons congregate and begin putting their nests in order, the birds do not wander far away from the heronry; and when the young are hatched the parent birds are kept continuously at work providing food for their ravenous progeny. This continues till late in the summer. Having reared one, often two broods of young ones, and taught them how to provide for themselves, the old birds throw off family cares and take long flights to some out-of-the-way spot—the banks of a river—where they can remain undisturbed. The heron loves the wilds, there to be alone, far from the haunts of men and noise of cities, where graceful willow and drooping birch shadow the stream, the stillness only broken by the wild cry of the curlew passing overhead, the harsh *crex, crex, crex* call of the landrail from the water-meadow, the gentle warble of the little sedge-bird hidden among the reeds, the distant plash of a leaping trout, and the sweet murmur of the brook, ever gliding over its pebbly bed, reminding us of the poet's charming lines:

> I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance
> Among my skimming swallows;
> I make the netted sunbeam dance
> Against my sandy shallows.

Here the bird will stand motionless, often balanced on one leg, patiently watching for an opportunity for hours together, the long, graceful neck carried bent between the shoulders, the head drawn back till the sharp-pointed bill almost touches the flowing breast-feathers, the keen eyes ever fixed on the moving water. No living creature beneath the surface, however deep down, can escape that watchful gaze; and presently the chance comes, in the shape of a hapless young trout or grayling, too eager in pursuit of a floating fly and unaware of danger until within reach of his deadly enemy. The heron makes a sudden, unerring stroke, with lightning rapidity clutches his victim, raises his head, by a quick movement turns the little fish head downwards, and swallows him.

Some of our best-known writers on ornithology, when describing the heron's manner of fishing, have used the word transfix only, or piercing through, when relating how the bird makes a stroke at a fish. I cannot help thinking that the above wording is unfortunate, even misleading, for if he is carefully watched it will be found that the heron seizes or 'snaps up' with his *opened* beak small-sized fish, only using the point of his bill to despatch larger prey. If carefully examined, the inner edge of the heron's bill will be found to be slightly serrated, evidently intended by nature to enable the bird the better to *hold* fish. I may also mention that the heron is furnished with a 'roughed' middle claw, also given to him to pin down slippery eel or wriggling frog.

Most anglers will now and again have noticed, when fishing trout-streams frequented by herons, dead fish, generally of large size, lying on the bank, bearing the unmistakable 'bayonet' wound caused by the heron's bill through the body, generally just behind the gill-cover, and it has puzzled many observers to account for this wanton waste of food on the part of the heron. The only excuse or explanation I can give is that I believe the bird, having in the first instance been tempted to strike a large-sized fish coming within reach of his bill, has later discovered the prize to be too large to swallow,

and in consequence has cast it on one side. I know of more than one instance of a heron having been found lying dead, choked by a fish—in one case a carp, in another an eel—which the bird had endeavoured to swallow. Herons are also frequenters of marshes, but, in place of remaining motionless in one spot as when fishing, the crafty bird slowly keeps on the move, beating for game, so to speak, and skirting ditches, where frogs and water-newts abound. These latter harmless tritons have an unfortunate habit at certain times of the year of lying motionless on dead pools of water, enjoying the warmth of the sun, or rising with a wriggle from the depths to the surface, and going down again, offering an easy chance to their enemy. Lizards, field-mice, even slugs and lob-worms, are snapped up. Toads, I have been informed, the heron leaves severely alone, and probably this is correct, for many birds—even snakes—will not meddle with this 'unsavoury' reptile. Those diminutive 'balls of fluff,' young water-hens, are considered a *bonne bouche* by the heron; and from the anxiety and distress always displayed by a pair of old lapwings when the great bird alights in a field where they have young ones, it is evident that the parent pewits rightfully distrust our long-legged friend.

It has been noticed that herons will regularly frequent certain rivers, lakes, or canals after their usual prey, but that other waters, though teeming with fish, and to all appearance quite as likely fishing-ground, are almost, if not altogether, neglected. I think that the reason for this apparently strange behaviour on the part of the bird may be explained in this way: herons are all waders, but never in my experience *deep* waders. As a rule they will only walk out on to a shoal or sandbank till the water at the most reaches the height of their knees, and *no farther;* and I think it will be found that rivers or canals with steep, abrupt banks, or where there are no shallows at the margin, are avoided by the heron because they are unsuited to his manner of fishing.

Herons generally build their nests on the tops of some group of Scotch firs or giant elms, or they select some broad horizontal bough, but generally on the outside of the trees—seldom with any sort of cover above. Some writers have described the nests as of large size, while others have expressed themselves to the contrary; but I think that the reason of this difference of opinion is not far to seek. A *new* nest is only a slight platform built of sticks and lined with dry grass, flags, and the like; but, if not blown down by the wind during the winter gales, the following spring this same nest is put into repair by numerous additional sticks and with a second lining. This same system of repairs will continue for many years in succession, till the structure reaches a large size.

The birds are much given to building their nests on trees growing on islands in lakes, and it is not difficult to understand their reason for doing so. A certain amount of danger is avoided by inhabiting an island, and probably the water surrounding the colony will contain their chief food-supply. The eggs, generally three or four in number, are of a lovely light-blue-green tint. The young when hatched are helpless, and a considerable time elapses before they can take wing. I remember when a boy I always thought that herons, flamingoes, and other long-legged birds, when seated on their nests, allowed their legs to dangle or hang down through holes in the structure; and I recollect my curiosity, on first visiting a heronry during the nesting season, to see for myself whether the above was a fable or the contrary, and how by a single peep my mind was set at rest when I observed several old herons on their nests with their legs tucked under them after the usual manner of birds.

It is a well-known fact, which I have witnessed several times, that a wounded heron with only a crippled wing, when driven to bay, is dangerous to a man or dog approaching him, as he strikes out furiously with his formidable beak at the face of his antagonist, often inflicting severe wounds. Retrievers, we read, have lost an eye from the blow of a heron's bill, but I regret to say that under ordinary conditions of life I have found the heron to be anything but a brave bird; nor in any sense can he be called courageous, for I have known him to be harassed and bullied by winged enemies much smaller in size, even to quitting his nest and allowing the contents to be harried rather than show a bold front and fight for the protection of his home. I well remember witnessing a case in point. Many years ago I resided in the wilds of County Kerry, in the south-west of Ireland. I was in the habit of occasionally visiting a highland loch, named Cloon, for fishing. In this lake there was a single beautiful island, in which grew a dense clump of hollies, and on the top of these trees, and at a height of only eight or ten feet from the ground, a small colony of herons had established themselves. It was in the month of April. I had visited the heronry in the forenoon, and later in the day was trolling for salmon at a distance of only a few hundred yards from this island, when my attention was attracted by loud cries from the direction of the heronry, and on looking round I saw a pair of hoodie-crows (birds that breed in that part of the British Isles) chasing, buffeting, and bullying five or six old herons which they evidently had first driven from off their nests.

After closely pursuing the herons to a considerable height, where the latter remained ignominiously circling round and uttering their harsh *quarch* cries of alarm, the villainous pair of marauders dived down to the unguarded nests, and presently deliberately flew across to the mainland, each with a heron's egg in his bill. Again, when recently staying at Penshurst, where formerly a strong heronry had been established, I was informed that the herons quitted the spot many years ago in

consequence of jackdaws, as also rooks, constantly interfering with and bullying them, the jackdaws carrying off the eggs with impunity.

In former times, more especially during the reign of James I. and his successors, hawking the heron was one of the favourite sports of the day. Herons were termed 'royal' birds, and were strictly preserved. We find that herons always appeared on the banqueting board, and any one killing a heron became liable to a severe punishment. Hawking has nowadays almost died out in this country; but many years ago, when quartered with my regiment in the Agra and Aligarh district of Northern India, and out with my gun, I several times came across parties of native gentlemen, mostly Mohammedans, engaged in hawking. In those days most rajahs and men of position included a falconer with his assistants in their retinue, and the falcons used for killing game, herons, and the like were most admirably trained for the purpose. A large-sized hawk, called the *bhyrie*, was generally used for wildfowl, the bird much resembling, if not identical with, our peregrine; and, just as amongst our forefathers, the hen falcon, always the larger in raptorial birds, was chiefly flown at the heron, while the male falcon, the tiercel—the ladies' hawk in olden times—was reserved for smaller game. The native falconers fully recognised the heron as one of the best birds for affording sport. The usual way of proceeding was to quietly approach some lake or *jheel*, as these swamps are called in India; and, unlike the old method of English hawking, a falcon was first let loose to circle overhead, and then a few beaters were sent to rouse the game. Probably the first to rise above the cover would be a flight of heavy duck. In an instant the *bhyrie* would dart after them, endeavouring to approach from below and force the birds to ascend in the air, when the falcon would follow, and if once he could rise above the fugitives he would probably dash one of them to the earth by a single blow of his powerful talons—the *hind-claw*, not the *bill*, as is often imagined, being brought into play. Presently a heron would be roused from the reeds and slowly fly up in his usual lethargic manner. But immediately he became aware of the approach of his enemy the *bhyrie*, the bird's whole manner changed in marvellous fashion; from a slow-moving, sluggish creature he instantly became surprisingly active, circling round and round, and rapidly ascending in spiral turns higher and higher in the air—a beautiful sight to watch, the bird endeavouring by every means in his power to keep above his oppressor!—till often the pair reached a great height, but generally speaking with one result. The heron would tire and the falcon obtain the upper hand and make his stoop, not striking the heron as he would a wild-duck, but clutching his prey; and the pair, a mass of writhing feathers, would slowly come down to the ground. Then we all rushed up, the falconer in front, knowing full well the danger his favourite would be in from his powerful antagonist. Often valuable hawks have been struck dead, pierced through the body by a single blow from the heron's bill.

I may, however, mention in conclusion that native falconers, when I asked them whether there was any danger to their birds from the heron's bill when they were *high up in the sky* and the two were at close quarters, invariably replied in the negative, asserting that until the two, locked together, reached the ground the heron never made an attempt to strike his opponent. Though contrary to popular opinion and to representations by our artists, I believe the above to be the truth.

AUNT MARY.

CHAPTER IX.

'HERE,' said Whitworth, 'is a most abusive letter from Partridge. He wants to know why Kitty is not at St Moritz.'

There was just a faint suggestion of malice in the speaker's tone; but Aunt Mary quite overlooked that. She had appeared dreadfully troubled and worried the last few days. Kitty had not been nearly so well, either.

'I cannot see my way to it,' she cried. 'It will be dreadfully expensive. If it were somewhere in the direction of Cornwall, for instance.'

'St Moritz is not Cornwall,' Whitworth said sapiently.

'But, James, it will cost quite two hundred pounds. Where is the money to come from?'

'You don't want any money. You must both go to St Moritz as Walter's guests. I shan't be there, because I'm off to Brazil in a day or two. And a good thing, too, seeing that I am down to my last few pounds.'

Aunt Mary protested that the idea was indelicate. She believed that such things were done in modern society. She had heard of dreadful cases where poor brides owed their trousseaux to wealthy husbands.

If Walter and Kitty were married it would be altogether a different matter.

Miss Bentley spoke slowly and with disdain for modern innovation. Whitworth was half-amused, half-inclined to respect her prejudices. But something would have to be done, and he said so bluntly.

'I fancy I have found a way,' Miss Bentley said presently. A pink spot burned on either cheek. 'I

am going to Ambermouth presently, and when I return I shall be able to speak more definitely.'

She went off presently in her best gray silk and her sable cloak that had come down from a bygone generation, and wearing a black bonnet of the severest Puritan style. It was no shock to her pride that she travelled to Ambermouth in the carrier's cart, which she graced as if it had been a barouche-and-pair.

A little later James Whitworth swung into Ambermouth with his long, free stride and his easy air, and made his way without the slightest regard for appearances in the direction of the side-door of a jeweller's shop over which hung the familiar trident of brass balls.

He swaggered into one of the dark little closets of the pawnbroking department as if he had visited his bank for the purpose of drawing a large deposit.

'Diamond ring,' he said, 'repeater watch, chain. I've had eighty pounds on the ring alone lots of times. I want a hundred and fifty pounds altogether. Look sharp.'

The keen-eyed man behind the counter gave a searching glance at the valuables. Then he nodded cheerfully. An assistant was attending to a customer in the next box. He came along to the manager with a diamond-and-ruby frame inside of which was an exquisite miniature.

'Lady wants a couple of hundred on this,' he whispered hoarsely.

Whitworth fairly gasped. The miniature in the lovely setting was quite familiar to him. The manager of the establishment shook his head.

'Not worth it,' he said. 'Probably fetch more money at Christie's; but too risky for us to advance more than a hundred upon.—Your name, sir? James Whitworth? Will you have the money in notes or gold?'

Whitworth elected for notes, which he carelessly stuffed in his pocket. He strode into the street and waited with confidence for the coming of the person he expected to see. A moment later and Miss Bentley emerged with a face of crimson and eyes full of tears. What an effort it had cost her to enter a pawnbroker's she alone knew.

'What were you doing in there?' she asked indignantly. 'Such a disgrace for Walter! Just think if anybody had seen you!'

She had quite forgotten herself; she was always thinking of other people.

'So I have found you out!' Whitworth said coolly. 'There's pride for you! My word, if anybody had recognised *you* coming from that place! Mary Bentley in a pawnbroker's! The mind reels at the mere suggestion. Mary, I think you are the best and dearest little woman in the world.'

'Don't!' Miss Bentley faltered. 'If you only knew what I have endured! But I was shocked to recognise your voice.'

'Were you? My dear girl, I am quite used to it. Nobody has more ups and downs than a mining-engineer. My last job was a short one, and I had been out of collar for months before this. Now that I am off to Brazil I need money. Now, which is best—to go sponging on friends who may never be repaid, or raise money honestly on your own property? I am glad of the accommodation; the pawnbroker has done an excellent stroke of business. There is nothing to be ashamed of.'

Aunt Mary shook her head sadly. The pawnbroker represented to her the last signpost on the broad road to ruin. She little realised how often the prosperous of to-day have availed themselves of that friendly aid.

'The miniature was worth the amount you asked,' Whitworth said dryly. 'You may flush and tremble, my dear Mary, but I never admired you quite so much as I do at this moment. It must have been a dreadful thing for you to violate your feelings in the way you have. But I'm glad you didn't part with the miniature of Marie Stuart, because there is another way out of the difficulty.'

'What do you mean by that?' Aunt Mary asked, trembling violently.

'Never mind for the present. When we come to have an explanation presently, we shall both have something to confess. And yet I am sure that the recording angel will drop a tear on our indiscretion as he did on that of Uncle Toby.'

There was a suggestion of fear in the eye that Miss Bentley turned on Whitworth. He was whistling, with his hands stuck deep in his pockets, whilst his companion fairly trotted along by his side.

'I'm walking too fast for you,' he said. 'We'll have a cab home.'

'Always so fearfully extravagant,' Aunt Mary gasped.

'Not a bit of it. Pocket full of money and a good appointment before me. You have to-day seen an object-lesson in thriftiness. I don't care a rap for a gold watch, and diamond rings for men I abhor. But in a moment of prudence I bought both. What is the consequence? I am in a position to raise a large loan on strict business lines without being under an obligation to any one. I've got to send off a telegram to Partridge saying that you start for St Moritz on Saturday.'

'But, my dear James, so far as I can see—— Eh, what an impulsive man he is!'

'Well, that's done,' Whitworth said cheerfully as he came down the steps of the post-office. 'You think you are not going on Saturday? My dear Mary, unless something entirely unforeseen occurs, the journey is inevitable. Oh! you designing, wicked woman, I have found you out at last.'

'I have done nothing to be ashamed of, James.'

'Of course you haven't. You have acted magnificently. At the same time, a judge would say some severe things to you if he knew as much as I do. Here's our cab.—Grey Gables, Anscombe, driver.—Mary, will you answer me a question?'

'Certainly, if the answer is not too difficult.'

'Nothing of the kind,' Whitworth said. He bent forward with a mischievous look in his eyes. 'All

I want to know is what you have done with that letter you found in the third volume of Colin's manuscript music compositions.'

CHAPTER X.

KITTY and Walter were seated with their heads close together by the organ. Whitworth had just airily proclaimed the fact that he would be off in the morning, and that it was rather a good thing, seeing that the others were leaving for St Moritz on Saturday.

'That is, if Aunt Mary can get ready,' he concluded.

'I shall be quite ready,' Miss Bentley said, as if the words hurt her.

'Then come along with me,' Whitworth cried. 'We'll go into the dining-room and work out the whole thing. A seasoned traveller like myself can put you up to all the tips. Come along, and leave these young people to themselves.'

Miss Bentley followed slowly. Her face was pale and her eyes heavy with tears. Whitworth carefully closed the dining-room door.

'Now, where is that letter?' he asked curtly.

Very slowly Aunt Mary took a letter from her pocket. Her face flamed scarlet.

'James,' she whispered, 'I did it for the best.'

'God bless the woman! I know you did,' Whitworth burst out. 'I suppose you found out quite by accident, and decided that it was best to keep the secret. And yet you knew perfectly well that it would have ousted Walter from here.'

'Yes, I knew that. When my father was going blind I did all the work of his office for him. I am more than half a lawyer myself. If I had mentioned this letter'——

'Walter would never have come here at all.'

'Oh yes, he would, James. You see, I never found the letter until after Walter came here. I meant to be cold and polite to him, but he won my heart from the first. And when he called me "Aunt Mary" and kissed me I was conquered. I said he was like his mother. But that wasn't the truth. The reason why I took to him was because he so reminded me of you when you were his age.'

Whitworth rubbed his right eye violently. He took Miss Bentley's hand and carried it to his lips. His voice was just a little unsteady. 'Always the best and dearest of women!' he murmured. 'Always.'

'James, don't be foolish,' Aunt Mary said, crying softly. 'The boy went straight to my heart. Then, when I was looking for some music for Kitty, I found the letter. It was from Colin to Mr Benn, but when written I can't say. Perhaps it was written before the will was made—the will in Walter's favour, I mean—in which case'——

'It was written after the will in Walter's favour, as I shall prove to you presently. Now, will you read the letter aloud?'

It was a letter written on a sheet of business paper and headed 'Grey Gables, Wednesday,' without further heading and minus a date:

'My dear Benn,—I have given your letter my careful consideration, and I have at length come to the conclusion that you are right and I am wrong. When I made my will two years ago, leaving everything to my brother James in trust for his son Walter on the latter attaining his majority, I am prepared to admit now that I was carried away by the glamour of my brother's bravery in Spain. Acting on that impulse, I allowed myself to commit a gross act of injustice against my adopted daughter Kathleen Evershed.

'My brother I have long since forgiven for the great wrong he did me. He is capable of looking after himself. His son, I hear, is a genius, and would perhaps be spoilt by too much prosperity. Let him make his way in the world.

'This, then, is my will in little. I instruct you to draw up a new testament, leaving everything to my adopted daughter, Kathleen Evershed, with a legacy of one thousand pounds to my nephew Walter. Return the will so that I can sign without delay. —Yours very faithfully, Colin Whitworth.'

'Now, why did you suppress that letter?' Whitworth asked.

'I am coming to that,' Miss Bentley explained. 'It is not dated. It might have referred to one of the last half-dozen previous wills made by your brother Colin.'

'Turn it over,' Whitworth suggested. 'It is written on the back of a letter from Benn asking how much longer the recipient is going to prolong an act of injustice. That letter of Benn's was dated 17th September 1900, two years after the will was signed. Now, if that letter came before a judge, and he was assured of the soundness of mind of my brother at the time he wrote it, it is pretty certain that the will of September 1900 would be set aside and that letter ordered to stand in its place.'

'Really!' Miss Bentley cried, aghast. 'I—I never thought of that.'

'And yet I am merely stating a fact. That letter is absolutely signed by the would-be testator, setting out his ultimatum deliberately. Why, the draft of a will in the handwriting of a mere lawyer's clerk has been allowed to stand before now. And yet you knew of this—you knew that if you only produced that document Walter would have stood aside and Kitty would have taken his place.'

'Stop!' Miss Bentley cried. 'I did know of this. I found the letter before you did, and in the same way—looking for music for Kitty. It was a great shock to me; but after careful consideration I decided to do nothing. And why? Because I was absolutely and sincerely convinced that Kitty's days were numbered. Again, that letter is not a will in the strict sense of the word. Otherwise I would never have behaved as I have done. Kitty was dying. No harm could possibly be done by holding

my tongue. Kitty was dying. The rest mattered nothing. And here was Walter, the boy who so strongly reminded me of you, on the threshold of his career. If you could only have seen his pure delight in the beauties of the old place! All his dreams were realised. And you were so proud of him. *I* was proud of him. I had not the heart to dispel those dreams. And so I held my peace.'

Again Whitworth kissed the speaker's hand. 'But Kitty,' he urged. 'Kitty came back from the grave. Surely, you should have spoken *then*. The money was morally all her own.'

'Too late, James. My prejudices were too strong for me. And I always had the miniature in the diamond setting to fall back upon. All this time I had not the slightest idea that you knew of the letter; and James, James'——

Mary Bentley's face lighted up suddenly; she smiled behind her tears. Whitworth smiled too, in an unsteady fashion.

'It's coming,' he said. 'My turn was bound to come. Go on.'

'James, you are worse than I am,' Aunt Mary cried. 'I am an angel of purity compared with you.'

'Well, everybody knows that,' Whitworth said coolly. 'Pray, proceed.'

'*You* found the letter as well as myself. *You* knew that Kitty was morally entitled to everything here. And yet you kept the secret. You allowed my foolish prejudice to stand in the way of Dr Partridge's cure, when a word from you would have made everything quite smooth. Was it for your boy that'——

'No, I'm hanged if it was,' Whitworth cried. 'It was for Kitty's sake. Oh, I am quite as guilty as you are, perhaps more so. But you refused to see Partridge; you declared that all that could be done had been done, and that Kitty must die in the orthodox fashion. Then I played my strong card. As Kitty's legal guardian, I insisted upon having my own way, and you had to yield. *That's* why I said nothing about the letter. If I had mentioned it you could have defied me, and'——

'And Kitty would have died,' Aunt Mary whispered.

'I'm afraid she would. It seemed to me that here was the typical case where the end justified the means. Mary, let us forgive one another.'

Their hands met across the table, and they smiled. They would be firm friends to the finish now, but nothing more. The old romance was dead and buried, but the fragrance of it lingered, and would sweeten their lives to the end.

'It is best as it is,' Mary said softly, and this was the requiem. They were sitting very quietly when the young people came in.

'Your father leaves us to-morrow,' Aunt Mary said in the same quiet fashion; 'and on Saturday we start on our journey. You smile, Walter. Well, my prejudices have vanished Sit down, you two, and I will tell you a story.'

She told the tale in her own simple way. She passed the letter from one to the other.

'This is not really a will?' Kitty asked. 'No. And it makes little difference whether the property belongs to Walter or me. Mine is thine, and thine is mine. And now we can settle all disputes like this.'

She rolled up the letter quickly and dropped it into the glowing heart of the wood-fire. The quick spurt of blaze fell on the Romneys and Lelys, who seemed to smile down approvingly. Aunt Mary raised a mittened hand in protest.

'I feel so well to-night,' Kitty said; 'so strong and happy. Aunt Mary, you are the sweetest and dearest woman in the world. And I am going to get well for the sake of those who love me.'

'Amen to that!' cried Whitworth. 'Amen to both, say I.'

THE END.

THE WHISTLERS OF GOMERA.

FIFTY miles off the beaten track of a great steamship highway, yet full two hundred years behind the march of present-day progress, lies Gomera, the sixth in size and importance of the seven Canary Islands. The crowd of British tourists that yearly turns Las Palmas and Orotava into an Atlantic Riviera takes little or no note of the outlying islets, since they have no hotels and—so far as the ordinary tourist knows—no 'sights.' Yet Gomera, at all events, can show a wonder second to no curiosity of the archipelago, in its ancient custom of talking across almost incredible distances of mountain by means of the 'whistling language.'

Curiously enough, very little of this remarkable custom is known, or indeed believed, in Grand Canary or Tenerife. Local books of travel refer to the alleged existence of such a power in the most cautious manner; visitors to the fashionable islands dismiss with an incredulous laugh the statement that a Gomera native can whistle a long conversation with a comrade four miles away; and even the very few travellers who take the slow but comfortable interinsular boat round to Palma, Gomera, and Hierro believe little, because they hear nothing in their short stay of a few hours in port concerning the whistlers of the island. Yet it is known that this strange art is of old existence in the Canaries. The Guanches—the original inhabitants of the islands, who were conquered by the Spaniards during the fifteenth century—seem to have been almost entirely a pastoral nation; and it was out of the constant necessity of signalling and speaking

to one another across the numberless ravines of the islands that the custom of whistling gradually arose. Originally all the islands knew the art; but it has now died out among the Canaries, except in Gomera. It exists also in Africa, among the natives of the Atlas Mountains, from whom, indeed, the ancient Canarians may originally have obtained the germ of the idea, since there was undoubtedly a good deal of emigration to the islands from the African mainland during the Middle Ages.

There is a brief mention of the whistling language in a letter addressed to the Royal Society of London about the year 1650 by Dr Sprat, Bishop of Rochester. That acute inquirer states that he met an Englishman in Tenerife who had been made deaf for fifteen days by a Guanche native whistling into his ear. The story is certainly rather 'tall;' but any one who has ever heard a Gomera whistle of the present day can at least believe that deafness for an hour or two might be the result of such an infliction. The present writer has been seriously assured by a Spanish hotelkeeper in Santa Cruz de Tenerife that a Gomera girl once employed as kitchen-maid in the hotel had been frequently known to mount a hill behind the town and whistle to her lover in Laguna, nearly five miles away; the lover invariably appearing in Santa Cruz, *vid* the electric tram, in less than an hour after the signal! Whether the above incident is to be believed or not (and it is at least not outside the realm of possibility), there can be no doubt that the Gomera islanders have an extraordinary power of throat and lung, probably due to some special development of a hereditary kind.

Gomera is two days' journey from Tenerife as the interinsular boat goes round by Palma. Leaving Santa Cruz de Tenerife on a Wednesday night, and lying all Thursday in Santa Cruz de la Palma, one reaches Gomera early on the Friday morning. The boat only stays a few hours in port, and calls but once a week. There is no really decent accommodation on the island, though it is fifteen by thirteen miles, and has a population of fourteen thousand. The climate, however, is perfect for camping out at all seasons of the year, rain being very rare, and the nights being almost as warm as the days.

San Sebastian, the tiny port and capital, is a strangely wild, desolate, forsaken-looking spot, lying in the mouth of a huge, barren ravine, and surrounded by dusty palm-trees shaking endlessly to the ever-blowing trade-wind. A square old fortified tower stands up in the middle of the low, flat-roofed houses—relic of the days when rough adventurers took this route to the golden Spanish Main, and were little particular as to what they took besides. The dark, sleepy, somewhat ugly church is famous as the last building of the Old World entered by Columbus before he sailed away across the unknown seas beyond. The great discoverer put in at San Sebastian for water, and, before leaving the island, went to the church to ask the blessing of Heaven upon the voyage then commencing. Not much of the building remains unchanged since 1492; but there is at least enough to create an atmosphere of historical interest about what would otherwise be a very ordinary little Spanish chapel.

We try to obtain mules or horses here, and have probably considerable difficulty in doing so. The sun smites, the beggars swarm, and unwholesome-looking children, curiously degenerate and malicious in expression, harass the visitors like clouds of flies. It is a relief to ride away out of the town and plod slowly up the rough mountain bridle-track which lies beyond. There are no roads in Gomera, and the bridle-paths are so steep that saddles are sure to slip over the shoulders or quarters of the mules unless well secured by breast-girth and crupper.

With the help of an experienced friend we have succeeded in finding a muleteer who knows the whistling-language; but, in reply to our broken Spanish requests for a display, he tells us that we must wait until we get up among the hills and meet with some one else who understands the *silvando*, or whistling. So we ride on for an hour or two, through a strange wilderness of volcanic clefts and gorges, unspeakably tantalising to would-be explorers who have but half a day to spare. The Giant's Causeway is 'not in it' with many of the outcropping ranges of basaltic pillars that we pass by; we ride among spires of black upstanding rock perched in impossible places at incredible angles; we see huge gloomy glens winding away into the dark hearts of unknown hills, balustraded at every turn with giant balconies of twisted columns—a very Dantean Inferno of wild and forbidding forms. The candelabrum cactus (*Euphorbia canariensis*) spreads its gaunt grayish arms, each tipped with a crimson star of blossom, on the roughest and most barren of the rocky shelves. Its nature does not belie its ugly, kraken-like appearance; for a single drop of its sap will burn the flesh like fire and almost destroy the eye into which it may unluckily have fallen. There are rich woods and green valleys farther inland; but time will not allow us to visit them. We have come up for the *silvando* only, and we should by now have reached a spot where a signal may be heard and answered from the hills.

The *arriero* scans the slopes to right and left; but there is no one in sight. Still, there may be some one out of sight; so he places his two forefingers together at an angle of forty-five degrees, puts them in his mouth, and begins to call.

That is indeed a whistle! It seems almost incredible that no instrument helps in its production, as we hear it rise and swell, shriller and louder, and shriller and louder yet, piercing our very brains with its keenness, and speeding like an arrow of sound far away into the distance, over the deep ravines and up the stony terraces, right into the heart of the hills. The whistler stops at last, and holds up his hand for silence. All hold their breath to listen as out of the far distance, from some invisible creature hidden among the heights, comes

a tiny silvery reply, thin as the ghostly shrilling of a bat or the distant pipe of a mosquito. The call has been answered.

The muleteer listens, with his head cocked on one side like a fox-terrier, to locate the sound, and when it stops he begins to talk in whistles, evidently using the echoes of the rocky mountain-walls to catch and toss onward his calls with wonderful skill. It seems to be a sort of Morse whistling code, elaborated into long calls, short calls, high and low calls, dropping and rising inflections, and curiously articulated calls like a mingling of bird-notes and human words. The power of the whistle is marvellous, but still more notable are its intensity and carrying force; one cannot but feel that those clothyard shafts of sound would spit a man from breastbone to spine if he came in the way of their flight!

The short sentence with which our muleteer begins is answered by a long one; another is replied to at greater length, and a third elicits quite a complicated and emphatic reply. The whistler translates:

'I say to them, "How many are you?" and they answer, "We are two, up in the hills." I say, "What are you doing?" and they answer, "We are very busy; we have done much work cutting grass." Then I say, "I have got two English here;" and they say, "Ask them will they buy our cow; we will bring it down for them to see."'

The 'English' burst out laughing at this new variant on the 'nation of shopkeepers,' and explained that cows—especially Canarian cows—were not the sort of souvenir they generally carried home from an excursion, but that they would not mind buying some milk if the cow could be brought down.

More whistling, more replying, and then we set off, having arranged that the proprietors of the cow should walk down towards us, while we rode up towards them. We were going at a smart mule-walk all the way, and the cattle-owners were probably hastening lest they should miss the rare and precious visitors; but it was nearly three-quarters of an hour before the meeting took place. We calculated that the whistlers must have been over three miles away in a direct line when they first answered our muleteer's call—not an amazing feat of *silvando*, but still a remarkable one; especially as my companion told me that the best whistlers never used their fingers, as our muleteer had done, and that he was probably rather an inferior performer.

The whistlers answered exactly to their own description when they appeared. There were two of them; they had reaping-hooks, and they brought a milch cow, with which they were very anxious to trade.

'Is the *silvando* much used in Gomera?' we asked our guide.

'Yes, much, in the mountains,' he answered. 'There are many in the towns who do not know it, and the old men are better whistlers than the young. Yes, the women whistle too, and they can be heard as far as we can.'

It seems certain, on the whole, that the *silvando* is beginning to decline; but time moves slowly in Gomera, and even another couple of generations will hardly see the extinction of the custom. It is to be hoped that, before it becomes uncommon and difficult to investigate, some scientific inquiry may be made into the history and nature of this most curious art.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE WHITEHEAD TORPEDO.

THE notion of destroying shipping by means of floating explosives is by no means so new as some persons are apt to think, for contrivances of this nature were employed at the siege of Rochelle nearly three centuries ago. But it was during the American Civil War that the torpedo, as it came to be called, first gained notoriety, for by its aid no fewer than thirty-nine of the Federal ships were destroyed. From that time torpedo-boats date, for the American Government was quick to see the importance of this method of naval warfare, and built vessels for its development. The modern Whitehead torpedo is a most beautifully constructed machine, and it is a slur on our boasted civilisation that so much ingenuity and skill should have been devoted to the wholesale destruction of life and property. Shaped like a fish, it is made of steel. It is driven through the water by two propellers working by compressed air, and the detonating charge at its head consists of more than one hundred pounds of gun-cotton. An ingenious application of the gyroscope causes the torpedo, which is about five yards long, to keep a straight line towards its goal, and it can be relied upon to keep at a fixed distance beneath the surface of the water—about ten feet. Since torpedo-nets were hung around battleships for their protection the torpedoes have been furnished with a scissors device for making their way through such obstructions, and nets are therefore now rendered useless. The cost of an ordinary torpedo is five hundred pounds, and its weight is half a ton.

MOTOR-OMNIBUSES.

At a meeting of the Scottish Automobile Club held in Edinburgh a paper on 'Motor-Omnibuses and Tramways' was read by Mr John Stirling, of Granton, in which he expressed the opinion that the subject would at an early date

become one of earnest public discussion. He considered that tram-cars constituted a perpetual street obstruction, and as time went on congestion and attendant street dangers would multiply unless a remedy were quickly found. He believed that the motor-omnibus was destined to displace existing tramways in crowded cities. It was free from the serious disadvantage of a tramway service depending for its power upon a central station. Recent improvements had brought motor-omnibuses into prominence as reliable means of commercial locomotion, and he thought that this fact should be widely known. It may be mentioned in connection with this matter that the Great Western Railway Company have opened up a service of road motor-cars between certain stations on their line and villages which hitherto have been difficult of access. These cars carry from fourteen to sixteen passengers, with accommodation for luggage, parcels, and bicycles. They are fitted with twenty horse-power petrol-engines, which enable the vehicles to ascend hills of considerable gradient. Only a few of these railway omnibuses are at present in operation, but it is intended within a short time to extend the service considerably.

SCULPTURE BY PHOTOGRAPHY.

An invention which has recently been shown at the Royal Society, London, is attracting much attention among photographers, for it aims at producing by means of the camera bas-reliefs from living models; and the examples of the work which we have had an opportunity of examining indicate a high measure of success. The system pursued by the inventor, Signor Carlo Baese, depends upon the circumstance that a thick layer of gelatine which has been treated with a bichromate salt, if exposed under a negative to light, will be deprived of its property of swelling on the application of water in proportion to the amount of light which various parts of the surface receive. Such an image in slight relief is the basis of the woodburytype and some other reproductive processes; but Signor Baese exaggerates this relief so as to adapt the method to the production of medals, plaques, and the like, by illuminating the model with a wedge-shaped beam of electric light, so that the more prominent parts (say, of a profile head) will receive the most light, while there is a gradual diminution of its intensity as the background is reached. By this means the ultimate amount of relief on the swelled gelatine which is used as a mould for the medallion to be produced is greatly increased. This is necessarily a very bare outline of the process, which, we believe, has before it a promising future.

RAIL-WELDING.

It used to be stated in some of the old school-books, as an instance of the expansion of iron under the influence of heat, that the metals on a given stretch of railroad were so many hundred feet longer in summer-time than they were in winter and that to leave room for the natural expansion a space was always left between the ends of each rail. This is perfectly true when rails are supported on wooden sleepers and isolated from the ground; but on tram-lines, where the metals actually form part of the roadway, the difference between summer heat and that of winter is so slight as to be disregarded. Such rails are now welded at the joints by the action of electricity; but a newer method which has recently been tried with successful results by the Glasgow Corporation Tramways Department is to employ the German preparation called thermit. This consists of iron oxide mixed with aluminium, which has to be ignited by special means, when the heat given out is so great that the iron separates out in a molten state. The metal is made to flow into a mould in two pieces which are clasped on either side of the rail to be joined up with its fellow. It will be observed that no fish-plates are necessary, the result of the welds being that each rail is in one continuous piece from end to end of the line. This ensures very smooth travelling.

NATURAL BULWARK.

When the Suez Canal was first contemplated there were many misgivings as to the possibility of preventing the sand from filling up the channel, and many suggestions were made as to the best means of preserving the integrity of the banks. But it has since been discovered that Nature has provided the most efficient means of protecting the waterway from injury, and a better one than the sunburned brick or sandstone in use in certain parts of the canal. The natural safeguard is a fringe of reeds, which travellers on the canal may have noticed on the African side below Ismailia. The Canal Company are making an attempt to grow these reeds for transplanting to other places; but the difficulty is that they must be reared in fresh-water, although in after-life they readily adapt themselves to salt-water. On the Asian shore of the canal no fresh water is procurable; but the difficulty should not be insuperable, and we may look forward to the time when the Suez Canal will grow its own embankment.

ORANGE ESSENCE.

In certain parts of South America *petit grain*, or essence of orange-leaves, has long been manufactured, the industry having been initiated a century and a half ago by the Jesuit priests, who at that time held sway over the Indians, and taught them how to rear the orange-trees which now form immense forests. The essence or oil mostly comes from Paraguay, and, according to a recent consular report, is principally manufactured by French people but the natives also make it. The peel of the fruit is exported for making bitters, marmalade, &c.; the essence made from the leaves being placed in hermetically sealed cans, which are enclosed in strong wooden boxes. The natives greatly value the essence as a medicament, using it as an ointment for the

treatment of wounds and cuts both for themselves and for their beasts. They declare that wounds liable to fester are caused to heal very quickly, and that the essence also makes a fine hair-tonic, causing the hair to grow fast when rubbed into the scalp. In commerce, the essence is chiefly imported for its use in perfumery and in soap manufacture, and most of it is shipped to France.

A DOMESTIC COAL-SAVER.

In spite of the introduction of most convenient gas-stoves and electric radiators, there is a comforting, home-like feeling about the blazing coal-fire which heavily handicaps its rivals. It is, of course, a very wasteful method of burning fuel, for the larger part of the heat, including much unburnt carbon in the form of soot and smoke, goes up the chimney. But it is perhaps in the kitchen where the greatest waste goes on, for the closed range there is provided with flues, by the aid of which cook can roar away the coals according to her own sweet will. Campbell's coal-saver has been designed to put a check upon this waste. It consists of a series of iron bars placed at an angle of 45 deg., which can be inserted bodily into the grate, with the result that its area is reduced one-half by a diagonal screen, and the fuel consumption is diminished in the same ratio. At the same time, the effectiveness of the grate is by no means impaired; and as the fuel is kept by this arrangement more towards the back of the grate than it is without the coal-saver, the boiler generally placed there for providing hot-water for the bathroom, &c., is kept hot. A minor point of advantage in connection with the contrivance is that it is very cleanly in use.

HARNESSED ZEBRAS.

Motor-cars and electric trams have been the means of driving thousands of horses from our thoroughfares, and 'the noble animal,' as he used to be called in the old copy-books, now has another possible rival in the zebra. It has long been known that this animal can be broken to harness, and experts declare that it is more intelligent and tractable than the horse. Some interesting experiments have lately taken place at the Zoological Gardens, London, where His Majesty the King has sent the zebras recently presented to him by Menelik, the ruler of Abyssinia. After a few hours' coaxing, the zebras allowed themselves to be saddled and ridden; and the authorities hold out hopes that in time these animals will share with the elephants and camels the duty of carrying children round the Gardens. It was certainly unlucky that the Grevy zebra, nine years old, should die a few days after the course of lessons.

OZONE.

Long ago, when Franklin enumerated the various points of similarity between lightning and electricity, he noted that both had a *sulphurous* smell. We now know that this pungent odour, often observable when lightning is close, and always noticeable in the near neighbourhood of an electric machine or an induction coil, is due to that modified form of oxygen called ozone. In pure sea-air and in the country it gives to air its bracing freshness; it has the power of destroying offensive emanations, and is believed to do good service in purifying the atmosphere in situations where animal life would otherwise vitiate it. In towns and crowded streets it can no longer be recognised. An apparatus for its artificial production by electrical means has been devised by Messrs Rosenberg and Company, of London. This device consists of a series of metal plates enclosed in a box, which can easily be connected with any electric light terminal in a building. It consumes no more current than an ordinary glow-lamp, and gives off abundance of health-giving ozone. This apparatus should prove a valuable adjunct to the ventilation system of a building.

MALARIA AT ISMAILIA.

Professor Boyce has recently returned from Egypt, and has made a most satisfactory statement with regard to the results of the anti-malarial expedition to Ismailia. In September 1902, when Major Ross visited the place, there were two thousand cases of malaria in a population of nine thousand, of whom two thousand were Europeans. At an expense of little more than four thousand pounds, the authorities loyally carried out Major Ross's suggestions as to sanitary reforms: marsh-lands close to the town were filled up, stagnant pools were cleaned, and petroleum was freely used to get rid of the mosquitoes, to whose agency the disease had been traced. The two thousand cases of malaria had now been reduced to one-tenth of that number. There were no deaths among the Europeans last year, and only four among the natives, instead of thirty, as was the case the year before. The president of the Suez Canal Company held out the hope that in a short time Ismailia would come to be regarded as a sanatorium and watering-place for Cairo. Even now people could sleep in any of the houses of the European quarter without mosquito-nets. Major Ross has been asked to draw up a report relative to malaria cases in India, which accounted for three hundred thousand admissions to hospitals among the troops and the jail prisoners. He considers that, in view of what has been done at Ismailia, the cases of disease represented by those figures can be reduced to about one-third.

PHYSICAL DEGENERATION.

We have heard much of late concerning the alleged physical degeneration of the British nation, and pessimists have drawn melancholy pictures of our possible future as a race. For this reason the paper read last month before the Society of Arts by Dr Robert Jones aroused much interest; and, as is often the case, the discussion which it provoked was as valuable as the paper itself. Dr Jones was able to speak as an expert of the increase

of insanity, for he is medical officer to a large county asylum, and he attributes a large percentage of cases to the drink habit. Other causes of deterioration are found in insufficient food, malnutrition, overcrowding, excessive tea-drinking, and juvenile smoking. He believes that the revolt against domestic service is a serious cause of evil, the general want of home experience preventing girls from becoming good wives and mothers. It seemed to be the general belief on the part of those who took part in the discussion that environment rather than heredity was responsible for deterioration of the race, and that much good would accrue if people could be kept on the land instead of flocking to the crowded centres. Dr Hall, of Leeds, said that the best physical development was shown by Jewish children, and he attributed this to their careful feeding. It seems that in the army recruiting department the number of rejections from physical causes remains the same year by year —about one-half. On the other hand, many lads of thirteen to sixteen years of age are passed into the army by the medical officers under the impression that they are eighteen, so well developed are they. In such cases the discharge of the lads is often claimed by their parents, and the true age is divulged.

LIGHTNING-CONDUCTORS.

Mr Alfred Hands has made a very interesting collection of photographs of lightning, and of buildings, &c., which have been struck by lightning, and he used them to illustrate in a very thorough manner a lecture which he recently delivered before the London Camera Club. He pointed out that a lightning-rod is a danger rather than a protection to a building unless it be properly fixed, is of sufficient area, and has a good earth connection. A conductor may be fixed in such a position and with such a bad 'earth' that the lightning is tempted to take an alternative path, say by any adjacent gas-pipe within the building, and in springing from one metal to the other it will probably destroy much masonry. It chooses the pipe path because the ramifications of the mains below ground offer a better earth connection than the rod provided for it. He estimated the damage by lightning annually in this country at about one hundred thousand pounds, and the loss of human life at about twenty. Much of the damage would be prevented if buildings were intelligently safeguarded.

THE TREASURE-LAKE IN SOUTH AMERICA.

In the June 1903 number of *Chambers's Journal* Mr Benjamin Taylor told the story of sunken treasure in the Sacred Lake of Guatavita in the Republic of Colombia, and described the efforts which are being made by a syndicate of adventurers and engineers to reach this treasure by means of a tunnel through the mountain. This romantic enterprise is in steady progress, just as if it were an ordinary matter-of-fact business operation. We are informed by one engaged in it that the water is now being taken out of the lake, which is in a cup-like depression on the top of a mountain. The tunnel described in the article has been driven right through the side of the hill to the edge of the lake, which was reached some months ago, and it was the intention to carry it under the bottom of the lake to a point some feet below the centre of the basin. Meanwhile a shaft was sunk from the banks of the lake to connect it with the tunnel. By means of this shaft the engineers began drawing off the water in three sections. The third section is, we understand, now being emptied. These sections consist of small subsidiary shafts sunk near the water's edge at different parts, and are connected by means of small tunnels with the main shaft admitting to the large tunnel. The drawing off of the first two sections reduced the depth of water from forty-five feet to ten feet. Then, as the ground became very soft, progress was slower. It is expected that the centre of the lake will be bare this month, after which the mud deposit will be carefully sifted for the reputed treasure. The Colombians say that the Spaniards undoubtedly recovered a lot of valuables from the lake, but that this was only the treasure thrown in by the common people from the banks. The treasure deposited in sacrificial form in the centre of the lake by the caciques has, they say, never even been sought for, and is bound to be there now. We shall see.

THE ANSWER.

'THERE 's naught but toil,' I said, and turned once more
To wrestle on with Fate;
And then I heard a little voice implore,
'Do not despond, but wait.'

'There is no joy in life or love or art,'
I said in my despair;
And then I heard your laughter in my heart,
And smiled to hear it there.

'There is no peace,' I sighed in hopelessness—
Held fast in gloom's embrace;
And then I felt your tender hands' caress,
Your lips upon my face.

'There is no promise. How can I rejoice?
To-morrow's lips are dumb!'
And still I hear your tender, hopeful voice:
'The summer days will come!'

J. S. M.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE RIGHT HORSE BUT THE WRONG MAN.

AN ADVENTURE IN SOUTHERN SPAIN.

By F. B. FORESTER, Author of *Held to Ransom*, &c.

IN FOUR PARTS.—PART I.

'AWFULLY rough luck!' said Kendrick, and he looked ruefully at the leg doubled under him.

It was bad enough luck, anyhow. While creeping warily along the base of a steep outcropping shoulder of rock he had made a false step, and had in consequence found himself immediately afterwards sliding, slipping, and jolting down, arriving at the foot of a precipitous slope in a thoroughly jarred and dazed condition, and with a sprained ankle into the bargain.

He tried to stand up as he spoke, found that to be impossible, and dropped down again pretty quickly. Then he looked up at the slope down which he had journeyed in so swift and sudden, if not altogether so pleasant, a manner; turned his regards in like fashion to right, left, and in front of him; and seeing that in the whole range of dreary, desolate, sun-baked crags, and dry, arid, treeless plain, there was not a sign of human existence visible, brought them back to his own immediate surroundings, and fell to fingering the twisted ankle tenderly.

'Don't seem much chance of getting on to Pozo del Monte to-night at this rate,' soliloquised Kendrick once more, and again he gazed from the bare forbidding rocks to the fast-reddening western sky. It would be sunset soon, and he knew it. Moreover, in the south of Spain darkness follows close on the heels of sundown, and he knew that too.

'Now, if there was a Civil Guard anywhere within hail!' thought he, speaking his reflections aloud. 'But, of course, there isn't. There never is when you want him.'

By this time the sun had begun to throw open the glorious doors through which he nightly passed to his rest; every peak, crag, and boulder glowed with a roseate light, wonderful and gorgeous to look at; and for a moment, despite his sprained ankle, Kendrick sat with lips apart and eyes intent, gazing at the majestic spectacle before him, and entirely forgetful of such sublunary matters as supper and shelter for the night. But the thought of these came back with a sudden leap a couple of minutes later, when, while still intent on the vision of glory in the west, he descried at the height of perhaps a hundred feet from where he lay a moving object among the rocks, which object revealed itself presently without doubt as the figure of a man.

'Maybe a Civil Guard after all!' thought Kendrick, with a leap of hope. 'And if that's so, t'other won't be far off. These fellows always hunt in couples.—Hullo! Hullo! *Ho-o-o-la!*'

The prolonged yell was loud enough to have penetrated far beyond the speck on the rocks there above, and for a minute or two Kendrick awaited results eagerly. He had seen the figure come to a halt, sure enough; but the blaze of the westering sun was dazzling his eyes just then, and there was no making it out very clearly. However, he rightly guessed the man to be on his way down, and for a couple of minutes waited eagerly, expecting every moment to see the erect, stalwart figure of a Civil Guard, cocked hat on head and rifle on shoulder, emerge from behind the rock at present barring his view.

But no! In place of the uniformed and white-belted trimness of one of the representatives of Spanish law and order, as upright and soldierly in bearing as military drill and training could make him, his disappointed eyes encountered only a wild, uncouth figure clad in goatskin, and wearing upon his head a cap of the same. So fantastically strange was his appearance that Kendrick found his mind wandering to the representations of Robinson Crusoe as depicted in pantomime and picture-book of his childhood, and for the first time he almost

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wished that he had followed the advice freely bestowed upon him and taken the precaution of carrying a revolver. But the man turned out to be merely a goatherd, and, despite his forbidding aspect, was an honest, good-natured fellow at heart. The worst of it was that the guttural *patois* in which he spoke left Kendrick utterly at a loss at first, and not even a good deal of dumb-show and many repetitions enabled our traveller to understand what the newcomer was trying to say. Moreover, when the latter, after an unintelligible flow of talk, suddenly glanced up to the rocks above and emitted a deafening and almost fiendish yell, the remembrance of certain objects lately seen from time to time throughout his wanderings returned to Kendrick's memory with unpleasant suggestiveness, and set him longing with ten times renewed vigour for that revolver. These objects had been crosses set up here and there by the wayside or happened upon by our hero in rugged and desolate mountain-passes—one and all, according to the testimony of his guide-book, invariably pointing out the scene of a murder; and with such recollections in mind it was hardly strange that Kendrick, rightly interpreting the shouts and gesticulations of the newcomer as signals, should have put him down as a bandit sure and certain, and expected speedily to find himself in the position of contributing another cross to the list. However, in spite of his inches, our traveller was British to the backbone, and being doggedly resolved that, come what might, he would at least die game, he awaited the appearance of his presumptive murderers in grim silence.

But it was a false alarm after all. The expected reinforcements proved to consist only of another sample of the natives, akin to the former, who stared in surprise, as well he might, at the unlooked-for apparition of a middle-aged British tourist in spectacles, Norfolk jacket, and knickerbockers in a place like that. Then it turned out—this fellow having at command a more intelligible *patois* than his comrade—that the intentions of the pair, far from cutting the throat of *el señor Ingles*, were merely to convey him to a small *venta* or roadside inn, hidden from view by the outcropping shoulder of the mountain and distant only a couple of hundred yards or so. Whereupon Kendrick, finding himself lifted carefully to his feet and as heedfully supported between these two stalwart sons of the sierra, recalled his late suspicions with somewhat self-reproachful sensations, and felt—nature having placed him already in the position of looking—a trifle small.

The *venta* referred to, a low, whitewashed, one-storied building, was the largest among a group of half-a-dozen hovels crowded together like frightened sheep, after the manner of outlying villages in Spain, and occupying a sheltered nook beneath a frowning crag. There was a bench at the door, and upon this his conductors set the Englishman down, one remaining beside him while his comrade, making a plunge through the low doorway, summoned with a vigorous shout and in the end brought out the hostess herself, a buxom, black-haired, black-eyed, and in the main comely matron of Andalusia.

Kendrick was wise in his generation, and no believer in extremes. Before quitting Paris he had learned from one enthusiastic friend just returned from a tour in the Peninsula that his experience had gone to prove the Spanish mind superior to reward; from another that an insufficient *douceur* tendered to a native of the Castiles had drawn from that gentleman choice specimens of abuse similar to those in which the London cabby is wont to indulge when displeased with the amount of a tip. Hence our traveller, knowing something of men, and too sagacious to judge by single examples, concluded to strike the happy medium by tendering a couple of *pesetas* to each of his friends in need, and sending them in to drink at his expense. As a result he was somewhat surprised to find the pair go off well satisfied after offering him hearty and courteous thanks, and disposing of a mere modest glass of anisette.

The sun had not yet sunk behind the sierra, and his parting rays still shone strong and bright on the bench by the door and on Kendrick sitting there in meditation. They shone, too, on the unclean gutter a couple of yards away, where a sow and pigs were rooting dejectedly and three or four disconsolate hens doing their best to pick up an evening meal. But of human beings he saw nothing until the return of his hostess.

'Señora,' began Kendrick abruptly, 'is there a doctor here?'

It seemed a hopeless question to ask in view of the surroundings. But his ankle had begun to ache and twinge horribly, and struck, too, in a way that was distinctly unpleasant when he tried to stand.

Up came the hands of the good woman in a moment. '*Un médico! No, por Dios!* But at Pozo del Monte, yes.'

'Nor a post-office?' Kendrick tried again, not very hopefully. But he was thinking that in the event of his being detained there by that wretched ankle it would be necessary to apprise his friends of his whereabouts.

His hostess, a stately dame in voluminous skirts and handkerchief-hidden bodice, paused for a moment, evidently at a loss. Then, apparently certain of being right in that anyhow, she responded, brightening, '*Si*, señor, at Pozo del Monte;' and, evidently under the impression that a post-office must be some sort of civic dignitary, went on to observe, 'They have an *alcalde* [mayor] there too.'

Kendrick sighed. All good and desirable things seemed to be at Pozo del Monte, and he only wished himself there with them. But the fast-falling gloom and the darkening sky seemed to put all such possibilities beyond question for that night anyhow, and there was nothing for it but to limp painfully into the house. Then it was that his feelings, too

sensitive for a present-day tourist, received a rude and sudden shock.

He had passed the night in more than one village of southern Spain of late, and was in consequence tolerably familiar with the general plan of a domestic interior. There to the right of the small, low-ceilinged room in which he found himself now, its not over-clean walls hung with daubs that were supposed to represent the portraits of saints, a doorway minus the door gave upon a stable, at present tenanted by about half-a-dozen mules and their drivers, the former feeding at a long, low rack of hay; the latter mere inanimate bundles of parti-coloured humanity, rolled in their *capas* and nestling fast asleep in the straw. Nothing in itself all this, except that this stable and the famous one of King Augeas had much in common.

Kendrick turned away with a shrug, and glanced at the interior at his elbow. The table had been placed across a corner, and behind it three or four swarthy, beetle-browed fellows, the whole group a study in crude colour, every man with a beard of at least four days' growth blackening lips and chin, and having his close-cropped bullet head covered with a handkerchief tied ringwise round the crown, sat smoking relays of *cigarritos* and drinking from a skin of wine, pausing in these occupations to stare hard at the stranger and whisper to each other. A picturesque, old-time interior, of course, with enough in the way of local colour to commend it to every lover of Cervantes, but hardly calculated—particularly when taken in connection with the formidable knife carried in each man's belt—to appeal to an inoffensive tourist, or render him specially anxious to spend much time in its near neighbourhood. Kendrick had seen enough, anyhow; and as he stood there he registered a mental vow that, come what might of it, sprained ankle or not, that *venta* should not afford him shelter for this night. He turned suddenly upon his hostess.

'Señora,' he broke out in desperation, 'have you anything—horse, mule, donkey'—he was almost on the point of saying pig—'that could carry me to Pozo del Monte to-night?'

The woman looked at him, and he saw her face change suddenly. It was a strange expression, and he remembered it afterwards.

'Then it would seem,' demanded she, 'that the señor has no wish to pass the night here?'

She was right enough there. Kendrick's convictions were quite decided on that point, and he had no scruples in telling her so. His hostess, however, showed no sign of being offended, nor did she try to dissuade him. On the contrary, seeing her guest limp towards the door as if determined upon putting his intentions into action that moment, she uplifted her voice and made the rafters ring in a shrill call for Perico.

LORD NELSON'S PRIZE CAPTURES.

INTERCEPTED LETTERS.

By Rev. R. A. GATTY, LL.B.

PART II.

THERE are many of these captured letters which would bear translation if it were only to get the gossip of various places during the war. As for the sea, the news that the English fleet had sailed must have caused a flutter among the mercantile shipping. The chaplain's diary gives a good idea of what went on, and one can imagine, from his quiet allusions to the captures, that they were the ordinary incidents of sea-life at that time. No doubt each ship carried a letter-bag, and Lord Nelson would require these to be translated by Mr Scott. The following quotations from Mr Scott's diary bear the date 1803:

'*June* 1.—The wind still favourable but not strong, carrying us about three miles an hour.

'*June* 2.—Very early in the morning saw two ships, one like a frigate, at the same time being in sight of the Rock of Lisbon. Wind favourable, and going eight knots. Passed at nine o'clock in the evening Cape St Vincent.

'*June* 3.—Passed Cape Trafalgar. Took a French ship from Guadeloupe to Marseilles, and anchored in the evening at Gibraltar. Wrote several letters.

'*June* 4.—King's birthday. Saluted garrison, Portuguese admiral, and His Majesty. Remained on board from illness. Quitted Gibraltar at three in the afternoon. Gave chase, in company with the *Maidstone* frigate, to a ship and brig in Tetuan Bay. Cleared for action. Passed Ceuta, which, with the fortifications, appeared in a beautiful point of view. Answered the chase-signal, which proved to be the *Tourterelle*, and bore up for Malta.

'*June* 5.—Trinity Sunday. Took a Dutch brig from Cette in Languedoc to Amsterdam. About an hour after took a French brig called *Le Silvain*, bound from Cette to St Malo.'

This made three ships taken in five days. It would be interesting to know what was done with such captures. To put a crew on board each and send them to England would sadly deplete the fighting strength of the Admiral's ship, besides running a considerable risk of recapture on the way home. Mr Scott is never tired of praising Nelson's delightful character, which from its entire freedom from all affectation made him beloved by all ranks. The close intercourse on board ship is a great test and trial of friendliness; and when for nearly two

years—as was the case when with Lord Nelson in the Mediterranean and chasing the French fleet to the West Indies—you rarely leave the ship, and are in constant company with the same person, it might seem difficult to preserve the same admiration and affection. The following story is very illustrative of Lord Nelson's genial kindness: 'One bright morning, when the ship was moving about four knots an hour through a very smooth sea, everything on board being orderly and quiet, there was a sudden cry of "Man overboard." A midshipman named Flinn, a good draftsman, who had been sitting on the deck comfortably sketching, started at the cry, and, looking over the side of the ship, he saw his own servant, who was no swimmer, floundering in the sea. Before Flinn's jacket could be thrown off the captain of marines had sent a chair through the port-hole in the ward-room to keep the man floating, and in the next instant Flinn had flung himself overboard and was swimming to the rescue. The Admiral, having witnessed the whole affair from the quarter-deck, was highly delighted with the scene; and when the party, chair and all, had been hauled upon deck, he called Mr Flinn, praised his conduct, and made him lieutenant on the spot. A loud huzza from the midshipmen whom the incident had collected on deck, and who were throwing up their caps in honour of Flinn's good fortune, arrested Lord Nelson's attention. There was something significant in the tone of their cheer which he immediately recognised; and putting up his hand for silence, and leaning over to the crowd of middies, he said, with a good-natured smile on his face, "Stop, young gentlemen! Mr Flinn has done a gallant thing to-day, and he has done many gallant things before, for which he has got his reward; but, mind, *I will have no more making lieutenants for servants falling overboard.*"'

Every evening Mr Scott was with his chief, and he was constantly a guest at his table. In a letter to Mr Rose, dated May 24, 1804, Lord Nelson said: 'The Rev. Mr Scott desires me to present his best respects to you, and I cannot let this opportunity slip of telling you that his abilities are of a very superior cast, and that he would be a most valuable acquisition to any one high in office. He lives with me; I can therefore speak confidently of his ability.'

Mention has been made of the difficulties Lord Nelson frequently had over victualling his ships, and the missions of Mr Scott to the shore at various places to negotiate *sub rosâ* for these requisites. On one of these occasions he made the acquaintance of Mr Francis Paul Magnon, a native of Savoy, who was commandant of the round-tower of Longo-Sardo, which was situated on an eminence at the natural harbour of Longon, in Sardinia, directly facing Bonifacio, in Corsica. He was a man of literary tastes and a poet, and he and Mr Scott became great friends. When dining one evening with Lord Nelson on the *Victory*, Mr Magnon received from his host a gold medal of the Nile, and from Mr Scott a copy of Cicero's philosophical works and 'a pen which had been used by Lord Nelson.' Among the 'intercepted letters' is an account of the state of the garrison at Bonifacio, which Mr Magnon obtained through a spy, and which at the time was valuable information.

On one occasion when Mr Magnon was on board the *Victory*, he expressed a wish that some of the officers, and even the Admiral himself, would attend one of the religious festivals of the country shortly to be held at a small town near his fort, the sight of which he thought would interest them, and their presence would certainly please the people. Several of the ship's company promised to be present; but before the event took place the fleet had left the Maddalena Islands, and anchored in the Bay of Rosas, in the north of Spain. 'Here the usual communications were held with the shore, and a number of Spanish newspapers, among other things, were sent to the Admiral, and were duly read to him by Mr Scott. In them a great sale of pictures, books, curious Bibles, church plate, dresses, &c. was announced, and attracted Scott's antiquarian tastes. Nothing was said at the time; but it seemed to have dwelt in the Admiral's mind, for at dinner, talking jocosely with Mr Scott, he said, "I know why you dwelt so much upon the advertisements in the Spanish papers. Ah, my dear Doctor! you are always the same. You want a holiday, I suppose, and would be glad to have a run on shore at Barcelona, and ruin yourself in old Spanish books and curiosities, as you have done before. You dwelt upon the advertisement to give me a hint; that's the plain English of the matter.—Well," he continued, turning to the officers, "can we spare Mr Scott?—You see I have half a mind to gratify you. Well, we must send into Barcelona for supplies, so I'll try and indulge you." This was all that took place openly on the subject; but Mr Scott on leaving received his private instructions, a signal was made for the *Juno* frigate to come alongside, and the following day towards evening she was despatched for Barcelona, with Mr Scott on board. They anchored off the town; and Scott, slipping quietly on shore, passed an hour at the theatre, and the next morning began to execute his commissions. In the course of a few days he returned to the *Victory*, when a number of large chests were hoisted on deck with him, which excited no small amusement from the extensive additions the Doctor (as Lord Nelson always called him) had been making to his floating library. What the chests really contained was not known until the party from the ship attended the festival recommended by Mr Magnon, when they discovered that the plate and vestments which decorated the altar and priests, and, in short, all the most distinguished ornaments of the spectacle, had been presents from the Admiral, and that he had employed his secretary to buy them at the Barcelona sale for the purpose of cultivating the goodwill of the people of Sardinia. The Sards

acknowledged the compliment by an enthusiastic inscription in the chapel to the praise of their benefactor.' Such was an instance of Lord Nelson's diplomacy, which proved him as skilful in securing friends as in subduing enemies. It must not be supposed that while these courtesies were going on between the Sardinians and the British fleet they had escaped the notice of the French Government, who sharply wrote to the Viceroy as follows: 'Le Gouvernement de la République a droit de se plaindre de cette excessive complaisance, nourrir régulièrement une escadre, qui bloque un port, la ravitailler, en un mot, periodiquement, c'est fouler aux pieds la neutralité que l'on dit professer. . . . Je vais faire part à mon gouvernement d'un fait, qui mérite toute son attention, et dans lequel, il m'est pénible, de voir quelques motifs de mésintelligence entre la France et sa Majesté Sarde.' The Sardinian Government, having no means of defence or resources for engaging in open hostility with France, complied officially with the neutral regulations by giving public orders for limited supplies; but it continued favourable to the English, and the commandantes of La Maddalena and Gallura were given to understand at the same time that it was the wish of the Viceroy that accommodation of every kind should be afforded to Lord Nelson's fleet. 'On one occasion when Mr Scott was sent ashore at Palermo, he received hospitality from the Benedictine monks of St Martino, whose monastery, which is on a magnificent scale, is situated in a wild, romantic valley, and is kept up in a style of princely grandeur. From its affording so luxurious a retirement, many of the monks are the younger scions of the best families of Italy, and are men of education and taste. While Mr Scott was there he was the means of saving the lives of some travelling priests who had taken shelter in the monastery for the night. His love of reading had caused him to dip deep into the morning hours among his books, when the thought suddenly occurred to him that the priests had gone to sleep in an adjoining room, and that he had seen a charcoal brazier burning there during the day. The idea of their possible danger from suffocation immediately suggested itself. He got up and knocked at their door, but receiving no answer, he went in, and found, as he had apprehended, the charcoal still burning, and the priests in a heavy sleep. So deep was their stupor that but for his timely assistance it must have been fatal; and he used afterwards to say his love of old books had at any rate been of use on that one occasion, even if he had never derived any other advantage from it.'

It is a pity more is not known about these secret service expeditions; but Mr Scott always refused to enter into any particulars about them, and his private journal supplies no further information. About this time he was sent to Algiers from the fleet, and in the Life of Scott the account states that when Lord Nelson arrived at Gibraltar in June 1803 to assume command, he found there the English Consul-General of Algiers, who had been expelled from his post in a most indecent manner owing to some suspicion of the Dey of quite a private nature. This affair, together with the detention of an English ship captured by the Algerine cruisers, had become intricate from the lapse of time and the Dey's shuffling explanations by letter. As soon as Lord Nelson had received instructions from Government to adjust these differences, he appointed Sir G. R. Keats, who then commanded the *Superbe*, to proceed to Algiers for the purpose, and permitted him, at his own particular request, to take Mr Scott with him. Captain Keats made this selection in consequence of the high opinion he had frequently heard the Admiral express of Scott's abilities and his knowledge of languages. The dilatoriness and continued evasion, however, on the part of the Dey rendered it necessary that Captain Keats and his companion should pay two visits before a satisfactory reparation could be extorted. Prior to his intercourse with the Algerine authorities, Scott took the precaution of translating into Italian the instructions by which he was to act. One of the most delicate points in the matter was to discover whether, and how far, the Dey's conduct was influenced by French politics. Three years before this an English fleet had saved Algiers from being attacked and plundered by Bonaparte, who wished to possess it. This was still a favourite object with him, and it seemed very probable that the obstinacy now exhibited, and which, so long as it lasted, precluded any English consul being sent to Algiers, might have secretly originated in the ingenuity of Bonaparte's emissaries. These would naturally wish to keep away every one likely to enlighten the Dey and regency as to their master's nefarious views. Captain Keats's mission, therefore, had to awaken the Algerians to the fact, without seeming to menace them, that they would stand in a very awkward position if they were deserted by England and left to the mercy of France. By this course they succeeded in getting the amplest apology for the insult offered to our consul, and the restoration of the captured vessel, cargo, and crew. The fleet was in port in Sardinia when the *Superbe* returned from her second expedition; but, on account of having come from a country infected by the plague, she could not obtain immediate pratique. This obstruction occasioned a letter from Lord Nelson to Captain Keats, who must have given it to Mr Scott, as it is among his letters, owing no doubt to the references in it to himself:

'"*Victory*," *January 15th*, 1805.

'My dear Keats,—Many thanks for your telegraph message, and I am sorry that, for form's sake, I must consider you, at least for one day, in quarantine; but I think if Dr Scott will go with one of your officers to the shore, and state to the governor and officers of health that you have been as many days in quarantine as you have been from Algiers, that the place is healthy, and you are healthy, with

such winning ways as Dr Scott knows so well how to use, I have no doubt but that you will have pratique; and let your officer say that I have examined the state of the ship and find her proper to have pratique, &c., which I am ready to certify if the governor wishes it. Then I shall hope to have you to dinner; but if they will not give you pratique I shall to-morrow.—Ever, my dear Keats, your much obliged NELSON AND BRONTE.

'I send you some late papers.'

Besides Mr Scott's conferences with the Dey, whom he describes as '*porco grandissimo*,' and Vikel Hadge the Marine Minister, whom he considered a man of talent, he had a great deal of conversation with Bacry and Busnach, the celebrated Jew merchants whose claims upon France afterwards remotely led to open rupture between the two Powers, and at last to the capture of Algiers by the French. Mr Scott was also employed by Lord Nelson at Naples as a means of communication with the Court and the English Minister, Mr Elliott.

The following is a copy of one of Lord Nelson's letters to the Queen of Naples:

'To the Queen of Naples.

'"*Victory*," *Dec.* 29, 1803.

'MADAM,—Yesterday evening I had the honour of receiving your Majesty's gracious and flattering letter of the 10th December, and it is only possible for me to repeat my assurance that my orders for the safety of the Two Sicilies will be always exactly executed, and to this my whole soul goes in unison with my orders. The *Gibraltar* shall not be sent away, for I would rather fight twice our number of forces than risk for a moment the seeing your royal person and family fall into the hands of the French. I see no hope of a permanent peace for Europe during the life of Buonaparte. I ardently wish, therefore, that it would please God to take him from the world. Your Majesty's letter to my dear and good Lady Hamilton shall set out by the first opportunity. Her attachment to your Majesty is as lively as ever. Her heart is incapable of the slightest change; and, whether in prosperity or in adversity, she is always your devoted servant, and such, permit me to say, remains your faithful NELSON AND BRONTE.

'I beg to be allowed to present my humble respects to the Princesses and to Prince Leopold.'

The escape of the French fleet from Toulon caused Lord Nelson in January 1805 to leave his anchorage at the Maddalena Islands, and on May 6 of that year there is this entry in Mr Scott's diary:

'*May* 6.—Arrived in the harbour of Gibraltar; but because the wind has just come from the east we have sailed away.

'The fleet had been for so long a time baffled by contrary winds in the Mediterranean that the favourable change just spoken of was quite unexpected by them. So much so, that officers and men had gone on shore, and the linen was landed to be washed. Lord Nelson, however, observing and weather-wise as he was, perceived an indication of a probable change of wind. Off went a gun from the *Victory*, and up went the Blue-peter, whilst the Admiral paced the deck in a hurry with anxious steps, and impatient of a moment's delay. The officers said, "Here is one of Nelson's mad pranks." But he was nevertheless right; the wind did become favourable, the linen was left on shore, the fleet cleared the Gut, and away they steered for the West Indies. This course Nelson pursued solely on his own responsibility, there being a variety of opinions as to the route the enemy had taken, some saying "they had gone to Ireland," some to this quarter, some to that. Lord Nelson said to Mr Scott, "If I fail, if they are not gone to the West Indies, I shall be blamed. To be burned in effigy or Westminster Abbey is my alternative."'

Mr Scott always considered that Nelson never exhibited greater magnanimity than in his decision on this occasion.

The chase of the French, however, consisted in tracking intelligence of the enemy from one West Indian island to another, until Lord Nelson finally drove them back to Europe, and on July 19 cast anchor once more in the Bay of Gibraltar. On July 22 the fleet sailed from Gibraltar to Tetuan Bay, where they took in water and fresh provisions, and on the 25th they repassed the Straits of Gibraltar, being fired at in the early morning from the battery of Tarifa, but without effect. A few days afterwards, on their course home to England, they celebrated in the Admiral's ship for the seventh and last time the anniversary of the battle of the Nile by the performance of a play. On the 20th of August Lord Nelson landed at Portsmouth, baffled, indeed, in his main object, but with the satisfaction at least of having driven a recreant enemy some thousands of leagues before him, and saved our West Indian possessions from the grasp of Bonaparte.

There has been some dispute just lately about the identical spot in the cockpit where Nelson died, and it was found the place indicated was wrong, and that it should have been marked under a big beam of the ship's side. It certainly is strange that there should have been any doubt whatever on this point, as there exists at Greenwich Hospital an oil-painting by A. W. Devis, who was himself actually present at the battle of Trafalgar. He sketched the scene, and afterwards the principal officers were grouped for the picture. Nelson is shown lying under the ship's beam, in the cock-pit, and Mr Scott is lying beside him rubbing his stomach. The surgeon Beatty is feeling his pulse, and Hardy is bending over him. Other officers also are there. A fine engraving of this picture is occasionally to be met with, and it is the true scene of what took place as certified by Mr Scott. There is the famous death-scene by Benjamin West, R.A., but this is entirely imaginary. It is not recorded what position

Devis held on board the *Victory*, but this might be ascertained from the ship's books. The story of Nelson's death has been so often told that it may seem almost unnecessary to repeat it again; but there is one more letter, which is a copy, that should be given if only for its pathetic interest. It was written by Mr Scott to Lord Nelson's friend Mr Rose, after Lord Nelson's death:

'*H.M.S.* "*Victory*," *December 22nd*, 1805.

'My dear Sir,—In answer to your note of the 10th inst., which, forwarded by way of Chatham, I received this morning, it is my intention to relate everything Lord Nelson said in which your name was in any way connected. He lived about three hours after receiving his wound, was perfectly sensible the whole time, but compelled to speak in broken sentences, which pain and suffering prevented him always from connecting. When I first saw him he was apprehensive he should not live many minutes, and told me so; adding in a hurried, agitated manner, though with pauses, "Remember me to Lady Hamilton—remember me to Horatia—remember me to all my friends—Doctor, remember me to Mr Rose; tell him I have made a will, and left Lady Hamilton and Horatia to my country." He repeated his remembrance to Lady Hamilton and Horatia, and told me to mind what he said several times. Gradually he became less agitated, and at last calm enough to ask questions about what was going on. This led his mind to Captain Hardy, for whom he sent and inquired with great anxiety, exclaiming aloud he would not believe the captain was alive unless he saw him. He grew agitated at the captain's not coming, lamented his being unable to go on deck and do what was to be done, and doubted every assurance given him of the captain being safe on the quarter-deck. At last the captain came, and he instantly grew more composed, listened to his report about the state of the fleet, directed him to anchor, and told him he should die, but observed he should live half-an-hour longer. "I shall die, Hardy," said the Admiral. "Is your pain great, sir?" "Yes; but I shall live half-an-hour yet. Kiss me, Hardy." The captain knelt down by his side and kissed him. Upon the captain leaving him to return to the deck, Lord Nelson exclaimed very earnestly more than once, "Hardy, if I live I'll bring the fleet to an anchor—if I live I'll anchor—if I live I'll anchor"—and this was earnestly repeated even when the captain was out of hearing. I do not mean to tell you everything he said. After this interview the Admiral was perfectly tranquil, looking at me in his accustomed manner when alluding to any prior discourse: "I have not been a great sinner, Doctor," said he. "Doctor, I was right. I told you so. George Rose has not yet got my letter—tell him"—— He was interrupted here by pain. After an interval he said, "Mr Rose will remember—don't forget, Doctor—mind what I say." There were frequent pauses in his conversation. Our dearly beloved Admiral otherwise mentioned your name indeed very kindly, and I will tell you his words when I see you; but it was only in the two above instances he desired you should be told.—I have the honour to be,' &c.,

'A. J. Scott.'

Mistakes are often made from very slight causes; but afterwards, when years are gone by, they are not always easily corrected. The great fresco of the death of Nelson by Maclise in the House of Lords has in one corner an envelope, on which is written, 'Rev. Dr Scott, Secretary H.M.S. *Victory*.' This is a mistake, as Mr Scott was Lord Nelson's secretary, and he was not Doctor till after the battle, when the University of Cambridge gave him the honorary degree. Another Mr Scott was the ship's secretary, and was cut in two by a chain-shot the moment the battle began. It so happened that while the picture was in progress Dr Longley, then Archbishop of Canterbury, took my father and mother to hear a debate in the Lords; and, to fill up the time, the Archbishop suggested they should call on Mr Maclise, who was at work behind a hoarding in the gallery. On knocking for admittance, they found the artist had gone out; but a workman was there with a syringe, squirting a preparation over the painting to render it proof against damp and weather. My father explained that the lady with him was daughter of the late chaplain of the *Victory*, and the man said Mr Maclise would be sorry he missed seeing her, for he was hunting all over London to get some one to give him particulars about Lord Nelson's death. My father then took out his card, on which was 'Rev. Dr Gatty;' and he added, 'Mrs Gatty, daughter of Rev. Dr Scott, Secretary H.M.S. *Victory*,' forgetting he was not Doctor at the time, and also not secretary of the ship. On his return Mr Maclise put the envelope into his picture, the only name there, and it can never be corrected on the fresco.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

By William Le Queux.

CHAPTER XXIV.—FORESTALLED!

WALTER went out again, and returned after an absence of about three-quarters of an hour. They had telegraphed to Peterborough, he said, but of the nature of the message he knew nothing. After leaving me he had watched the pair ascend the curious old triangular bridge which stands in the centre of the village at the junction of cross-roads, and once, no doubt, spanned two narrow rivers long since dried up. On the top of this old Saxon bridge, approached by three flights of much-worn steps, Lord Glenelg and the hunchback halted, and stood gazing around. Then again Graniani took another plan from his pocket, took bearings of the northern angle of the one remaining tower of the abbey, and, his compass in hand, pointed away to a comfortable old-fashioned stone house in East Street, between the abbey and the bridge, the brass plate on which showed it to be occupied by a Mr Wyche, a solicitor.

Openly, and watched by the idlers at the bridge, the lounging-place of the villagers, they made a measurement to the corner of the house in question, going over the ground twice in order to make no miscalculation, Walter watching them from the bar-window of a small beer-house. The villagers evidently supposed the pair to be surveyors, and took but little notice; nevertheless Wyman kept careful observation upon their every movement.

'What they intend doing at the corner of that house in East Street I can't for the life of me imagine. They made a small mark in charcoal on the wall about two feet from the ground, then again returning to the top of the bridge and referring to the plan, took their bearings a second time and marked a spot right out of the village to the north-east of the abbey, in the centre of the field about ten yards behind the old windmill.'

'And then?' I asked, much interested.

'Then, having done this, they went to the telegraph office and wired to some one in Peterborough—afterwards returning to the "White Hart," and engaging beds for the night, saying that they had decided not to return until the morrow.'

'Why, surely they intend to make a search for the treasure?' I gasped.

'Without doubt,' was his reply. 'My theory is that they've telegraphed to some of their friends who are awaiting them in Peterborough, and that they mean to make a secret search to-night when all the villagers are asleep and everything is quiet.'

When dusk fell we again called upon the rector, explained how we had discovered the presence of our rivals and their intentions, and arranged to return to him at ten o'clock. The feature of the case that aroused the rector's indignation—and most justly, too—was the intention of the others to search without permission. To me, their mode of facing matters boldly showed that they were in possession of positive information, and relied upon securing the treasure and getting it away before any one knew of their intentions.

When Walter once took up an inquiry or set out upon a journey, he never rested until his object was accomplished. He was one of those men who seem continually active and unable to rest in idleness for ten consecutive minutes, and, happy possessor of such a fine physique, he was never tired. We watched the pair away from the 'White Hart' again, for they were both smoking and wandering about, apparently enjoying the rural quiet, but in reality awaiting darkness. Then, when they had gone away—in the direction of the old South Eau, we learnt—we both lounged into the inn, called for ale, and chatted with the rosy-cheeked servant who brought it. A judicious sixpence released her tongue, and by careful questions we soon learnt all we wished about the two guests. They were staying till morning, but did not expect any visitors. One, the tall gentleman, was a doctor and might be recalled; therefore their coachman from Peterborough, who would remain there also, might be called up during the night, and they would be compelled to leave. His lordship had recourse to a clever fiction, then. He was a doctor who might be called in the middle of the night! I suppose it never occurred to the rustic mind that, if he was a doctor, his practice was not in Crowland, and therefore he was scarcely likely to receive an urgent call.

The other man, she told us, was a foreigner. They had brought a bag full of papers, but kept it locked. Both took a great interest in old ruins, and for that reason they had taken some measurements.

One fact she forgot she remarked before going out. The tall gentleman had said that a young lady might arrive during the evening and inquire for him. If she did, she was to be asked to wait.

A young lady! Was it possible that Lady Judith was about to follow her father there?

As ten o'clock chimed from the abbey bells we took our candles, and, wishing the worthy landlord 'good-night,' went to our rooms and there waited until all was still. Crowlanders retire early to bed, and presumably the policeman, like all others, has to meet another guardian of the peace, perhaps, at the end of that long, straight old road called Kennulph's Drove that runs towards Peterborough, for we saw nothing of him when we carefully crept

* Copyright, 1904, by William Le Queux.

down, drew the bolts, unlocked the door, and, closing it noiselessly after us, made our way to the rectory.

Mr Mason, ready attired in hat and overcoat, opened his door noiselessly ere we had approached it, and we slipped into his study to tell him all that we had heard. Then, feeling that we ought to go forth at once and take up our position to watch, we all went out, skirting the churchyard and passing down behind the high hawthorn-hedge which formed the boundary of the field wherein were traces of the fish-ponds.

The night was dark and starless, with that oppressive stillness that foretokened a storm. Behind us lay the black ruins of the abbey rearing high and gloomy; and as we passed along, led by the rector, who knew every nook and corner, a silence fell upon us.

The rector's object was to approach the spot marked with the paper and stone as near as possible, yet having good cover to conceal us. In this he was eminently successful; for, after we had traversed the field on two sides, he suddenly suggested that we should crouch down in a low hedge only thirty yards or so from the scene of operations.

We conversed together in low, expectant whispers for almost an hour, until, indeed, the rector began to fear that our vigilance was in vain, when of a sudden we heard on the hard road far distant the sound of wheels approaching—the road skirting the village on the Welland side, Mr Mason declared.

They approached until they had gained the point where we ourselves had left the road, then stopped. The vehicle bore no lights, but from where we lay concealed we heard men's voices in greeting, as though his lordship and the hunchback had met them there by appointment; and then we heard the jingle of spades and the clatter of iron as some implements were apparently taken from the cart.

Without loss of time the party approached; and a lantern being turned on by one of them, search was made for the piece of paper held down by the stone. This was quickly found, whereupon more lights were turned upon the spot, and then we saw that the treasure-seekers numbered four—two of them were new-comers, apparently well equipped for the undertaking.

So close were we that we could overhear nearly all their conversation, for in that still night all sound travelled a great distance. But their words were few. Lord Glenelg assumed direction of the work, and before long the whole four, his lordship included, were busy with pick and spade making a large square excavation. Their lamps showed an excellent light upon the work, and were additionally useful to us, for we lay back in the dark shadow impossible of discovery.

Suddenly, as one of the men bent down to examine the ground, and the light fell full upon his big, clean-shaven countenance, Walter gripped my arm, whispering 'See! That's the fellow Selby! Can you see his face? He's the man who probably holds the missing page of The Closed Book.'

I looked, and obtained a fairly good sight of his dark, sinister-looking visage—a hard, clean-shaven, furrowed face that had the miscreant stamped upon it. He seemed to be wearing a rough suit of dark serge, with a soft felt-hat which he had pushed to the back of his head. Seen under such auspices by the uncertain light of the lamp, he was not the kind of man one would care to associate with: loosely built, gross in manner, and deep of voice.

I watched him narrowly for a few moments, but he soon continued digging with the others, and when he stood upright his face was not within the zone of light. All worked with a will, knowing, of course, that the undertaking must be finished before the dawn, and from all four the perspiration soon poured, and their quick, deep breathing reached us even where we crouched, content within ourselves that their labour must be in vain.

Through nearly two hours they toiled on, removing the earth around a line of huge stones which appeared to be the foundations of one or other of the monastic buildings long since swept away. Time after time the abbey chimes sent out their solemn music far over the wide, misty fenlands; but with pick and spade and crowbar they slaved away in their efforts to recover the gold and jewels, the great treasure of what had been one of the wealthiest abbeys in England.

The hole they had made was so deep that two of the conspirators were down working out of our sight. The other two were Selby and the hunchback.

Suddenly, above the sharp ring of the picks, we heard a heavy thud, and then another.

'Look!' broke from Selby excitedly. 'At last! Here's the first of the chests—bound with iron. Hark!' And again he struck it heavily with his pick, while his companions were around him instantly, dropping on their knees and examining the find.

'That's one of them, without a doubt!' cried Lord Glenelg, as excited as any of the others. 'Come! Let's get it out. How very fortunate that we fixed the exact spot!'

The hearts of all three of us sank within us. How unfortunate for us, after all, that Walter had moved their paper mark from its original position!

PALESTINE UNDER THE SULTAN'S SWAY.

MANY books have been written on Palestine. It is to be feared that the tourist has to answer for a great deal of the trash which passes for travel-literature. Travelling in the East has been made so easy that it has become the fashion to 'do' Palestine. Clergymen in ever-increasing numbers visit the country every year. Incompetent guides and dragomans supply the indulgent traveller with such information as they think will please him. After a short visit to Jerusalem and a rapid run of eight to ten days through the land, the traveller thinks that he has got such a store of valuable information on Palestine that the world will be thankful to share it. Clergymen are the greatest sinners in this matter. Perhaps they have to prove to their congregations that they have not wasted their time, and the proof usually takes the shape of a volume which is valuable only to burn. This may appear to some a hard saying; but if the reader had seen a tenth part of the trash which has come under the notice of the writer he would judge that it is not too severe. The amount of nonsense, the utter twaddle and futility of most of these books on Palestine are appalling. There are a few notable exceptions.

The writer has no thought of adding one to the number of 'Travels in Palestine.' He has lived for a good number of years as a missionary in the country, and desires merely to record one or two facts about Turkish misgovernment. While for obvious reasons the writer's name must not appear, the reader may be assured that what is here recorded rests on personal knowledge, not on hearsay.

It is common knowledge that the government of the Turk is corrupt, but how corrupt it is very few except those who have lived under the Sultan's sway really know. It is not too much to say that the whole system of government is rotten. There is not an office, great or small, which is not bought. Without the giving of backsheesh no office can be obtained. Every petty town throughout the provinces has its own governor (*ka-im-akam*) and judge (*kâdi*), its own municipality with its various officials, and every governor and judge and municipal official must pay so much for his place. And the amount given for any office, and of course as much more as possible, the official must squeeze out of the people under him before he is called upon to resign his office. A system of rotation ostensibly devised for the safeguarding of justice and the interests of the poor, but in reality working for the enrichment of the government through the exploitation of the people, secures that no official shall exercise his functions for long in one place without a break. The governor or judge, if long resident in one place, might, it is said, be influenced by the rich against the poor. Hence frequent changes are resorted to. But in reality these frequent changes bear far more heavily upon the poor than occasional acts of injustice would do. At every shifting of the scenes the official has to *buy* his old or a new place, and he is always expected to give a higher price than on the last occasion. Thus, as his salary is small and frequently unpaid, he has every inducement to make hay while the sun shines. A judge, for example, is appointed for two years. His term may be less (for he may be dismissed at any time) and it cannot be more. Before his appointment he must go to Constantinople and buy his office from the Porte; and according to the amount paid will the district assigned him be good or bad. It often happens that he must pay for his appointment *a sum equal to the whole of his salary for the two years' term;* and as his salary, inadequate as it is, is sometimes unpaid for six months at a stretch, the judge, however willing he may be to administer justice, is compelled to accept bribes—nay, more, to *demand and force them.*

The governor (*ka-im-akam*) is not usually obliged to repair to Constantinople. He is appointed by the governor-general (*vali*), through whom his 'donation' is forwarded to headquarters. Even if he is a man of influence who can secure his appointment directly from the Porte, he yet finds it to be to his interest to 'square' or 'satisfy' his chief in the vilayet (a district under a *vali*). The writer knows a case where this was not done, the *ka-im-akam* thinking he had influence enough to stand against the *vali*. The result was that the *vali* made things so hot for his subordinate that he had to resign after little more than a year's rule. Again, if any important case comes before a *ka-im-akam*, appeal may be made by either of the parties to the governor-general. If the appealing party only presents him with a gift the decision will be in his favour, unless the local *ka-im-akam* also sends him a remittance, when it is likely that *his* decision will be upheld. It frequently happens, however, that both parties *and* the *ka-im-akam* make contributions, when the decision will be for the highest bidder.

The same principle, or want of principle, holds good with regard to the offices of municipalities. The doctor, for example, is appointed by the Minister of Health, with the concurrence of the *vali*. But before the appointment is made both these officials must be 'satisfied.' In many respects the doctor's position is worse than that of any other official. He may be removed at any time at the caprice of his superior; he may be charged with murder if an influential patient dies under his care; he may be evilly reported of by a casual inspector if 'palm-oil' is not given him; his salary is small and is irregularly paid (this is true of *all* officials). Every office, however lowly, has to be secured by backsheeshing a superior. Even the scavenger, when there is such a functionary, must pay a dollar or two before he

can secure his miserable employment which brings him in a few coppers per week. So, again, in the Post-Office every employé must pay his price, which price, and as much more as possible, he will get by hook or crook out of the poverty-stricken people. Without backsheesh nothing can be done by native or foreigner with any municipal or government official. If you want a dead animal removed from your door—it has perhaps been placed there for the purpose of 'bleeding' you—you must backsheesh the scavenger before he will remove it. If you want your letters and telegrams delivered or despatched promptly, you must backsheesh the messenger or operator. If you want to build a house or effect an alteration on existing premises, the whole hungry brood of town and government officials must be 'fed.' If you want a case tried in the law-courts, you must grease the wheels of the law machinery. I do not say there are not exceptions here and there. Occasionally you will find a governor or judge who, as a personal favour, will get your case attended to. More rarely you will find one who, on principle, does not take gifts. But these cases are so rare that they may be passed over. During nearly eleven years' residence in Palestine, the writer has known personally only two *ka-im-akams* and one judge who refused to take bribes. Two of these were men of wealth and of European education, and the third was a young man in his first place, who has not, it is reported, persevered in the good way. Indeed, it is almost impossible, under the present system, to refrain from what the people style 'eating.' 'He is a great "eater,"' is said of an official who does nothing without backsheesh. The Turkish official has to pay heavily for his place; his salary, small enough if paid regularly, is often merely nominal; he may have three or four wives and a large family, and if he is to live he must 'eat.' Thus on all sides the people suffer, and when the reader hears how they are oppressed by the system of taxation he will marvel, with all Europeans resident in the country, how the miserable, oppressed peasantry contrive to live.

On all produce a tax of (nominally) one-tenth is levied. In reality the tax is frequently, it might be said generally, as much as one-half, and in some instances it swallows up the whole produce. How this can possibly be the reader shall hear. The crying evil with regard to this tax of the tenth is that it is *let out*. The government does not collect it, but sells that privilege to the highest bidder. In a favourable year there will be keen competition. The would-be tax-gatherers (*publicans* of the New Testament) inspect the crops of the district, appraise them at a certain value, and offer so much for the tax. He whose offer is accepted collects the tax as he pleases. There is no government inspector to see that he does not take more than his due, and he will extract from the poor illiterate *fellah* as much more than the government tax as he possibly can. But let us suppose that the farmer has done fairly well, the year having been a good one. Next year, perhaps, the rains are late or insufficient, or the crops are destroyed by vermin. From one cause or another there is a poor crop. Does the farmer therefore pay a smaller tax than before? Not necessarily, and more than probably not. He *ought*, of course, to pay less, as the tax is one-tenth of the yield. But the *vali* dare not send to Constantinople this year less than he sent the last. His plea that there had been a bad harvest would not be listened to. He would be instantly dismissed and a successor appointed who would not allow bad harvests. Hence, if the crop is poor, so much the worse for the farmer, who, to save the *vali* from dismissal, has to pay *the same sum*, or as near as may be, as if the yield were at high-water mark. In 1901, for example, owing to insufficient rain, the crops were generally about one-third of what they were in 1900. The farmer, therefore, should have paid about 33 per cent. of the former year's tax. As no profit was likely to be made, no one would offer for the collecting. The sheiks or village chiefs were therefore made responsible for the tithe. They offered 40 per cent. of the former year's tax. The offer was treated with scorn. They were brought into the *ka-im-akam's* presence and induced by threats to promise 60 per cent. The *ka-im-akam*, who was a humane and fairly just-minded man, but without experience, reported to the *vali* that he thought the sheiks could promise no more, and that even with this percentage many would be ruined. The *vali* informed the young *ka-im-akam* that he did not know his business, and that he would send a special commissioner who would let him see how to raise the tax. That gentleman came, saw, and conquered. The village sheiks were once more summoned, were at once cast into prison, and told that they should not depart until they had promised the last farthing. And meantime, until this business was settled, no harvesting operations were allowed, so that a good deal of the grain was lost. The *kourbash*, a heavy whip of plaited hide, was freely used as a persuader, and at last the unhappy prisoners promised 90 per cent. of the former year's tax, and this was actually paid. With what had been lost through delay, the whole produce was in not a few cases absorbed. Scarcely a farmer had enough grain left for next year's seed, and few had enough to feed their oxen. Half of the animals had in some instances to be sold that the rest might be fed; and some cases were known to me where all the oxen had to be sold to provide the simplest food—Indian corn—for the family. In one instance, when the sheiks were brought before the lieutenant-governor (*mutasarrif*) and were proving obstinate, he was so exasperated that he sprang upon one of the unfortunates and bit his finger to the bone! This is a fact, though many may be unwilling to believe it.

Fruit-trees are taxed in a similar way. The tax is raised in a good year, and kept at the highest figure even in the worst year. As with the grain, sometimes the whole yield is swallowed up by the

tax. Even if there is *no* fruit, still the owners must pay; and hence it is that many owners of olive-trees have during the last few years cut them down that they might be free from such iniquitous demands.

Another grievance must be added. If the tax-collector gets into difficulties, as he well may, because of his exactions, he can call upon the local government for help. Soldiers are quartered upon the *fellahin* until the last farthing is paid, and even then they will not depart until they receive a back-sheesh. In some cases when this was refused they drove off the oxen and horses and sold them. Such is the *normal* state of affairs; what of the *abnormal?*

THE DEADLY TORPEDO.

THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE WEAPON IN THE WORLD.

THE firm of Messrs Whitehead, whose name is borne by the most terrible engine of destruction that has ever been invented, supply nearly all the navies of the world with their famous torpedoes. Great Britain and Russia are the exceptions, although the French, Germans, Danes, and Italians make a certain proportion of torpedoes at home, and even the Japanese, resourceful in this as in so many other directions, manufacture a few for themselves.

Though there are many types of torpedoes, yet the standard dimensions may be taken at a diameter of eighteen inches and a length of sixteen feet five inches for all ships-of-war except torpedo-boats, and these carry torpedoes having a diameter of fourteen inches and a length of fourteen feet ten inches. The Russian torpedo has a diameter of fifteen inches and is nineteen feet long.

As with all ships-of-war and weapons, improvements are being constantly made in the Whitehead torpedo, and ceaseless experiments combined with the application of untiring energy and the highest skill have made the present-day torpedo the beautiful and marvellous weapon that it is. The improvements are in the direction of speed and in the torpedo's range of action. The speed chiefly depends upon the pressure at which the torpedo can, in its air-vessel, carry the compressed air which is used for propelling it through the water. Until quite recently this pressure did not exceed one hundred atmospheres (about one thousand five hundred pounds per square inch); but Messrs Whitehead have now produced a new torpedo in which the pressure is to be no less than about two thousand two hundred and fifty pounds per square inch.

A torpedo is constructed in the following parts: the head, which encloses in war-time the charge of gun-cotton or similar high explosive; the air-chamber, which is about eight feet long; the balance-chamber, for regulating the depth at which the torpedo travels; the engine-room, the after-part of which now contains the wonderful gyroscope, which is literally the brain of the torpedo; and the tail. Indeed, the torpedo is by no means unlike a human body, for in addition to its brain it has its lungs in the shape of the air-chamber and its heart in the form of the engine-room. And very tough lungs they are, too, and a very stout heart it is, for the little engines develop no less than forty-five horse-power.

The charge of explosive in the head has varied a good deal with different patterns or makes of torpedoes, but it has never been less than one hundred and twenty-five pounds or more than one hundred and eighty pounds. The lesser charge would probably either disable or sink a ship, however large; while the greater charge would, if properly exploded, almost certainly cause her to sink at once.

The charge is fired by a percussion arrangement which is 'safe' until the torpedo has travelled for a certain distance. The violent blow with which the point of the torpedo would strike a vessel is enough to fire the primer and charge by means of a simple rod or striker impinging on a detonator. The safety-gear to prevent premature explosion only consists of a screw-nut on the striker, which is fitted with small blades like a screw-propeller, which screw back the nut as the torpedo passes through the water, and so allows the striker to have play enough to strike the detonator.

The air-chamber is made from a steel forging; its walls are three-eighths of an inch thick, and after having been machined as a hollow cylinder, the ends are screwed in and soldered to make them air-tight. The forgings for these chambers have to be most carefully made, and have to pass elaborate tests. They are manufactured either in England (by Messrs Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth, and Company, of the world-famous Elswick Works, Newcastle-on-Tyne) or in Austria, where Messrs Whitehead's works are situated.

The capacity of the air-chamber for an eighteen-inch torpedo is about ten cubic feet, but for the latest one hundred and fifty atmosphere torpedo this capacity has been increased to about eleven cubic feet. In other words, the process of charging an air-chamber of ten cubic feet to one hundred atmospheres means that all the air in a room ten feet long, ten feet broad, and ten feet high is pressed into a vessel ten feet long, one foot high, and one foot broad.

The balance-chamber was in the first days of the torpedo often called the 'secret' chamber because Mr Whitehead only allowed the secrets of its mechanism to be explained to those who signed a paper promising not to divulge what they learned. The secret is now so well known that it is no breach

of confidence to explain that the mechanism consists of a combination of hydrostatic valve and pendulum which controls horizontal rudders in the tail of the torpedo. The hydrostatic valve is supported by springs against the pressure of water due to the depth at which the torpedo is travelling, so that the depth can be regulated by increasing or diminishing the compression of the springs.

With a fast-running torpedo the pressure on the rudders themselves is so considerable as to render it necessary to use an engine to work them. The balance-chamber combination of hydrostatic valve and pendulum therefore operates a small valve in a servo-motor engine, the piston of which moves in obedience to the valve, and in its turn moves the horizontal rudders. The servo-motor is worked by compressed air, and is to the torpedo what steam-steering-gear is to a steamer. The engines are triple-cylinder, single-acting, they run at about twelve hundred revolutions a minute, and develop about forty-five horse-power.

The Whitehead torpedo could be adjusted to run a fairly straight course from a fixed launching apparatus; but it was not very reliable under the conditions which must prevail in warfare, when it has to be fired from a moving vessel. Therefore, until recently it was generally considered that four hundred yards would be about the correct range at which to discharge a torpedo against an enemy. Under these circumstances there is but slight wonder that up till the present war very little execution has been done with torpedoes. The invention of the gyroscope, however, completely altered matters. A gyroscope for steering torpedoes was several times proposed, but it was left to an Austrian engineer named M. Obry to invent the mechanism by which the gyroscope could be made practicable. So perfect is the 'gyro' now that if a torpedo be launched in a certain direction it will maintain that direction to the end of its run. It is this little instrument which has made long-range firing with torpedoes practicable.

The gyroscope is to the torpedo what the fly-wheel is to a watch. It consists of a wheel of about four and a half inches diameter, with a heavy periphery. This wheel can be engaged with mechanism attached to a strong clock-spring. The wheel is in a gimbal frame, and on the frame is a small lever which controls a tiny air-valve. The air-valve can admit pressure to one side or the other of a piston in a cylinder, and by suitable rods and levers the action of the piston is communicated to a pair of vertical rudders. Before launching the torpedo, the clock-spring is wound up by hand, which action also locks the gyroscope wheel in a certain plane. When the torpedo is launched a lever is thrown over, an act which admits the air from the air-chamber to the main engines, and at the same time releases the clock-spring mechanism. This sets the gyroscope spinning at a very high speed, and having done so, releases it, so that it is left spinning freely. It will therefore resist any motion tending to change the plane in which it is spinning. If the torpedo swerves to the right or left the little air-valve opens in the direction necessary to move over the vertical rudder to correct the deflection. It is only when the torpedo has assumed the direction in which it lay immediately before launching that the vertical rudders come 'amidships.'

The 'gyro' is a delicate instrument, and has to be not only carefully kept but frequently treated for adjustment. It is therefore made so that it can be readily removed from the torpedo. It is generally kept in a little box, and most ingenious appliances are provided for adjusting it. When in the torpedo the 'gyro' finds its place in the after-body.

So much for the torpedo and its mechanism. Let us now look at the means of launching it.

All modern ships of considerable size are fitted with submerged torpedo-tubes—in other words, launching apparatus *below* the water-line. The two best-known systems are that of the British Admiralty pattern and that of Messrs Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth, & Company. Both systems are kept as secret as possible, but it may be said that the principal difference is that in the Admiralty tube the bar or shield is run out before firing the torpedo and run in after firing; while in the Armstrong tube the torpedo and shield go out together, and the shield returns automatically as soon as the torpedo has gone.

In the Admiralty tube the torpedo is ejected by compressed air—that is, the tube may be looked upon as a gun and the torpedo as the shot. A charge of compressed air is introduced and shoots out the torpedo. In the Armstrong tube either cordite or compressed air can be used.

All the Japanese ships above nine thousand tons are fitted with the Armstrong submerged torpedo-tubes, and the Russians also employ this tube.

Small vessels such as torpedo-boat destroyers and torpedo-boats are much too small to carry submerged torpedo-tubes, so they are provided with 'above-water' tubes. These are very simple apparatus, consisting of a smooth tube into which the torpedo is placed, and from which it is ejected again by means of either compressed air or cordite, usually the latter. The torpedo is shot out into the air and falls into the water, where it quickly picks up its depth under the influence of the balance mechanism and horizontal rudders, and its direction from the gyroscope and vertical rudders.

None of the torpedoes now being used in the Far East are of the one hundred and fifty atmosphere pattern; but they are all fitted with gyroscopes and are capable of ranging two thousand yards.

A word or two may be said with regard to handling torpedo-boats and destroyers. In the opinion of eminent naval authorities these are such a danger to war-vessels that instructions should be issued that every torpedo-boat seen at night to be approaching should be destroyed, on the chance of its being an enemy. 'Your own boats should be given a countersign in the shape of some signal with

lights to change every night or every hour of the night, and the boat having made the signal from a distance should stop until the ship has covered her with her searchlight beam, and should then approach slowly.'

No ship, much less a fleet, should lie at anchor in an open roadstead, and this danger has been so well recognised by our Admiralty that they have prepared a harbour of refuge at Portland just in the most convenient place for our fleet to lie in time of war. This harbour is enclosed with breakwaters except for two narrow entrances, which could be closed by booms and other similar obstructions, besides being well defended with guns and searchlights. At Portland a fleet would be perfectly safe from torpedo attack, and yet without either difficulty or delay it could get to sea. No one can justly attribute neglect to the Admiralty, who are ceaselessly striving to foresee every danger to the British fleet, recognising that on it depend not only the welfare but also the very existence of the Empire.

BURIED HISTORY IN ROMAN REMAINS.

THE lingering traces of Roman occupation in Britain still call forth the latent enthusiasm of antiquaries and others, and every year that passes leaves a well-digested array of new facts, of excavations mapped and described, which will furnish a rich quarry for the future historian. This exploitation of Roman remains is on a higher level than the treasure-hunting craze encouraged by some journals from which better things might have been expected. Now and again some old hoard awakens more than local interest. At Caerwent, Chepstow, where excavations have been going on since 1899, stately fragments of a little walled town inhabited by civilised Romano-Britons have been unveiled, besides a hoard of seven thousand five hundred bronze coins found in the corner of a house in 1902. Dr Talfourd Ely has published an account of six years of digging in the island of Hayling (Hampshire), under the title of *Roman Hayling*. At Silchester (Hants), at Gellygaer (thirteen miles north of Cardiff), Brough (Derbyshire), and elsewhere discoveries have been made. Abroad, at Kaiser-Augst, near Basel, coins are found every year. A private collector has secured from this place specimens of coins from the time of Emperor Augustus to Arcadius, a period of over four centuries, minted in Rome, Lyons, Trèves, and London. Imitation coins made from impressions of money in circulation have also been found, as well as an early Christian cross of silver plate. While the ground was being dug up in connection with a deep drainage scheme at Stamford in 1903, Roman ironworks were disclosed. At High Wycombe was found, in 1904, a rare coin of 322 A.D., minted in London, inscribed 'Crispus Nobil. C.,' Crispus being a son of Constantine the Great. A copper coin found here shows the bust of the Emperor Galerius, 300 A.D. Near Walmer an interesting collection of pottery was found, beautifully fashioned, and with the glaze still almost perfect; also a green glass vase, evidently a cinerary urn, with human remains, found inside a glass jar. Mr Le Queux, author of *The Closed Book*, at Castor (Northamptonshire), found in a field close to the ancient Ermine Street the floor and boundary walls of a temple, besides glass and pottery. The discovery of a relic of the Roman wall around London below Newgate Jail, and the bastion in the wall of St Giles' Church, Cripplegate, shows how we are treading to-day over the foundations of a past civilisation.

This is much more the case at the heart of the Empire. To Giacomo Boni, under whom the Forum at Rome is being excavated, it has seemed for many years past that the greatest book of human history, the story of the life of Rome, lies buried, page upon page as it was written, within the small half square mile of the Forum, 'which was the most famous spot of the ancient world.' Truth is sought for not less in the pages of the historian than in the accumulated débris of ages, as Livy, whom he quotes, has said, 'to set our minds to understand the life and customs of the ancient Romans, that we may perceive by what manner of men and through what means, whether at home or in the field, the Roman power arose and grew.' The excellent handbook entitled *Recent Excavations in the Roman Forum, 1898–1904*, by Mr E. Burton-Brown (John Murray), will certainly assist towards this end. We are apt to forget that Roman polity lasted for a thousand years, and that in Britain there was Roman domination for about three hundred years at least. 'Roman methods,' says Mr Burton-Brown, 'were rough and often cruel; but the Roman character was of the strongest and most self-controlled. On Roman law the system of modern life is based, and no people ever ruled so well, because no men have ever so well ruled themselves.'

Rome was not so much destroyed from outside as by its own rulers. Professor Lanciani asks in his *Destruction of Ancient Rome* where the two hundred and fifty thousand feet of stone and marble in the Circus have gone, and replies that not the barbarian, but the Romans themselves of the Imperial, Medieval, and Renaissance periods are responsible for its destruction. In dredging the Tiber, he further says that the strata disclosed correspond with considerable regularity to the leading catastrophes in the history of Rome. For the details of the excavations in the Forum we recommend the reader to Mr Burton-Brown's book. Special interest, however, attaches to what was found in some of the forty wells which were cleared there. Later

we mention the 'finds' in a well in the station of Barr Hill, on the Antonine vallum, near Glasgow. A silver coin of Antoninus and a baker's wooden shovel for putting bread into the oven have been found in a Roman well in the Saalburg. The shovel is of beech-wood, and in one piece. The contents of the well at Procolitia on the English wall of Hadrian were a great surprise. Some sixteen thousand coins were discovered, as well as carved stones, altars, vases, Roman pearls, old shoes, and fibulæ; also a stone with carved figures of three water-nymphs, attendants on the goddess Coventina, to whom the well was dedicated. No one can place Coventina; she belongs peculiarly to Procolitia. It is believed that in a moment of panic the treasure-chest and the contents of the chapel over the well had been thrown into its depths for security. Likewise the articles recovered from wells in the Forum throw an interesting light on Roman domestic life. Seeds and fruits were found which had dropped from the trees that grew there. From the mud of a 'Republican' well on the Sacra Via were taken such miscellaneous objects as a vine-branch, a hammer and a hatchet, a little Greek marble head, a wooden flute with bone settings, and many cups and jugs. Lower down were found the whole contents of a butcher's shop: knives and grindstone, a chopping-slab of chestnut wood, the sawn bones of an ox, also a series of stone weights from which the system of weighing and its units have been accurately determined. Many skulls of weasels were found in some of the wells; these were the scavengers of Rome before cats were introduced from Egypt. Since Mr Burton-Brown's book appeared the foundation-stone of the equestrian statue of Domitian was discovered in 1904. A square chamber in the lower block was found containing five terra-cotta vases. Two were red in colour and three were *bucchero*, a primitive black ware, which fixes its use for ritual purposes at a later date than was believed. Pieces of charcoal, with a bit of crude gold and iron, were found in the large vase, and suggest the dedicatory rite of the monument.

The excavations made in recent years upon the Antonine vallum which spans Scotland at its narrowest part correct the old opinion that its termination was at Old Kilpatrick, on the Clyde, and that it was thirty-six and a half miles long. The late Alexander Gibb, in his valuable articles in the *Scottish Antiquary* (1900–1903), gives a new measurement of the wall. Beginning at the fort at Bridgeness, Carriden, the wall, he shows, must have ended at Dumbarton Rock; and it is satisfactory to know that the Ordnance Survey measurements and those upon the stones of the Roman legionaries work out, with only the difference of a few yards, at slightly over forty miles. Mr Gibb further shows that it must have gone to Dumbarton in order to block the path, as there was a ford (Sandyford) between the Castle and Old Kilpatrick. Quintus Lollius Urbicus, governor of Roman Britain, built the wall about 140–142.

The *Proceedings of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries for 1900 and 1903* contain a record of work done at Camelon and Castlecary, near Falkirk. The report has not been made as yet upon Roughcastle. The report upon Camelon will increase in value as the district increases in population, as it is rapidly doing, and the station is built over. Several foundries and part of a railway siding occupy ground on the south half of the station, which is situated eleven hundred yards north of the Antonine vallum and one and a half miles west by north of Falkirk, on the edge of a tableland through which flows the Carron River. In the south camp the buildings were very deep under the surface; in the north camp they were just below the surface, so that only the lower parts of the foundations existed. Much pottery was found here, as well as bronze objects, many of them being finely enamelled. The Samian ware belongs to the first four centuries of the Christian era. There were small cups and jars; a platter-like dish of dark-coloured ware, lamps of clay, beads, fibulæ of bronze, pick-axes, spear-heads, two long-handled combs of deer-horn, and a few stone implements. The visitor to-day will see nothing save foundries, dwelling-houses, a railway cutting, and agricultural land, as the excavations have been covered in. Hence the value of the plans and printed description. Mr Thomas Ross, F.S.A.Scot., finds a remarkable likeness in the architectural details of a Roman station to our own twelfth century buildings. The camps or stations generally lie four-square, and have rounded corners, and there are gates on the north, south, east, and west, with streets leading from these inwards.

At Roughcastle the surprise has been a series of military pits to the north-west of the station, similar to those described by Cæsar in his *Commentaries*, book vii. chap. 73, in connection with the siege of Alesia. A walling tablet broken in three pieces is ascribed to Antoninus Pius (138–161). The section of the turf-wall exposed at Roughcastle shows the sixteen or eighteen layers of turf turned into peaty soil, with black streaks of decayed wood which had been used as a binding. At Castlecary nearly a hundred quarters of charred wheat were found in 1771, which may or may not have been Roman. This fort is believed to be of the period about 151 A.D. Of the leather shoes and sandals, one has a sole of ten and three-quarter inches long and four inches broad, studded with iron nails. Some of the sandals have the thongs attached. The small and slender varieties evidently belonged to the women and children. Some of them, like those found at Barr Hill, have the upper leathers cut in open-work or stamped with lines of impressions. One shoe about nine inches in length is studded with 'tackets;' this is quite a feature of the foot-gear discovered at Barr Hill, as if the wearers needed catch and foothold for rough country. The bulk of these finds are preserved in the Edinburgh Antiquarian Museum, including the Camelon stone with figure of a warrior and prostrate native, and the fine

legionary stone found at Bridgeness, near Bo'ness, in 1868. This has an inscription which may be translated: 'To the Emperor Cæsar Titus Ælius Hadrian Antoninus Augustus Pius, Father of his Country, the Second Legion, the Augustan [made the vallum], for four thousand six hundred and fifty-two paces' (four and a half miles).

The station at Barr Hill (near Croy Station of the North British Railway) lies on a ridge thirty or forty yards to the south of the vallum, and is a square of three hundred and ninety-nine feet by three hundred and ninety-three. Within this camp of the second century is another of one hundred and ninety-one feet by one hundred and sixty feet, which belongs to the first century. It has been suggested on good authority that this is one of the forts erected by Agricola. If this is so, it is the most interesting discovery yet made in Scotland, as hitherto we have no certainty as to any of his work. From a well forty-three feet deep in the centre a host of interesting articles were extracted. After a depth of twelve feet was passed the well yielded its hidden relics, which included sixty feet of shafting of stone pillars with several most remarkable capitals, carved and moulded, and with their corresponding bases. From the well and ditch and refuse-heap were found boots and sandals, those belonging, it may be presumed, to the ladies being ornamented above the instep. Amongst those belonging to children was one heightened by a piece of iron driven into the heel, evidently because of some deformity. There was a bag of workman's tools held together by corrosion, including a pair of compasses, chisels, and nails; also diamond-pointed chisels, arrow-heads, ballista-balls, a large amphora, oyster-shells, walnuts, hazel-nuts, a fine copper pot, a bell, an inscribed altar and walling tablet of the time of Antoninus Pius, skulls of the extinct Celtic ox, and several rudely carved stone heads. A number of denarii were found on examination to be made of tin, which may be an indication that the old Roman thought there was no use throwing away good money as a votive-offering to his god.

In this connection we note that two volumes have been published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge which are of great interest to those who wish information in handy form about the Romans in Britain: *Roman Britain*, by E. Conybeare, and *Roman Roads in Britain*, by T. Codrington, M.Inst.C.E. The first is of a popular nature, and gives a bird's-eye view of what as a nation we owe to the Romans. Although crammed with information, the book is yet pleasant to read. There was room as well for a volume on Roman roads in Britain, which are so much a matter of speculation in many districts. Mr Codrington, in his excellent chart which accompanies the volume, distinguishes between the problematical course of a road and that which can be accurately set down. The map shows how England and the Lowlands of Scotland were intersected with roads, which are the pioneers and forerunners of social intercourse and the handmaids of civilisation. Mr Codrington has had another object in view: that of discrediting the spurious *Itinerary* of Richard of Cirencester, some of whose imaginary roads and stations find a place in new Ordnance Survey maps. Where the routes of the *Itinerary* of Antonine can be identified, the positions of the stations are fixed by distance, and the dimensions of camps and walled stations on the lines of road given. Mr Codrington remarks that although the roads do not appeal to the imagination as the remains of the Wall of Hadrian do, yet, when the extent and the permanent nature and effect of them are considered, they may claim a foremost place among the remains of Roman work in the country. They were part of the network of roads that covered the Roman world, for many centuries they continued to be the chief means of communication within the island, and, while some of them are still to be seen in almost perfect condition, portions of many more form part of the foundations of roads now in use. The writer believes that the course of the roads was planned with skill and laid out with a complete grasp of the general features of the country. Their wholesale obliteration began when turnpikes were constructed along them or near them in the latter part of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century. In cutting a trench for laying a telephone tube along Edgeware Road in London a Roman road was discovered. Beneath the wood paving and the concrete foundation, on about a foot of brick rubbish, there was found four inches to a foot of ordinary soil; but sometimes the brick rubbish rested immediately on the Roman paving, which consisted of long black nodular flints on a bed of reddish-brown gravel. On the bevelled surface of the gravel lime grouting appears to have been laid, in which flints were set. The workmen had more trouble to break this up than the concrete floor above. Watling Street is believed to be older than the Wall of Hadrian, and the Roman road to the north of the Forth dates from the expedition before the construction of the Antonine Wall, 140 A.D. Watling Street, after passing through the Cheviots, goes north to the Antonine Wall a little to the west of Falkirk, and joins it near the modern villa of Watling Lodge.

As mentioned in a previous article, 'Roman Remains in North Britain,' in this *Journal* for 1903, there seems room for a handbook devoted to Scottish Roman remains, similar to that of Dr Bruce upon the English Roman wall.

WHERE LOVE IS.

Love! Love is there, where, high on halcyon wing,
The lone bird cleaves the air, and flies to sing
Its anthem 'neath the quiet evening sky,
Away from earth and things that fade and die.
High in the blue celestial vault of heaven,
Perchance, for it awhile a rift is riven
To show how bright the glories are, how fair
The citadel of God, and thus to swell
Its song close to the home where Love doth dwell.

C. C. Cakebread.

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THE PIEDMONT PEASANT.

By Eustace Reynolds-Ball.

PIEDMONT, though so near the great tourist centres Genoa and Milan, is almost unknown to English travellers; and, though only a day and a half from London, so far as tourists are concerned it might be in Transylvania or a remote 'government' of Russia. Like Brittany, this remoteness partly accounts for the strong individuality of the province and its inhabitants.

In climate especially the distinctiveness of Piedmont is very marked, and altogether different from the popular conception of what is loosely termed the Italian climate; it would be more accurate to say that Italy has a dozen distinct climates. The Piedmontese climate has been somewhat unkindly likened to Siberia in winter and to the Sahara in summer. The arctic severity of the cold season comes, indeed, as an unpleasant surprise to those who fondly imagine that when the Alps are crossed a mild winter-temperature will reward them.

The traveller bound for Rome or Florence, who has perhaps condescended to approve of the romantic scenery of the Mont Cenis or the St Gothard—the latter perhaps the most striking and picturesque railway trip in Europe—is apt to dismiss with a careless glance the monotonous rolling plains of Piedmont. Yet Piedmont, the cradle as well as the market-garden of Italy, is well worth the attention of the foreigner; but nine out of ten hurry on to Florence or Rome, and, taking their cue from the hasty glimpse from the window of the sleeping-car, ignore the beautiful hills and valleys alternating with farms and vineyards. The plain itself is, indeed, one huge market-garden, furrowed in spring with innumerable irrigation-canals. Seen from a balloon the country bears a striking resemblance to the Nile Delta, with the palms represented by mulberry-trees and poplars, and the mosques by the equally picturesque campaniles of the village churches.

Politically and morally Piedmont is far ahead of the rest of the peninsula, while the curious mode of life and habits and customs of the peasantry seem to a casual observer almost primitive by contrast with those seen in the beaten track of Italy. In winter the stable is invariably used as a general living-room for the sake of warmth. To English ideas this sounds no doubt repulsive; but the stable in an Italian *cascina* is large, well ventilated, and tolerably clean. In fact, the practice is not considered unhealthy by medical men. Some, indeed, go further, and recommend living in the stable for consumptive patients! It is actually said that the breath of the cows and oxen has a prophylactic value; and certainly the peasantry believe this.

The inhabitants of the north of Italy, both in cities and in the country, suffer a good deal from the severe climate. Partly from the scarcity of fuel, and partly from a popular prejudice against large fires, they seem never to be really warm in winter. They vainly attempt to cope with the arctic rigour of the climate by a lavish use of portable fire-pots (*scaldino*), a little clay pot holding a few embers, which, in the homely wit of the people, is generally known as a *marito* (husband). This broad humour so characteristic of the Piedmontese is also illustrated by the popular name of a curious wooden frame (in which a pan of red-hot embers is placed) used to warm the bed. This is called a *prete* (priest). These *scaldini* are in universal use. Clerks in public offices, shop assistants, &c. are usually provided with them, and it is a little ludicrous to see a grave and elderly official carefully placing one under his chair or high stool. Even children going to school are invariably provided with one of those quaint little hand-warmers.

The casual traveller is scarcely likely to take up the study of agricultural systems in Italy, though no country in Europe offers a better field. It has been observed that all the various land-tenures which obtain from Edinburgh and Stockholm in the north to Cadiz and Smyrna in the south are to be found in the peninsula. The mere fact that

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in 1881 a Government Commission which inquired into agricultural conditions in Italy was unable to condense the result of three years' work into less than fifteen bulky volumes is sufficient to daunt all but the most zealous students of rural economy. It is a popular error that the *métayer* or profit-sharing system of tenure is almost universal in Italy; it only obtains in certain districts, chiefly in Tuscany and central Italy. In Piedmont it is the exception, unless in the case of vineyards, whose up-keep demands considerable outlay.

The antiquated methods of agriculture which are so pleasing to artists and visitors with an eye to the picturesque entail a terrible waste. The farming operations are substantially the same as those in vogue when Giotto passed his childhood tending sheep. One may see the same kind of plough in Egypt or Palestine, where indeed these implements are known to differ slightly from those in use in the time of our Lord. Winnowing is carried on in the same elementary fashion, the labourer with his wooden shovel throwing up the thrashed wheat into the air for the wind to separate the chaff; and sometimes even a simpler method is employed, when the peasant, standing on the top of the outside stone staircase of his cottage, contents himself with merely ladling out the corn over the edge. Previous to this rough-and-ready winnowing the corn has been threshed by oxen yoked to a curiously shaped wooden roller. The rumbling noise made by this peculiar-looking instrument, which is called a *rubatto*, is a familiar feature of rural life.

It will be noticed that in Piedmont the scriptural injunction against 'muzzling the ox that treadeth out the corn' is often observed. Horses are seldom used on the farms, while oxen are considered indispensable for all farm-work, and though rather more costly than horses—a good yoke of oxen costs from forty to fifty pounds—are much preferred. They are occasionally shod, in spite of the cloven hoof, though their light shoes approximate more to racing-plates than the heavy shoes one associates with farm-horses in England. For field-work the principle of shoeing is peculiar. In a yoke of oxen only the off feet of an ox would be shod and the near feet of the others, and they are yoked in such a way that the shod feet are contiguous. The harrow usually employed could hardly be more elementary; it is a rough kind of sledge called an *erpio*, fitted with heavy iron prongs and weighted by a few large stones, on which squats the labourer who acts as driver, holding himself on by the tail. The stubborn conservatism of the Piedmontese is strikingly illustrated in hay-making. It would be thought that a long stick is but a poor substitute for a fork; but, though forks are in constant use in farm-work, in tossing the hay a stick is preferred. A quaint custom, which has a biblical savour, is the letting of the pasture-land during the winter to a shepherd, who at the expiration of the term gives to the farmer, in addition to the rent, the last-born lamb and a cheese. The veterinary surgeon is usually paid, by contract, with a measure of corn.

Perhaps the most quaint of all their customs is that connected with their coffins. It is the correct thing for each head of a family to choose and season the wood for his coffin; occasionally an ultra-conscientious householder will actually make the coffin himself. The selected planks are carefully put aside to season, and if the owner wishes to be particularly courteous to his male cronies he will exhibit this precious piece of timber and ask their opinion as to its durability!

A curious co-operative custom is that of the village bakery. Each family is in turn responsible for the firing of the oven, and each family has a right in turn to use the oven for the baking of the fortnightly supply.

In no other country in Europe, except perhaps Turkey, are the lower classes so monstrously exploited by the Government. The crushing burden of taxation which in Italy weighs so heavily on the agricultural classes is aggravated by the local and municipal taxes which the peasantry have to pay. There is actually some kind of census taken of live-stock by the local authorities, and each addition means a further tax. Even the vegetable kingdom is not neglected by the tax-gatherer, each olive-tree (few in Piedmont, however) and vine being duly registered and subjected to a small duty.

The ordinary day's routine of the family of a small farmer is instructive. In summer they actually get up at sunrise, and take their dinner, consisting of soup *minestra* (or *polenta*), or at all events the chief meal of the day (*pranzo*), whatever we choose to call it, at five in the morning, an hour when fashionable London is thinking of retiring. Work is then resumed, and continues till about eleven o'clock, when the intense heat of the sun compels them to knock off. Then what is called a *merenda* is taken, generally bread and cheese and salad. During the great heat of the day, till 2 P.M. or so, a siesta is universal. After this rest work goes on continuously till 7 or 8 P.M., interrupted only by another *merenda:* a generic term best translated by 'snack,' consisting of some kind of salad or an onion and bit of bread. At about half-past eight they seek their well-earned repose. Supper (*cena*) is as frugal a meal as the *merenda:* a little fruit, soup, a bit of bread, or one sardine divided among the whole family. In short, the Piedmontese peasant spends almost as little in food as an Indian coolie. White bread, for instance, is only eaten on a *festa*, whole-meal bread being the usual kind consumed.

In character the Piedmontese are very unlike the popular conception of the Italian people. As a class the peasants are sober, industrious, and thrifty. They have not the gay and *insouciant* temperament of the Italians of the south, but are stolid and

unemotional. There is, indeed, a curious resemblance in temperament between the Piedmontese and the Bretons. If thrifty, they are intensely grasping, and their religion is apt to run to bigotry. The blind devotion of the peasants, coupled with their extraordinary ignorance of affairs, is sometimes exploited by the priests. There is an amusing, if hypothetical, story told of a certain priest who increased the Peter's Pence offering of his flock by exhibiting from the pulpit a straw which he declared came from the Pope's cell in the Vatican. This sacred relic was accepted as an indisputable proof that His Holiness was kept a State prisoner by the Government!

The following instance of the thrift of the peasants has in it a touch of pathos. On one occasion having given a cigar to a *boaro* (herdsman), I found afterwards that the precious weed had lasted the recipient a whole month, a few whiffs only being taken after the evening meal, and then it was carefully laid aside till the next evening.

Whether the custom which still obtains in some parts of Piedmont of regarding the harmless, necessary domestic cat as a delicate morsel is to be put down to thrift or merely to a perverted appetite is doubtful; but it is well known that to fill the *pot-au-feu* of a Piedmontese peasant is the usual fate of wandering or homeless felines.

The strong religious side of the Piedmontese is shown in all relations of life. Nowhere in Europe outside of Spain or Brittany have the priests so strong a hold on the people. No girl, for instance, would be allowed to enter domestic service 'abroad'—that is, beyond her native province—without the express permission of the priest, and service with any but those of her own faith would be strictly forbidden. In minor matters the superstition of the peasants is displayed in erecting crosses on hay and corn ricks to protect them from fire and lightning. Sometimes they are placed over stables or sheds to ward off robbers. In fact, the sacred symbol is really regarded by the country-folk in much the same light as the insurance company's plaque affixed to buildings on the Continent—with the advantage, too, of being free from any premium!

The little shrines, containing a statue of the Madonna, which may occasionally be seen on farms are often erected by the landlord with the view of protecting his crops from storms, especially hail-storms. The efficacy of this is implicitly believed in. Certainly I myself know—and the coincidence is at all events striking—of a little farm near Carmagnola where the maize crops had been devastated for three consecutive seasons by hail-storms, and after a shrine had been put up the crops did not suffer at all. The severe hail-storms to which this country is peculiarly subject in July and August are much dreaded, especially in the vineyard districts, and it is the universal practice for the church bells to be tolled on the occasion of a storm, when the peasants, with touching faith, are in the habit of leaving their work and assembling in the church to pray that their crops may be spared from the fury of the elements.

The marriage customs are characteristic. According to the approved etiquette, bride and bridegroom, along with the parents of each, make a *festa* of the purchase of the trousseau. They proceed to the milliner's to buy a black silk and a stuff dress (woollen and cotton), to the shoemaker's to buy a pair of boots, and then to the pastry-cook's, where cakes are bought, but consumed at a café. A wardrobe is always bought by the bride; and the earrings, an indispensable part of the outfit, are bought by the bridegroom. The same evening the bride's mother holds a reception; then the best-man (*camarade*) puts in one earring and the bridegroom the other; and as each earring is put in, one of the groomsmen outside the house fires off a pistol. A supper and dance conclude the festivities. On the morning after the wedding the best-man's duties are to black the boots of bride and bridegroom, and take them, as well as a cup of *café noir*, to the bridal-chamber! These conclude the arduous and somewhat delicate duties of the Piedmontese best-man.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXV.—WHAT THE BURIED CHEST CONTAINED.

FROM our hiding-place in the bushes we all three watched intently, wondering what was the nature of their find.

That they had discovered something of interest seemed certain, but from our position we could not see its nature. The whole four were in the deep hole, working eagerly and digging around what was apparently a strong chest buried in the earth.

The moments seemed hours until at last, with loud gasps, they drew the object to the surface, and their lamps revealed it to be an old chest about five feet long, narrow, and looking in that uncertain light very much like a coffin. But it was, we saw, strongly protected by great bands of iron bolted upon it, and locked by three ancient locks along one side.

'By Jove!' we heard Selby cry excitedly, 'it's heavy, isn't it? Let's get these locks off;' and, taking aim, he struck at one with his crowbar, using all his might. But the stout iron resisted all

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his efforts, although he repeated them from time to time.

Then the whole four turned their immediate attention to the locks, carefully examining them by the aid of their lamps.

'They're still very strong,' we heard his lordship say. 'The only way will be to file the hasps, and then force them.'

Thereupon two files were produced from the tool-bag, and Graniani and Selby set to work upon the hasps, while the other two stood by impatiently.

The work was more difficult than they anticipated; but at last the whole of the three fastenings were wrenched off, and, with a cry of expectation, Lord Glenelg raised the lid and, holding his lantern above his head, peered within.

His companions, in their haste to investigate the contents of the chest, bent and delved with their hands; but their exclamations were those of bitter disappointment, for instead of gold chalices and silver cups, they withdrew only a quantity of damp and bulky leather-bound volumes, evidently ancient religious manuscripts, which had formed part of the treasure of the old abbey at the time of its dissolution. Perhaps, indeed, they had been hidden for some reason long before those fateful days of Southwell's visit, for the monk Godfrey did not mention them in his list of the secreted treasure.

The disappointment of the investigators was very great. Above the low chatter we could hear the old hunchback grumbling to himself in Italian, while Selby expressed his dissatisfaction pretty strongly in English, declaring that they were not in search of old books but something of more intrinsic value.

'These are evidently a rare find,' remarked his lordship, opening several of the big musty volumes and glancing at them. 'But the damp, unfortunately, seems to have spoilt most of the miniatures.'

'The finding of that box makes one thing plain,' Walter whispered to me. 'The abbot would never have buried a box of manuscripts in water; therefore this discovery shows that the treasure itself does not lie concealed in the same spot. Let them go on, for they must fail. In a couple of hours it will be five o'clock, and the village people will be astir. They dare not work very much longer, and they certainly will not attempt to come here again.'

'But those books,' I said, with the envy of a keen collector; 'are they to secure them? They may, perhaps, contain something of interest to us.'

'I think not,' my friend responded. 'Let them take the lot. We are playing for bigger stakes.'

'Quite right, Captain Wyman,' added the rector. 'They must not discover us at this point.'

After a cursory glance at the big volumes, some of them fastened with heavy bronze clasps, like The Closed Book itself, they ascertained that there was nothing else in the chest, and then three of them returned to their work of excavation, while his lordship commenced to carry the books, in small piles, across the field to the high-road where the horse was tied up.

I confess that I would have liked to jump up and secure one of those fine old tomes. I was only restrained by my friends, who were determined, as a matter of policy, to let him cart the books away, Mr Mason declaring that in due course he should claim their return, as an outrageous theft had been committed.

Lord Glenelg had made several journeys backwards and forwards across the fields, when, just as he returned, a stir among the treasure-seekers showed us that they had made another discovery, which, a few minutes later, we saw was a fine image of the Virgin, about four feet in height, dark and covered with the clay in which it had been embedded.

As it lay there upon the grass they placed their lanterns beside it, and with their pocket-knives scraped away the clay until it shone bright beneath.

'There was a celebrated image of Our Lady, in silver, here,' remarked Selby as he scraped diligently. 'Perhaps this is it.'

A few seconds later the thick-set man who was assisting, and who was a stranger to me, cried:

'It certainly isn't silver. Look! It's only one of those gilded wood things.'

And again there arose a chorus of dissatisfaction and disappointment.

The statue was evidently very ancient; but so well had it been preserved in the clay that the gilt still flashed upon it where they had scraped away the dirt, and in the early gray of dawn that was now spreading we could just distinguish the bright blue-and-silver stars upon the robes.

Again they all returned to their work with pick, spade, and 'grubbers,' toiling on in the hole they had made, their heads only being visible above the surface, until the abbey bells chimed out and then solemnly struck five o'clock.

Day had broken, and the warning notes of the bell caused his lordship to order a cessation of the labour. All four regained the surface and looked with regret upon their rather fruitless efforts, well knowing that the damage they had done would in an hour be discovered, and that to continue their secret search at that spot would be impossible.

'We can't return; that's very evident,' remarked Selby. 'The village constable will be put on to watch, I expect. Therefore we shall have to wait a month or so before we come back.'

'Couldn't we perhaps square the constable?' the fourth man suggested.

'I doubt it. These country policemen are so much more straight than the men in town. As like as not they'd split upon you, so as to get their promotion. You see, the work we've done to-night

is a bit ugly, for a magistrate would probably call it stealing.'

'Rubbish!' snapped his lordship. 'Don't stay gossiping here. Let's pack up and get away. There are a lot of labourers already on the move. Don't you see the smoke from the cottage chimneys over there? We shall have some one across this footpath to the fields in a few minutes if we don't get clear away.'

Scarcely, indeed, had he finished speaking when the dark figure of a man with a fork over his shoulder, whistling to himself on his way to work, appeared at the stile in the opposite corner of the field, and took the footpath in their direction.

They noticed him, and hastily snatching up their picks and spades and other tools, all four made off in the direction where the cart stood, and climbing into it, drove rapidly off down the long highway across the fen, in the mists of which they were quickly lost to sight.

As soon as they had gone we emerged from the spot where we had remained cramped for so long, and rushed to the big hole they had made.

My first investigation was the old chest, and in it I discovered several manuscripts which his lordship, not having finished transferring them to the cart, had been compelled, in his haste, to leave. Of these we took possession, and the labourer, on passing, looked at the hole with considerable surprise, especially on recognising Mr Mason.

In reply to the man's inquiry, we told him that thieves had been trying to discover something hidden, and had found some old books; for we wished the whole village to know of the secret attempt that had been made, in order that the people should keep a watchful eye upon the abbey precincts for further depredators.

Presently, when the man went on to his work and it had grown lighter, we were able to see the extent of their investigations, which was certainly far greater than we imagined; while Walter, after making some measurements, showed us the spot which they had at first marked out, and from which he had removed their landmark.

The chest and books were, of course, the property of the abbey, so we carried them to the small room in the restored portion of the fabric that the rector kept as a kind of museum, and there investigated them.

They were of little interest, all being works of theological writers, copied in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, save one,* a small quarto manuscript, beautifully illuminated, written by William, a monk in Ramsey Abbey, in Huntingdonshire, in 1191, which commenced '*Incipit Vita beati Guthplaci metrice composita*,' a poem on the life of St Guthlac, dedicated to Henry de Longo Campo, the contemporary Abbot of Crowland.

It was Mr Mason's opinion, as well as my own, that the chest had been buried there fully a century before the dissolution, at some time when the abbey feared attack, and the worthy rector was already eager to demand of Lord Glenelg the return of the whole of the other volumes that had been surreptitiously carried away.

At present, however, it was agreed to make no sign. The manuscripts would no doubt be well preserved in his lordship's collection, and there was no fear of their going astray.

Then, having completed our examination, we returned to the Rectory, where we had hot coffee to warm us after our long night-vigil. Mr Mason promised to set a night-watch upon the field until such time as we should deem it advisable to make our search; for I pointed out to him that a journey to Scotland was imperative, in order to forestall our friends if they attempted to make a search there, and that we should be unable to excavate the site of the monastery fish-ponds until our return from Galloway.

As a matter of fact, we all felt, from the conversation we had overheard, that it was not their intention to return at present, as they had no wish to fall into the hands of the police.

'Well,' remarked Mr Mason as we sat over our coffee in his study, 'the whole affair is most mysterious and remarkable. Lord Glenelg evidently possesses certain information upon which he is working.'

'We hope that ours is equally precise,' I laughed. 'That is why we intend to go north and make preliminary observations. We can only make our investigation at a certain hour on a certain day, the 17th of September.'

I was not more definite, as I did not intend at present to give the secret away. In a hunt for treasure success depends to a very great extent upon strict secrecy. Arousing undue interest is always to be avoided. The Crowland treasure concerned the rector to a great degree, but the Borgia jewels would, if we discovered them, surely be our own.

At half-past seven we returned to 'The George,' which had already been open an hour or so, and we went in as though we had returned from a morning walk. Neither servants nor landlord suspected anything until the villagers discovered the big hole near the abbey, and then, I believe, we were viewed with considerable suspicion. Indeed, I was much relieved when, at eleven o'clock, we drove out along Kennulph's Way and through the village of Eye back to 'The Angel' at Peterborough.

* Cambridge University Library MSS., Dd. XI. 78, ff. 61, 92.

THE PROSPECTS OF BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

LORD DELAMERE'S remarkable emigration scheme and the offer made by the British Government to the Zionist Congress of a portion of land in British East Africa wherewith to found a Jewish colony have again brought that little-known protectorate into public notice. Most people in these islands have a very hazy notion of the extent, nature, or resources of the East Africa Protectorate. This is the more wonderful considering the interest that was taken in the building of the Uganda Railway, which traverses this protectorate its full length of five hundred and eighty-four miles from the coast to the terminus at Port Florence on the shores of Lake Victoria Nyanza. The present Consul-General, Sir Charles Eliot, is doing his best to bring the possibilities of the protectorate before his countrymen.

A glance at the map of Africa will show that the East Africa Protectorate extends, roughly, from the Indian Ocean on the east to the Victoria Nyanza on the west, and from German East Africa on the south to Abyssinia on the north. In the partition which took place of the East Coast of Africa, Britain came off decidedly well, and with characteristic energy addressed herself to the task of developing this new asset. Here was an immense tract of land without roads or waterways, and closed to all but an occasional big-game hunter or traveller. Behind it lay another vast unexplored protectorate—Uganda. How were these to be opened up to the enterprise of her subjects? The answer was the Uganda Railway. Though avowedly built primarily for political reasons, it must be admitted that in the railway lay the only hope of developing the resources of the two protectorates. And whatever charges of mismanagement may be brought against the railway committee, or however much we may rue the millions that it has cost the nation, the Uganda Railway, considering the difficulties that had to be overcome in its construction, is a superb monument to the energy, enterprise, and determination of our fellow-countrymen.

The change that has taken place in the protectorate since the railway was undertaken is little short of miraculous. Instead of a few isolated Government officials upholding precariously the authority intimated by the flag waving in front of their tent-door, townships are springing up. Chief of these is Nairobi, the headquarters of the railway management, situated about three hundred and twenty-five miles distant from Mombasa. The telegraph now traverses the length and breadth of the land. The journey to Uganda, which formerly occupied months, is now a matter of a few days. Instead of a trackless wilderness, the whole protectorate lies open waiting the advent of the planter and the farmer. Probably in Mombasa, the capital of the protectorate, more than anywhere else is the change seen. What was a few years ago an unimportant conglomeration of wattle-and-mud huts is to-day an important seaport, which promises soon to rival Zanzibar. The 'iron shanty' of the pioneer is disappearing before neat tile-roofed bungalows; while the solidly built law-courts, two fine hotels, and the palatial buildings recently opened by the National Bank of India give an air of business prosperity to the place.

It is true that the completion of the Uganda Railway has not been followed by that rapid improvement in trade expected by many. A temporary depression seems rather to have set in owing to the departure of so many of those who were employed in the construction of the railway. This is understandable when it is remembered how much everything at present depends on the money disbursed by the Government. No great improvement need be expected until private enterprise steps in and money begins to circulate more freely among the natives. The foreign element is very strong among the merchant community. German, Italian, French, and Dutch firms are engaged in the import and export trade, and completely outnumber the British firms, and the retail trade is chiefly carried on by Indians and Goanese. It is interesting, as bearing on the agitation for a subsidised line of steamers from England to East Africa, to know that since the establishment of a direct steamship service by the British-India Company such heavy merchandise as cement and corrugated-iron sheets are imported almost entirely from England, whereas these articles were formerly imported mainly from Germany. It is painful to know that in that branch of trade which is most likely speedily to expand—namely, the trade in piece-goods and cotton sheetings—we are entirely out in the cold. America supplies the cotton sheetings, while Germany and Holland send most of the piece-goods. This is entirely due to the deplorable lack of enterprise on the part of the British firms in Mombasa. The exports from British East Africa are insignificant considering the extent of the territory. Such as they are, they are completely in the hands of the foreigner. Ivory, of course, is the principal export. Rubber is exported in considerable quantities, and is at present occupying the attention of the Government. The export of hides and copra is rapidly increasing—especially the latter, which might be quite an important industry could the natives be deterred from ruining the coco-nut trees for the manufacture of *tembo* (palm-wine). There are a few insignificant exports, such as gum-copal and wax.

But the trade of the East Africa Protectorate must remain insignificant and its financial position wretched as long as imports are paid for chiefly by the subsidy granted by the British Government, and exports depend on the bounty of nature. The railway, too, must remain a tax on this country as long as there is little or nothing for it to carry. It

must be remembered, however, in estimating the loss on the working of the railway that a very substantial saving is now effected in the transport department of the administration. The British people are so used to hear of the abounding prosperity of the colonies that they are apt to look askance on a protectorate which calls for a subsidy to the tune of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year, including the subvention for the Uganda Railway. The chief sources of revenue at present are the customs duties and the hut-tax. There is so little money circulating among the natives that in many instances it is found necessary to accept payment of the hut-tax in labour or in produce. A small revenue is derived from sporting licenses, gun-taxes, registration fees, &c. But small as the revenue of the protectorate is, it is the utmost that can be produced by taxation, and it is not likely that the ingenuity of His Majesty's Commissioner will be able to find new sources from which to augment his depleted treasury.

What, then, is to bring prosperity to this British East Africa and raise it to the status of a self-supporting colony? It is impossible to predict what course the development of a new country may take. The discovery of gold in the protectorate may any day change the scene 'as by the stroke of an enchanter's wand,' and we shall awake some morning to find a new Transvaal in the heart of Africa. The search for minerals is being carried on by quite an army of prospectors, and it is on the success of this investigation that most of the inhabitants base their hopes for a speedy change in the fortunes of the protectorate.

But apart from minerals there is the more certain, if less dazzling, prospect of finding prosperity in the soil of the protectorate. Mr Chamberlain, with his usual acumen, hit the nail on the head in his speech to the members of the Mombasa Club. He said that though the discovery of minerals might reasonably be expected, it was rather to exports of rubber and cotton that we should look for the future prosperity of the protectorate. Pessimists in this country declare that since agriculture has not been tried on anything like a large scale its success is problematic. But the writer has not heard this view expressed by any who have been in the country and have beheld its wonderful fertility. Between Nairobi and the Mau escarpment lie thousands of acres of the most fertile soil uncultivated and supporting countless herds of zebra and antelope. Here at Kikuyu and Nairobi are to be found the *shambas*, or farms, of the first British settlers, who fondly hoped that they were but the forerunners of that army of burly British farmers who were to put backbone into a country overrun by languid Asiatics.

True, agriculture is but in its beginnings in British East Africa. The few settlers around Nairobi give their attention chiefly to potatoes. This is owing to the demand from South Africa. Even the modest potato possesses potentialities undreamt of here. They grow to great perfection at Nairobi; but the lack of cold storage in the steamers running to South Africa makes it difficult to place them on the market in good condition. When this and other drawbacks are overcome a very profitable industry will be established. The success which has attended the potato industry is but an indication of what might be done if agriculture were pursued on a proper scale. Most European cereals and vegetables grow admirably, and thus the settler need not confine his attention to purely tropical products. Climate, of course, is a determinating factor in agricultural undertakings, and here in British East Africa are to be had almost all varieties of climate. While at the coast the temperature hardly ever falls below eighty degrees in the shade, in the high uplands it is usual to have frost in the mornings. Thus, while wheat, oats, barley, &c. could be grown in the higher latitudes, the cultivation of tropical products could be undertaken in the low-lying districts. The recent Agricultural Show held at Mombasa gave an idea of the number of economic plants which may be cultivated and which at present grow, for the most part wild, within the protectorate. Castor-oil, coffee, cotton, tobacco, sugar-cane, and numerous fibre-plants were exhibited in their natural and manufactured states. It is of interest to know, in view of the recent cotton famine, that the fine black soil around the Victoria Nyanza is pronounced by experts as especially suitable for the cultivation of the cotton-plant. Rice, at present brought in such large quantities from India, could be grown all over the land. Indian corn is grown in large quantities by the natives. With proper cultivation and the introduction of the red Kaffir corn an enormous export trade could be done with South Africa. But why multiply instances? Enough has been said to show that, even if minerals should fail, there is abundant hope for the future prosperity of the protectorate in the development of its agricultural resources.

To the settler with only a limited capital British East Africa does not hold out much prospect of fortune-making. The want of a local market for his produce, the expense of transport, &c., militate against his success. A comfortable living could no doubt be made; but beyond that he would be foolish to fix his expectations. Capital is what the country most needs at present—the advent of companies who could invest considerable sums in developing its resources and wait a few years probably for a return.

A word on behalf of the natives of the protectorate. Was there ever a more misrepresented lot of men? They are idle and lazy and given to dissolute habits, unfit for any hard work: so we are told. Have they ever been given a fair trial? The efforts being made at Lovedale and at Blantyre on Lake Nyassa under Dr Laws are in the right direction. In addition to religious training, there is industrial training in many of the arts of more civilised life. The land-laws, however, will need

considerable modifying before British East Africa enters the running with the Canadian north-west as an attraction to farmers. Not that land is not to be had in plenty—it is the inane, petty exactions laid down by the Government officials that make the would-be settler flee the country.

Mr J. Cathcart Wason, M.P., after a visit, declared that it would become a second New Zealand, and now that the old colonies were filling up, emigration should be directed towards East Africa. He was convinced of the utility of the Uganda Railway, which would be cheap in the end at six million pounds. Sir Harry Johnston, the author of a big book on the country, has said that East Africa afforded an area of eighteen thousand square miles to British settlers in a country which was nothing short of an earthly paradise. Mr Stordy, veterinary officer to the Government, has stated that to the agriculturist its soil is capable of yielding the finest crops and of rearing cattle and sheep. The British Government has introduced a large number of live-stock for the purpose of improving the breed of the native herds, which had deteriorated by native in-breeding. Mr Stordy has made experiments in the taming of the zebra for riding and traction purposes which promise to be successful. It is immune to the bite of the tsetse fly, which is not only the direct cause of the deaths of so many animals, but another species is said to be also responsible for the Uganda 'sleeping sickness,' now the subject of close inquiry.

A correspondent of the *Times* has described a remarkable emigration scheme of Lord Delamere's, the big-game hunter, who for the past two years has been in East Africa. His lordship has purchased round Nairobi one hundred thousand acres of land for general farming and breeding, experimental growing, &c. He has been guaranteed fifty square miles of land, and offers this free to fifty suitable settlers. The best free plots are between Elburgon and Fort Fernan, and within the railway zone. Lord Delamere says that the Foreign Office policy of hitherto treating this most wonderful country as private estate is responsible for the present sparseness of settlers. The following are extracts from his messages: 'There are enormous timber trees, evergreens, grasses, and clovers; perennial streams abound; the climate is temperate—it will grow anything; and this is a chance in a thousand for men with little money. Each person of age in a household may have free six hundred and forty acres. Such land in Australia and New Zealand is worth ten pounds and twenty pounds per acre. English vegetables, wheat, oats, barley, roots, fruit, &c. grow splendidly without irrigation. Potatoes are the staple crop and command good prices in South Africa. Coffee, in which I am sure there is a future, simply grows like weed. For sheep-grazing, land can be leased up to ten thousand acres at a halfpenny an acre per annum. Tobacco and cotton offer a good return. Cotton has been produced in experimental plots valued at sixpence per pound. It should give a good return with land and labour cheap. Directly markets are fixed land will go up. It is now absurdly cheap.' Lord Delamere trusts his free land scheme will have the desired effect. Agriculturists are said to be chiefly wanted. The artisan's day will come later.

Altogether, hitherto little encouragement has been given to merchant, trader, or farmer. Possibly the administration have not been anxious for any considerable increase in the white population until they were in a position to offer them protection. But now that the railway is completed and the warlike spirit of the more troublesome tribes subdued, it is to be hoped that they will inaugurate a more generous policy than they have pursued in the past. With a generous and wise administration, British East Africa is sure to attract capital as its resources become known; and in a few years we may hope to see a most prosperous colony.

THE RIGHT HORSE BUT THE WRONG MAN.

PART II.

PERICO, who proved to be the son of the *ama*, made his appearance on the instant. A clear and olive-tinted skin; great melting eyes, soft as velvet in their ordinary expression, and yet none the less capable of watching the sanguinary business of the bull-ring from start to finish without so much as a quiver whenever the rare chance came in their owner's way; a head crowned with dark curls; and a frame and limbs the lithe grace and superb moulding of which the raggedness of his costume could do nothing to hide, made up this Apollo of eighteen. Perico came, listened, smiled, glanced commiseratingly at the stranger, but had only the obvious suggestion to offer of remaining there for the night. However, his mother was evidently of another opinion; for that comely dame, suddenly opening fire upon her son, treated him to a torrent of Spanish reeled so rapidly off her tongue that the listening Englishman could not make out so much as a word. Perico listened, shrugged, played with the silver button that held his collarless shirt upon his brown neck, glanced again at Kendrick, and finally delivered himself in his turn. That he was arguing some point with his mother was evident; but beyond the single word *caballo*, meaning, as every one knows, horse, it was impossible for the perplexed Englishman to make out a syllable the lad said.

'Speak, then, obstinate one,' commanded the

matron at last, in a voice the speed of which it was possible for the stranger to follow, 'and explain to the señor. He is lame, and his wish is to go to Pozo del Monte to-night.'

Perico shrugged his shoulders. For some reason or other best known to himself, he was evidently reluctant to say a word. But his mother was inexorable, and would take no evasion.

'Look you, señor,' the lad said at last in a tone of evident unwillingness, fingering the ends of the *faja* twisted round his waist in a manner which, had it been possible to say so of one of his race, might almost have been termed awkward, 'if to go to Pozo del Monte is your wish, there is a horse, a good one, in the stable here, and at your service. Only'—— He broke off short, and looked at Kendrick with a significant shrug.

But the gesture was lost upon the Englishman. He caught at the suggestion as a drowning man is said to catch at a straw. A horse there! A horse to be had for the hiring, and he would have cheerfully mounted a donkey, had it come to that, sooner than remain exposed throughout the night to the scent and atmosphere of that den! True enough, his ankle was badly twisted, and might turn out a nuisance in the way of his riding; but no very mettlesome steed would be likely to issue from a stable like that, he told himself, and it would go hard if he could not keep in the saddle.

'What's his hire?' he demanded eagerly, in the best Spanish he could muster.

He had looked at Perico, but before the lad had time to speak that business-like dame his mother, who stood by prepared to wade with elevated skirts across the sea of mud that formed the stable floor, spoke out with decision:

'Twenty-five *pesetas*, señor.'

Kendrick stared. A modest charge, certainly, considering that his objective could be no more than ten English miles away. He was opening his mouth in remonstrance, but pulled himself up short in time. To walk the distance was impossible—that wretched ankle put the mere suggestion beyond question; and as for staying there—well, a single glance at the surroundings was enough to settle that. But Perico had also been watching him, and his quick intelligence had leaped at the right conclusion.

'The señor reckons it too much,' the lad said eagerly. 'And twenty-five *pesetas!* By my faith! it is a stiff price. He will be better to stay here.'

'What dost thou know about it, foolish one?' screamed the señora. 'Put thy tongue in thy pocket, and go and bring out the horse.'

Jewels are at times found in rough enough caskets, and such proved to be the case here. Kendrick rubbed his eyes and stared in amazement as the lad returned five minutes later. He had expected to see emerge from that awful stable some lean, miserable screw, a broken-down brute whose next destination would probably be the bull-ring in the nearest town, and, instead, Perico reappeared leading by the bridle a handsome chestnut horse, the finely shaped head, full prominent eye, shapely limbs, and well-set-on flowing tail, one and all giving proof of his descent from the famous Moorish barbs of days gone by.

Kendrick felt some surprise, and expressed it in no measured terms. But the subject was one on which the youthful native he addressed was scarcely inclined to be communicative.

'Yes, señor, you are right,' he rejoined somewhat confusedly, bending down over the shining neck as he spoke. 'The horse is a fine one, that is true. Only he is not ours, look you; we have the use of him, that's all. But'—the suggestion came with a quick and eager lifting of the intelligent eyes to the Englishman's face—'the señor's ankle pains him, that is very clear, and to my thinking this horse may give him some trouble on the way to Pozo del Monte. Would it not be wiser, then, in place of going on, to pass the night here?'

He asked the question in a slightly lowered tone, glancing in an oddly furtive way at his mother. But the eyes and ears of the señora were on a par with those of her son for quickness, and she not only intercepted the glance itself, but caught the drift of the muttered words.

'What hast thou told the señor, obstinate one?' she demanded with suspicion.

'I told him nothing, except that he might have trouble on this brute's account before reaching Pozo del Monte,' responded Perico sullenly, his handsome face taking on an expression of defiance as his eyes met those of his mother. 'True it is, and you know that, mother, as well as I.'

For a moment the pair stood facing each other in silence; then the señora turned to her guest, a word or two of adroitly spoken flattery upon her lips.

'The lad speaks folly, señor. The *caballero* is too good a rider for that; and to leave the horse at the *posada* of José Despana, in the Calle de San Martino, is all the trouble you are likely to have on account of him.'

'*Caramba!* but you have first to make sure that the señor will get there,' put in Perico the obstinate bluntly. 'Look you, mother, I may be a fool, as you say; yet I am no such fool as to mount a free horse like this when my foot is not to be trusted to bear my weight. By my faith, no! But the señor will not be warned, and it is of small use to say a word.'

Kendrick looked at the lad standing beside him, who overtopped him by at least a head, twisting a straw between his fingers, a frown contracting his handsome features as he gazed almost defiantly at his mother. That there was something in the background was evident, but for the moment Kendrick could get no further. Then a light dawned on him, and for the first time, as he saw that while the mother was unmistakably anxious that he should go on to Pozo del Monte, the son seemed equally as desirous of dissuading him, he began to entertain a doubt, not far removed from a suspicion, of this youthful Apollo. Tales of benighted travellers, compelled to seek shelter at lonely wayside inns,

who had met with foul play there and had never been afterwards heard of, came crowding with unpleasant suggestiveness on his memory now, all the more when he recalled the company, scarcely to be termed reputable, occupying the *venta* there within. Why, even this handsome youngster at his elbow, with his melting dark eyes and musical voice, was safe to have a six-inch blade *navaja* concealed somewhere in the folds of the ragged crimson *faja* twisted round his waist; and although a harmless, middle-aged tourist like himself scarcely showed as a specially promising object of plunder, still all would probably be fish that came to these fellows' net, more particularly when he remembered that, according to a popular and prevailing notion abroad, Englishmen were commonly reputed to 'swim in gold.'

That was the meaning, then, without a shadow of doubt. Kenderick saw how the cat jumped now, and had no longer any difficulty in understanding the anxiety and eagerness of his poor hostess to get him away from a dangerous neighbourhood. Probably the poor creature was risking something, too, out of the sheer kindness of her heart; for that one among yonder swarthy, muscular, sunburnt fellows whom he had seen drinking there within was her husband, and as such probably hand-and-glove with his hopeful son in their nefarious designs upon travellers, was not merely possible, but in the highest degree likely. And now this poor creature, in the profound pity and tenderness of her heart, was doing all she knew to save her guest from his otherwise impending fate by prevailing upon him to put himself beyond its reach. Well, women were the same all the world over, the same compassionate, tender-hearted creatures, ready at any moment to sacrifice themselves in order to spare others; and Kendrick, who had certainly been intending to dispute those twenty-five *pesetas* as a piece of rank extortion, felt the remonstrance he had been about to utter die on his lips. A pretty sort of brute he would be to grudge the paying down of a paltry sum like that when he had more than a shrewd suspicion of its being destined to conciliate husband and son for the slipping through their fingers of a presumably plump partridge in the shape of himself. How eagerly the poor creature caught at the coins as he handed them to her!—her only protection, in all probability, against expected ill-usage; nor was there any mistaking the glance of exultation she flashed at her son. But the face of the latter was dark and irresolute; and though he helped Kendrick to climb—the climbing was literal—into the saddle, he merely bestowed upon the Englishman a curt '*Bon Dios*, señor,' and did not vouchsafe another word.

'Not this time, my fine fellow,' thought Kendrick, smiling grimly. 'Too old a bird to be caught with chaff; and I've seen through your little game for once.' And in spite of his sprained ankle and the prospect of the long, dark, comfortless ride before him, he chuckled audibly as he rode away at the thought of how the rascals had been done.

DE RULLECOURT'S INVASION OF JERSEY.

By C. T. O. Cooke.

FROM times long anterior to the Norman Conquest the Channel Islands were part and parcel of the ancient Duchy of Normandy.

Since the Conquest, with two inconsiderable breaks—one during the life of Robert and the other during the short reign of Stephen—the sovereignty of these islands has been united with and has followed the devolution of the English Crown. When King John ceded the Continental portion of Normandy to Philip Augustus these islands remained faithful to him, and they have ever since paid allegiance to the successive kings and queens of England as heirs and successors of their ancient dukes.

These sunny isles being French by their geographical position and language, it is only natural that our Gallic neighbours should cast covetous eyes upon them, and when opportunity offered attempt their seizure; the last and most important occasion being the disastrous descent on Jersey in 1781, which is locally known as 'the Battle of Jersey,' a distinction which the local militia has recorded on its colours.

An extract from an extraordinary *Gazette* of the time will serve as an introduction:

'St James's, *9th Jan.* 1781.—This day arrived Lt. Waugh of the Invalids at the Earl of Hillsborough's office with letters from Lieut.-Governor Irving of Guernsey, inclosing a letter to him from Lieut.-Governor Corbet of the Island of Jersey, dated Jan. 6th, 1781, of which the following is an extract:

'"I am now to acquaint you that the French landed this morning about two o'clock between two posts so distant that the guard did not perceive them. They marched across the roads and were in the market-place by six this morning. I was taken prisoner about seven, but I was fortunately released by the very brave and steady behaviour of the troops and the militia; and the commandant then informed me that they all surrendered prisoners of war. They were all taken, killed, or wounded. Poor Major Peirson, exerting himself at the head of a brave troop of followers, at the close of this affair was unfortunately killed.

'"*P.S.*—We have about five hundred prisoners. Some hundreds are killed and about one hundred wounded; the rest fled into the country, but hope to have them all to-morrow. Our losses may be fifty killed and perhaps half that number wounded.

'"My friend Mulcaster has as usual exerted himself; I am not hurt, but two shots through my hat. Particulars to follow.

'"(Signed) MOSES CORBET."'

It appears that an adventurer known as Baron de Rullecourt obtained the consent and assistance of the French Government to make a descent upon Jersey, his reward to be, if successful, the governorship of the island. He accordingly collected an expeditionary force at Granville, a small town on the French coast opposite, and on the 24th of December 1780 set out with one thousand picked men of various corps. Stress of weather, however, compelled him to put back and refit.

On the evening of the 5th of January they again embarked, and, after a stormy passage, arrived off the south-eastern extremity of the island. While they were in the act of landing a terrible gale sprang up, upsetting several boats and resulting in a loss of nearly four hundred men. Meanwhile the garrison at Fort Laroque, which commanded the landing-place, never dreaming for a moment that any one would attempt to land during such stormy weather, had gone to bed. They were rudely awakened by the French bursting into the redoubt, and, being unarmed, were compelled to surrender.

Leaving a strong party with two guns to guard the landing-place, De Rullecourt set out with four hundred men to seize the town of St Helier. The garrison at this time consisted of three hundred and fifty of the Seventy-eighth Highlanders, three hundred and fifty of the Eighty-third Regiment, seven hundred of the Ninety-fifth, four hundred men of various details, a hundred artillery, and about one thousand nine hundred of the Jersey militia—a total of three thousand eight hundred men.

Led by a treacherous Jerseyman, who avoided the main roads, the little force of adventurers arrived at the market-place at six in the morning and surprised the guard on duty there.

The Lieutenant-Governor, Major Moses Corbet, the Fort-Major, as well as the chief civil officials were seized in their beds, bound with ropes, and dragged to the court-house, where De Rullecourt informed them that resistance was useless, as he had over four thousand troops in the island; and stated, further, that unless the capitulation was signed within an hour he would put his prisoners to torture. In order to give colour to this, he pompously ordered two of his officers to at once march two thousand men to Elizabeth Castle. The joint effects of threats and bluff caused the terrified Governor and the Fort-Major to sign the capitulation. The other officials, although threatened with death, manfully refused to sign the document.

News of the landing having been brought to the Rev. Francis Le Couteur, he sent word to the commander of Fort Conway that a party of Frenchmen had been left at the landing, offering him the use of two small cannon which were in his possession. This officer, dividing his small force into two columns, set out for the landing, and after a sharp fight, compelled the French to surrender. In this encounter the British lost seven killed and eight wounded; the French two officers and twenty-two men killed.

Meanwhile the capitulation having been signed, De Rullecourt read a commission from the King of France appointing him Governor of Jersey, and then proceeded to advise the people to open their shops and proceed with their usual avocations; further, he invited a number of the chief residents to dine with him at Government House.

One cannot help admiring the impudence of this bold adventurer, who knew all the time that there were at least two thousand men still under arms, while he had but four hundred.

His next step was to send copies of the capitulation to the commanders of the various forces in the island, demanding their surrender. Captain Mulcaster, who commanded at Elizabeth Castle, on receiving the letter placed it in his pocket, remarking, 'I cannot read French.'

The French officer urged a speedy surrender, as ten thousand more French were coming.

'All the better,' replied the gallant captain; 'we shall have all the more to kill,' and peremptorily ordered the officer to quit.

This reply was a bitter pill to De Rullecourt, for with the castle in his possession he could turn the guns on the town if the inhabitants proved refractory. He then threatened to destroy the town with fire and sword—a threat which so terrified the poor Governor that he sent a peremptory demand for the castle to be handed over to the French, which elicted the following firm reply:

'ELIZABETH CASTLE, *6th January* 1781.

'SIR,—Seeing that you have been surprised and taken prisoner, the command of His Majesty's troops falls on Major Peirson, whom we know has neither been surprised nor taken prisoner. Moreover, the castle is not under my command. You know our force and our situation, and when we reflect that the standard of England has reaped honour in the defence of this fortress, we shall not allow its glory to be tarnished now, and that is why we are determined to hold out to the last extremity.

'(Signed) P. AILWARDS, *Capt.*'

Meanwhile the militia, with detachments of the Seventy-eighth and Ninety-fifth Regiments under Major Peirson, had formed up on Gallows Hill to retake the town; and in response to De Rullecourt's message to bring in their arms to the Town Hall, the gallant Major replied, 'Oui, nous porterons nos armes à la Maison de la Ville; mais ce sera la bayonette au bout du fusil' ('Yes, we will bring our arms to the Town-Hall, but with fixed bayonets'), and gave the officer half-an-hour to get back to his commander; at the expiration of which he advanced on the town with two columns, one commanded by himself and the other by Captain Lonsdale of the Seventy-eighth.

The French position in the market-place was a strong one, for cannon were planted at the outlets so as to sweep the narrow streets along which the British must of necessity advance.

Placing himself at the head of the regular troops, Major Peirson rushed into the Royal Square ; but a discharge of grape and musket shots fired almost point-blank caused the Ninety-fifth to fall back upon the militia ; however, seeing their commander lying dead in front of them, they re-formed and made a final dash into the square, when a terrific hand-to-hand encounter took place.

Above the din and rattle of the musketry could be heard the shrieks of the women from the bedroom windows of the surrounding houses as they witnessed their relatives fighting for hearth and home.

De Rullecourt, seeing that all was lost, dragged the unhappy Governor from the Court-House, swearing that they should die together. Scarcely had he uttered these words when a shot from a man of the Seventy-eighth took away part of his lower jaw, killing him, while a couple of shots perforated the hat of the Governor. De Rullecourt's second in command thereupon surrendered.

As this affair only lasted half-an-hour, and the French loss was computed at one hundred and one killed and one hundred and forty-two wounded, it must have been pretty sharp work. The loss on the English side was not quite half that number.

As soon as the firing ceased the women and children rushed from the adjacent houses to ascertain if their relatives were numbered with the slain, and many pathetic scenes were witnessed, for the men of the 'Town Regiment' of militia, who were fighting practically on their very doorsteps, had lost heavily.

When the body of De Rullecourt was searched, papers were found showing that in the event of his being successful the Prince of Nassau was to descend with fourteen thousand men upon Guernsey, and the inhabitants were to be transported to Languedoc, their places being taken by French settlers.

Seldom has a force met with greater disaster, for about five hundred were killed or drowned, while the remainder were taken prisoners, many of whom were wounded.

The Lieutenant-Governor was tried for surrendering the island, and removed from his position. The gallant Peirson was buried at St Helier's Church, not far from where the pulpit stands. A plain slab with the word 'Peirson' marks the spot where rests all that remains of the young hero. Copley's famous picture in the National Gallery, London, embalms the incident of Peirson's death.

De Rullecourt was buried in the churchyard, where a stone bears the inscription: 'Rullecourt, 6 Janvier 1781.' The inhabitants raised a memorial to the gallant officer, Peirson, which records : 'À la mémoire du Major François Peirson, lorsque cette île fut envahie par les Français, tomba vaillamment à la tête des troupes Anglaises et de la Milice. Il mourut dans la fleur de sa jeunesse, et dans le moment de la victoire, le sixième jour de Janvier 1781, âgé de 24 ans. Les États de cette île en témoignage, reconnaissant de leur délivrance, causérent ce monument d'être érigé aux frais public.'

The following parody of the Lieutenant-Governor's despatch appeared in the *Universal Magazine* of that period :

A LATE EXPRESS VERSIFIED.

I acquaint you, my friend, here 's the devil to do,
For the French are come here—yes, they landed at two.
When the folks brought the news I could hardly believe 'em,
But the guards were so stationed they could not perceive 'em.
They marched 'cross the roads, every common track scorning,
So got to our market by six in the morning.

I was taken at seven, and might have been slain,
But the troops and militia released me again;
And then the commander informed me that they
Surrendered themselves, as a body may say,
All prisoners of war—not a soul saved his bacon;
All were killed or were wounded, and so they were taken.

But poor Major Peirson demolished I find him,
As he marched before troops who were marching behind him.
We have five hundred prisoners, some hundreds are killed,
One hundred were wounded and left on the field.
All the rest left their arms, and are fled great and small,
But I hope by to-morrow I shall have 'em all.

Our loss may be fifty men slaughtered outright,
And perhaps half that number were wounded in fight.
As usual Friend Mulcaster fought: what of that?
I am safe, though they fired two shots through my hat.
To transmit an account to Old England 's my plan,
In meantime, I wish you 'd send this if you can.

REFORMATION AT TRAWDSLEY.

By Robert Stonecheek.

TRAWDSLEY was rural — rural as waving corn-fields and insanitary cow-sheds could make it. It consisted chiefly of one straggling, cobble-paved street, and possessed, amongst other rural features, a general store that supplied the village with eatables and the county with a fly-cemetery ; for the windows thereof were mottled and the goods it displayed were mottled by countless carcasses of flies that had apparently considered it their duty to expire thereon in the most ungraceful attitudes; and the proprietress, having a monopoly of the village trade, failed to see any necessity for removing them—her prejudice against such unnecessary exertion even surviving inquiries about the price

per quart of fresh ones compared with those long deceased, and whether or not she measured them with the wings on.

This information was usually sought by loud-voiced boys who congregated in a sheltered passage near the shop door, and into which generations of youthful Trawdsley had gathered of an evening, to the chagrin of the shop's successive proprietors, who had at various times tried many ineffectual methods of removing the evil.

With such an object in view, she who harboured inanimate flies had had a capsizable bucket affixed over the shelter and connected by rope and pulleys to the shop counter, from where she could flood the pavement underneath and its noisy tenants with soapsuds or other objectionable liquids. But no public right-of-way was ever defended more savagely than the gathering-place of Trawdsley juveniles, and it can safely be asserted that 90 per cent. of the stones hurled into Trawdsley atmosphere after the bucket's appearance finished up in the vicinity of the booby contrivance, till the inventress was fain to remove it.

It was this bucket that primarily caused 'Blubby'—legitimately known as William Sterrip—to enter the army; and as Johnny Andot would not have enlisted without a companion, Mrs Hudson's corner-cleaning apparatus was really the cause of both entering Her Majesty's Service.

Blubby was fifteen years old, and only son of his widowed mother. The ages of those who patronised Mrs Hudson's corner ranged from twelve to sixteen, and Blubby could be insulted or maltreated with impunity by any one of them. If outrage had been committed on somebody's property, and a name had to be furnished to the schoolmaster, it was Blubby; if a bragging child was contradicted, he kicked Blubby; if a new practical joke came into action, Blubby was the victim. And all these happenings only caused him to bury his face in his cap and weep. In short, Blubby was 'soft.' His mother and twin-sister, worn out at night with the washing that earned them bread, would often weep at the thought of his sufferings as they removed from his clothes the muddy traces of the day's indignities; and at times they entertained faint hopes that he might one day lose his timidity and become as other boys.

Therefore, Blubby being public scapegoat, his name was naturally given to Mrs Hudson as the perpetrator of the latest outrage on her watering arrangement—to wit, mooring her pet tabby underneath and then creating such noise as induced her to pull the string. As such perpetrator Blubby was duly beguiled into the shop and chastised; and afterwards, as he shed silent tears by the roadside, a notorious young bully derided him and gloated over his misfortunes. Then it was that Blubby's sister, taking clean linen to a neighbouring mansion, came along and fought for her brother. She got badly beaten and hurt, whilst Blubby, afraid to interfere, tremblingly watched operations.

The bully, satisfied that he had done sufficient damage to the Sterrip mind and body, presently went his way; the girl, after speaking cheering words to her brother, did likewise, carrying a heart almost as heavy as her basket; and Blubby, lying face down in the green laneside grass, forgot his sobs in a turmoil of strange thoughts.

It had suddenly dawned upon him that he was a coward. He had been addressed by a plebeian equivalent of the word before, and answered to it without shame—because the odium belonging thereto had never troubled him. Now, however, the recent sight of his sister's rapidly darkening eye and bleeding nose revealed its unwelcome meaning to him in a horribly clear manner, and also his own undeniable title to it. His own sister, whom the books at school taught him to defend against all odds, had fought for him, who was afraid to uplift a hand, and afterwards she had tried to laugh his tears away without so much as a word about her own hurts! Why was he not like the rest of the tribe—able to resent indignities in a practical manner, instead of merely brooding over them?

He grew incensed against his surname: it might be that if he had been of another house he would have been different; but his sister's pluck recurred to him and floored the conclusion.

Finally, the lad was forced to tell himself, with a mighty effort of will, that he, Blubby Sterrip, was a coward because—well, he did not know; but surely he was a mighty coward.

These were virgin thoughts for Blubby; and afterwards, when Will Sterrip, matured, commanded respect from all men, he often wondered what kind wind brought them.

Blubby's heel at length ceased to raise itself pettishly in the air, and his toe rested motionless in the hole it had kicked in the turf. His chaotic thoughts had fallen into order, and he was thinking deeply.

When a perennial thrush in the vicarage grounds proclaimed high noon the boy rose suddenly to his feet. Next moment he had mounted an adjacent copse and was striding savagely over the fields towards Brakeley, a small barrack-town seven miles distant.

A sob coming from the right in Farmer Dandy's hay-field arrested his attention. Blubby waded from the beaten path and beheld Johnny Andot lying in the hay, a picture of abject, weeping misery—Johnny Andot, expert bird-nester, surveyor of orchards, and defier of gamekeepers!

'What's up?' Blubby asked. He was rather astonished at the unique sight.

Johnny looked up, brushing away his tears with a shiny coat-sleeve.

'Where're you goin'?' he asked, with an effort to look unconcerned, and ignoring Blubby's question.

The lad's astonishment changed to timidity. He retreated.

'Come back!' commanded Johnny. Blubby obeyed. 'Where're you for?'

The timid one shuffled nervously, and presently stammered:

'To 'list.'

'To what?' shouted Johnny.

''List.'

Young Andot sat rigidly upright for the space of a minute, then lay back and searched the heavens for the wandering bolt that had struck Blubby. Gradually, however, his features relaxed and his interrupted thoughts returned. Tears gathered in his eyes again; and Blubby, noticing a scar of recent birth on his cheek, ventured to repeat his question.

'It's him again,' replied Johnny.

Blubby understood, and sat down in silent sympathy.

'Him' was Johnny's stepfather, an idle, dissolute man whom, six months before, Trawdsley said Mrs Andot was throwing herself away upon, even if she was forty and had three children—intelligence that the lady in question had fallen in complete accord with about three months after she had married him. Trawdsley also volunteered the information that the late Mr Andot would turn in his coffin if he knew what was taking place, though he had been in that receptacle six years.

Those six years, aided by an assured income of fifteen shillings weekly, had effaced the grief Mr Andot had caused by departing; and tranquil contentment reigned in the Andot household till Ned Hicksby came along and successfully wooed the widow. He was a semi-respectable farm-labourer; but immediately after the marriage he retired from manual labour, regularly appropriated the family income, and took upon himself the maintenance of domestic discipline.

His method was simple. After copious libations at the inn with his wife's money, he would reel home reeking with meanness. If Johnny, gem of his mother's heart, was in the house, the drunken wretch would chastise him with feet and hands for some fancied offence; if the larder was empty he vented his brutality on his wife, and the two younger children learned to run from him as they would from a mad bull. These things became daily occurrences, and Johnny's mother often moistened with tears the wool she knitted all the day through. Little wonder that she lost all regard or respect for the man, and that her son's teeth collided with impotent fury whenever he saw him.

This was why the redoubtable Johnny happened to be watering Farmer Dandy's hay-field with his tears when Blubby found him.

Young Sterrip silently watched his friend's grief return, and as silently watched it ebb; he watched him look thoughtfully up into the heavens as though asking advice from his own beloved parent who was gone. Then Johnny spoke:

'Is your uncle at Brakeley, Blub?' he asked.

'Yes.'

'Will 'e write to my mother for me?'

'I think so,' replied Blubby rather curiously.

Johnny rose. 'Come on, then,' he said.

'What!' gasped Blubby. 'You're not goin'?'

'Yes, I'm goin' to 'list too,' laconically answered Johnny. His resolve seemed to bring wonderful solace.

Two days later Mrs Sterrip received a letter from her bachelor brother, sergeant with fifteen years' service, then serving at Brakeley, saying that Blubby, subject to the maternal consent (which he as her brother had guaranteed), was serving his country; also that Johnny, subject likewise (which the soldier beseeched his sister to obtain), was ditto. He further said that he would make men of them, but omitted to add that at the moment of writing, and at the writer's instigation, three big army-men were instilling into Blubby their intention of flaying him alive if he failed to give battle when the junior bugler next insulted him.

Mrs Sterrip, having faith in her brother and attaching some importance to one day seeing her son a man, approved with a little inward reluctance. Johnny's mother sorrowfully gave her consent because her husband registered a drunken vow to half-kill the boy when he returned.

. . . . . .

Two years elapsed, during which Sergeant Grant and his regiment migrated to Aldershot, and the Sterrip-Andot generation in Trawdsley gradually took to various rural apprenticeships.

One genius of diabolical mischief, by name Andrew Ellabie, was milk-distributer for Farmer Dandy, and consequently had a wholesale contempt for Farmer Dandy's time, as was evident one beautiful June afternoon when he laid down his cans and solemnly incited two cats and a dog to mortal combat.

Having, by the judicious use of sundry unearthly, hissing noises, inducted a little sickly determination into each animal, he was breathlessly watching the next move when a girlish voice called him from behind.

He turned round and beheld Miss Sterrip.

'Hello, Nell!' he cried earnestly. 'Don't call 'im off!'

Nell was too much occupied with the news she had to trouble about canine morals.

'Willie's coming home to-day!' she joyously exclaimed.

'Eh!' The cats escaped, much to the dog's secret relief.

'Willie's coming home,' replied the girl. 'We got a letter this morning. He'll land at Warderbank station at quarter-past five.' Then, seeing the lively anticipations expressed on the lad's features, she said plaintively, 'Don't plague him, Andy; don't, please. It'll spoil his coming home.'

The milk-cans leapt instantly into noisy action. Andrew clattered up and down a garden path, leaving half-a-pint of milk in a jug and a like quantity on the doorstep; he mounted and wriggled through fences of all descriptions; he belaboured creaking doors unmercifully, and when the dila-

tory housewives appeared they were greeted with opprobrious insinuations concerning the neglected duties of husbands with idle wives. And the women were so astonished by the arrival of the milk before tea that they forgot to repeat the customary ominous prophecies regarding his future career. In short, Andrew delivered the milk, returned the empty cans, and travelled to Warderbank station in less time than half the round usually occupied.

Warderbank station was managed by one man; two trains stopped each day; two passengers rarely alighted; occasionally there was one, often none.

A lazy, contented peace hung about the basking metals, the uninhabited platform, and the combination waiting-room-booking-office building, wherein Andrew knew the combination stationmaster-porter was enclosed—probably asleep. Over the carefully trimmed hedge at the platform side winged insects droned monotonously.

Presently a bell whirred faintly in the wooden building, and a signal at the platform end rattled down, giving Andrew pleasant visions of extorting from Blubby his two years' experiences; probably—if Blubby were kind enough to give the slightest offence—of kicking a soldier's cap in the dust.

Trawdsley had never, within Andrew's limited memory, produced a soldier before, and the lad was anxious to learn what it was like. In fact, he had martial inclinations himself.

The train deposited two passengers—Blubby and Johnny, both of whom, to Andrew's astonishment, smoked cigarettes.

He greeted them with a weird yell at the station wicket-gate, to which they responded with a cheery but quiet 'Hello, Andy; how are you?' then coolly continued their conversation.

Andrew was piqued; and, moreover, he grew instantly envious of the uniform. Not realising that thoughts of home were uppermost in their minds, he offensively appropriated a white glove from Blubby's belt. The young soldier calmly—very calmly—reclaimed it.

'Wash your hands first, Andy,' he said, neatly hanging the glove in his belt again. 'It's a glove, if you wish to know its name.'

Master Ellabie was enraged, and slightly mystified. Was this Blubby?

'Look 'ere, Blubby,' he ejaculated, 'no cheek, or I'll'——

William Sterrip had not been addressed by his old nickname for almost two years, and its resurrection did not please him; therefore he took bodily possession of Andrew, who had uttered it.

Physically the Ellabie youth was little the worse when the two friends walked on again: he had merely been whirled round and jammed rather tightly in the hedge; but mentally he was a temporary wreck—his mind was a chaotic turmoil. For Blubby could fight, and his fighting was a revelation.

He looked after the two youths, and noticed what his knowledge of Blubby's former nature had blinded him to: Blubby had grown; Blubby was broad; so was Johnny—Johnny was very tall; and they both walked with an easy confidence seldom seen in Trawdsley.

Suddenly a brilliant idea impelled Andrew to wriggle out of the hedge and race across field and ditch towards a distant farmhouse, the yard of which he presently surveyed with one eye from behind the gate-post. He instinctively dodged a turnip which a farm-hand, coming upon him suddenly, just as instinctively threw at him; whooped defiance at an old man feeding pigs, and darted across the yard; eventually discovering in a barn the pugnacious youth from whom Nellie Sterrip had once tried to defend her brother.

'Jim,' gasped Andrew, 'Blubby 's come 'ome!'

Jim appeared but slightly interested.

''E says 'e 'll give you the best sluggin' you ever 'ad in your life,' continued the visitor. Jim apparently did not believe. Such thoughts in Blubby were outrageous.

''E says you can no more fight nor a yelpin' kid.'

The bully grew attentive. 'Did 'e?' he asked, dropping his hay-fork.

Master Ellabie solemnly confirmed his statement.

'All right,' said Jim ominously; 'I 'll be droppin' across 'im to-night. Then 'e 'll see 'oo 's a yelpin' kid.'

His informer was visibly disappointed.

'They 've red coats,' he continued desperately. 'Leastways, I said it was red, an' Blubby said 'e used to think so, till 'e one day bethought 'issel' o' your 'ed, then 'e give 'is coat a back-seat.'

Jim grabbed his coat with a scowl.

'Where is 'e?' he asked.

'Gone 'ome; but if you cross Brayley's meadow, you 'll catch 'im afore 'e gets to Trawdsley.'

Jim put on his coat, peered out of the barn, and by a little scouting got clear away unobserved, with the exulting Andrew at his heels.

Five minutes later he detached himself from a roadside copse, and gave Blubby great delight by his offensiveness. Andrew Ellabie, invisible in some neighbouring brambles, gleefully witnessed the Trawdsley bully receive a wonderfully scientific chastisement; and when the sorrowing but astonished Jim returned to work, his employer, after commenting abundantly on his various eccentricities of feature, had to admonish him hourly during the next three days; for Jim was like one half-dazed, and was wont to sit down and scratch his red head with a vague, unbelieving expression on his piebald countenance.

Blubby's fame went before him—Andrew carried it. But as Andrew had no particular grudge against any other member of Trawdsley society, he told the solid truth. Mrs Sterrip heard it as she stood at the garden gate to greet her son; and had the news been otherwise she would have believed only the truth when she saw him—three inches nearer the sky, and big in proportion, with a walk—oh, the way he carried himself!

Mrs Sterrip was exceedingly proud that day.

Johnny Andot continued on his way up the street, greeting old friends every few yards. Near his own gate two ill-clad children rushed upon him with delighted shrieks, followed by a woman whose pinched face seemed to be smiling for the first time in many months.

She dusted with her apron a chair for him to sit upon, gazing lovingly at his straight figure; but a pained look intruded on her smile when Johnny involuntarily glanced round the kitchen for the furniture he missed.

Johnny silently thought the tea rather transparent, and that the children fell voraciously on the victuals; also that his mother gave periodical uneasy glances through the window. The missing furniture and his mother's altered face were in his mind too; but he did not discuss them. Johnny had learned to study men and things in the army; Johnny was observant.

After tea he sent the children out to buy sweets for themselves, whilst he idly smoked on the doorstep. He smoked till a man wobbled out of the 'Shepherds' Arms' away up the road; then he turned to his mother with some money.

'Mother, I wish you'd see if Mrs Hudson has any pipeclay. I forgot to bring some with me, and my belt would disgrace a wash-basket.'

The mother grew suddenly nervous.

'You come too, Johnny,' she coaxed, 'and I'll show Mrs Hudson the lad she used to chase. She'll be quite pleased to see you.'

'I'm just slipping across to Will's, or I'd go myself,' said Johnny innocently.

His mother watched him cross the road into Sterrip's, and felt relieved. Two hundred yards up the road her husband lurched behind an intervening clump of thorn just in time to prevent her seeing him, or Johnny's anticipations might have miscarried. She slipped hurriedly out through the back-door; but by the time she reached the shop her son was home again, and his friend Sterrip sauntered leisurely across to Mrs Hudson's, thinking out devices to lengthen his greetings with Mrs Hicksby.

The two children rushed hilariously into the house a moment after Johnny returned; but he immediately bought up their purchases at a terribly enhanced value and cleared them out to reinvest. When they had gone he smoked again in company with many unchristian reflections.

His stepfather's feet presently collided heavily with the doorstep; but the remainder of his body refusing to stop on such short notice, he fell full length in the porch. With a few muttered growls he tumbled up and leered savagely at Johnny.

When he realised who the visitor was he proceeded to unbuckle a leathern belt.

'What're you after?' he bellowed.

'What do *you* want?' Johnny quietly asked.

'I'll show you what I want!'

'So will I,' said Johnny, rising and kicking the chair aside.

Shortly after, a half-sobered man awoke to the fact that the lad he had once kicked out had returned—a man, or at least sufficiently acquainted with men's ways to be dangerous. His ill-treated wife, returning home to say that Mrs Hudson had searched in vain for pipeclay, was informed by her two startled but by no means displeased children that Johnny and father were fighting, and Johnny was winning.

She raced home full of nervous apprehensions for her son, and arrived in time to see her husband leaving the premises, Johnny's energetic army-boot being chief motive-power. And—let it not be said to her shame—the surprise pleased her; for her love of the man had long since been driven away.

Next day two red-tunicated youths looked serenely into the blue sky from Farmer Dandy's hay-field. Same hay-field; same place.

'I suppose he kicked against your company,' said young Sterrip, watching the blue cigarette smoke curl lazily to the sky.

'I did the kicking,' replied Johnny.

'Where's he gone?'

'Don't know; up Brakeley way, I heard. Anyway, it does not matter; he won't trouble Trawdsley again.'

'He'll hear when we go back, though.'

'Not going back,' replied Johnny laconically. 'Don't stare, Will; it's correct. I'm staying at home to do sentry-go over the house and mother's bit of money. She saw Mr Brade this morning, and I've an idea I'll be engaged at his corn-mill before long.'

Young Sterrip looked melancholy.

'Anyhow, Will,' continued Johnny reflectively, 'I'm not sorry I went; and when you're sergeant-instructor I dare say I shall feel a bit envious. And you can tell your uncle, Will, that he deserves a V.C. for the trouble he took in driving us to the school and gym.'

SONG.

Will he come when comes the springtime,
When the blossoms crowd the tree?
Will it be when birds are singing
My heart's love will come to me?
Will he come when summer cometh,
With the roses all aglow?
Will it be in spring or summer
Love's fair flower again shall blow?

Will he come in changing autumn—
Days of heat, and nights of cold;
Sun and mist and frost a-turning
All the green to brown and gold?
Will it be in stormy winter
That my love will come to me?
Ah! I know not: know I only,
Welcome will his coming be!

CLARA SINGER POYNTER.

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TALKS WITH GIRLS.

THURSDAY'S BAIRNS.

By KATHARINE BURRILL.

Monday's Bairn is fair of face,
Tuesday's Bairn is full of grace,
Wednesday's Bairn is loving and giving,
Thursday's Bairn works hard for his living,
Friday's Bairn is full of woe,
Saturday's Bairn has far to go;
But the Bairn who is born on the Sabbath Day
Is bonnie and blithe and good and gay.

IS it better to be born lucky than rich? Master Albert Perkins, proud possessor of the proverbial Silver Spoon, may open his mouth too wide in his anxiety to grab all the good things he sees spread in front of him, when out flops the spoon and away go all his wealth and riches. Whereas poor Thomas Hodge, eating his daily portion of porridge with a common little wooden spoon, has good luck seated on the rim of the porridge-bowl: good luck that shows him how to turn mangel-wurzels into note-paper or peat-moss into blankets till he amasses a large fortune, and by the stepping-stones of a knighthood and a baronetcy becomes Baron de Hodgue of Hodgue-town! Good luck turns Thomas's fustian into a peer's robes, and the want of it makes it impossible for Albert to preserve his velvet pelisse. Miss Kilmansegg was very, very rich; her artificial leg was made of solid gold; and yet no one will dispute the fact that, notwithstanding

A wealthy Nabob was Godpapa,
And an Indian Begum was Godmamma,

poor 'Miss K.' was a remarkably unlucky young lady. Yes, on the whole, I think it is better to be born lucky than rich; of course some of us have the misfortune to be born poor and unlucky, but our birthdays may have something to do with that.

Sunday's children have an immense advantage over other people; they are naturally light-hearted, which helps them to bear their troubles bravely; they are 'born good,' and not an austere, gloomy goodness either, for we are told they are blithe and gay. They are also bonnie, which means they are just nice-looking enough to be attractive, and not so superlatively beautiful that they make their neighbours envious and uncharitable. Unfortunately we cannot choose our own day of the week, and must put up with the woes of Friday and the travels (probably Third-class and Steerage) of Saturday as well as we can. Perhaps Wednesday is even a nicer day than Sunday. Don't we all know those dear, loving, kind-hearted, generous Wednesday's Bairns: ready to help Miss Thursday with her work and comfort Master Friday, full of enthusiasm and admiration for graceful My Lady Tuesday and fair-faced Mistress Monday, and always with a spare moment to help weary, travel-stained Captain Saturday pack his boxes before he starts on another voyage?

Christmas Day would be a lovely birthday, only of course no one could reasonably expect two sets of presents. Midsummer Eve would make you feel you had real Fairy Godmothers, who danced on the green and rang peals of blue-bells all in honour of you. Twenty-ninth of February people must look upon their birthday as a Will-of-the-wisp, whose pale-green skirts and snowdrop-filled hands can only be caught and held once in every four years, and not always then. It would certainly be very nice to have your birthday on a Saint's day; to know you had Saint George to specially protect you from the Dragons in your path; to think brave Saint Andrew was your very own Saint, or that shamrock-crowned Saint Patrick or noble Saint Margaret was watching over you, and taking a real and personal interest in your welfare. Every girl can make her birthday a saint's day to the rest of the family; but we cannot, alas! *choose* our own day, and very many of us have to be contented with grim, prosaic, hard-working Thursday. Now, there are two kinds of Thursday's Bairns: the Real, who have to work for their living, whom we all admire and honour; and the Spurious, who call themselves Workers (with a large capital 'W'), who have no

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need to work, and make themselves so objectionable that every sensible person wants to slap them. We all know them. Sometimes they are misunderstood at home, sometimes they think they have a great mission, and very often they want to be nurses and singers and artists and actresses because it is dull at home. The young woman in *Punch* who explained to her Uncle, 'Mother is getting so blind, and Father is always ill, and it's so dull at home that I am going to be a Hospital Nurse,' is by no means so exaggerated as she sounds. There are at present in London five thousand actors and actresses out of work; but that does not deter the girl who thinks she can act from joining 'the army of budding Juliets' at fifteen shillings a week in a fifth-rate company—always, mind you, with the pleasing consciousness that at any moment she can leave the 'Thinking parts' and the lodgings that smell of parrots and Irish stew, and return to a comfortable home where she will be received with open arms. What about the girl who has no home, and wants that particular fifteen shillings a week to live on? There is nothing more contemptible than the Amateur well-off, and with no striking talent, who deliberately robs the poor 'Pro' of his bread. Only two things should take a girl to the stage: genius or starvation.

As for the reedy sopranos who think they are good enough for opera, their name is legion. We all know the girl with the penny-whistle voice who goes to Paris to study (if only the money her parents waste on her could be spent on some one who could sing!); she returns from Paris (very French) and talks a great deal about her singing, but has invariably mislaid her music, her accompanist, or her voice. Then there are girls who 'Sculp,' who paint, who recite, who fiddle, all calling themselves Professionals when they are nothing but inferior Amateurs; but then, you see, the studio (in the attic!) and the novels that are going to be written take up so much of the dear girls' time that they have not a moment for the ordinary home duties or a second to waste on Father or Mother. They are very tiresome young people, and not unlike bad Half-crowns which look impressive, but when tossed on the hard Table of Life with no pleasant backing of parents, home, and money do not ring true. I would rather have the honest, hard-working Penny that sells in a shop or teaches A, B, C in a Board School for her living than such pinchbeck silver coins. It would be a very sweeping assertion to say no one should work for money who does not actually require that money for bread; for sometimes Fate only provides people with dry crusts, and they rather fancy a spoonful of jam. If you can make some jam, make it; it's by no means easy.

> **It's a very good world to live in,**
> **To spend or to lend or to give in.**
> **But to beg or to borrow or to come by your own,**
> **It's the very worst world that ever was known.**

It certainly is a very hard world to make a livelihood in, and that is why I have so little sympathy with girls who cannot be grateful and thankful when they have comfortable homes. I would not condemn a girl with exceptional talents to 'the common round, the trivial task;' but we have had a good many distinguished people who did not think the daily trivial task beneath their notice. Lancelot Gobbo tells us 'Murder will out,' and assuredly so will genius. You may bury ordinary talents in the back-garden, but genius cannot be hidden among the gooseberry-bushes. This is for the comfort of the girl who thinks her particular talent is genius, and that in the unappreciative home circle she is 'wasting her sweetness on the desert air.' Cheer up! If you are a genius and have greatness in you, you will be great. The picture will be painted that is to electrify the universe, the novel will be written, the poems published. You will rise to Fame on wings of song, or write your name on the Sands of Time with the end of your fiddle-bow, or act like Mrs Siddons if—you have not made the very common mistake of looking at your nice, compact little talent through a very powerful magnifying-glass. If you really have to work hard for your living with even a small talent, the necessity for 'the infinite capacity for taking pains' may turn that talent into something very closely resembling genius. Little Tommy Tucker probably sang his very best when his supper depended upon his performance. Hunger is a good incentive to work; but it is tragic to think of that great army of women who often are hungry, who have songs to sing and no audience who will listen to their singing. Can we keep our windows shut and not hear their voices: the songs that are full of tears, the songs that are sung with a brave but a breaking heart? It is terrible to think of the lives of some women, hard, unlovely, always toiling, always struggling, with nothing to look forward to, and nothing to look back upon—gray days, gray streets, gray lives—and then little Miss Flibbertigibbet says how lovely it must be to work for your living, how dull it is at home, and how she wishes she could set up in London in a small flat and write for the papers! Oh, foolish Flibbertigibbet! stay where you are, where the beds are soft, where there is kindness and comfort, and where there is enough to eat. Bread touched up with mustard to give it a relish is not a very sustaining nor exciting form of diet; but it is not unknown to girls who are fighting for a foothold at the bottom of the journalistic ladder. Miss Billington, in a recent article, gave ten years as the time of hard work and struggle that it takes to make a successful woman journalist. What of those who are not successful, and who go under in the struggle? Dr Forbes Winslow says: 'While, of course, it is true that many forms of manual labour are too severe for women, I hold that in any field of work where her strength will permit her to compete with Man, she can do as well as he can; while her general organisation will be no hindrance to her success and continued exertions.' This is true; women's work

is as good every bit, but—it is not so well paid. Now, if a woman-clerk is in every possible way as good as a man-clerk, why does she not receive the same salary? In some cases she may, but in many cases she does not. It is manifestly unfair that women should not be paid for good work exactly the same as a man would be. There should be no question of getting women cheaper. It is very cruel to the women, and it lowers the standard of paid work all round. If women are cheap, mean firms will employ them in preference to men, and the men are thrown out of work. I wish from the bottom of my heart that women had not to work for their living; but nowadays many of them must do so or starve. They can no longer sit at home and embroider silken banners, while the knights ride away singing:

> I'll make thee glorious by my pen,
> And famous by my sword.

No, the women must go down into the Hurly-Burly themselves; no one will bring them home the spoils of the fight, and they themselves must gather the bay-leaves with which to deck their brows. If their hearts ache and their white hands are roughened and torn, no one can help it, and no one can do anything. That Fathers are immensely to be blamed in bringing girls up in the lap of luxury, and then leaving them totally unprovided for, goes, of course, without saying. And yet it is done every day. They will tell you they expect their girls to marry; but even if they do expect them to marry, are they going to let them go to their husbands for every single penny, are they going to give them nothing of their own? A French Father can give his daughter a *dot;* why can an English Father not do the same thing? If the *dot* is there to be planked down on the wedding-day, it is equally there when the day comes that the kind and indulgent Father says 'good-bye.' Ever so little money would help a girl to make her way in the world. It is surprising how small a nucleus of capital will form the basis of a successful business. There are few things a girl can take up that she has not to pay a premium for, or to which she has not to serve a long apprenticeship. How can she possibly do this if she is penniless? It would be far better to live in a simpler, less luxurious way, and put by something for the girls. If they marry well, so much the better; a little pocket-money of her very own would not come amiss to even a millionaire's wife. She could always feel her husband was not paying for his own Christmas present! As ten chances to one girls will not marry millionaires, their little *dot* will help to make a small home with some honest, straight young fellow who can bring the same amount. If the girls never marry, the *dot* will be useful to live on, or if very small, *half* live on. Any way you like to take it, it will not be wasted.

That a woman's proper sphere is her own happy home is an undoubted fact; of course a great many High-Falutin young women will tell you just the reverse. The chronicling of small-beer does not appeal to them. Well, as there are not nearly enough men to go round, it's just as well some women feel themselves too superior for ordinary happiness. I wish there were enough men, and that every hard-working, weary, slopping-through-wet-streets and riding-in-stuffy-busses woman had a real good home, with a husband to take care of her and do the bread-winning, while she did the bread-baking. 'Whoever makes a happy home for some one makes a happy world.' Can you possibly do anything better than help to make a happy world? All you girls and women who are (I hope) doing your share towards making the world's happiness, do think of the tired, worn-out workers who never see the sun except in short blinks through a high-up office window. Just think if you cannot do something for the Thursday's Bairns. They are not all interesting, sometimes they are very dull, and sometimes they are not grateful. But I don't think I should be grateful if I spent all my day tap, tap, tapping at a typewriter, nor particularly amiable if existence were passed in conducting small bored children through the intricacies of *Le Petit Precepteur.*

There are many Thursday's Bairns who want help and sympathy; a twopenny bunch of violets can brighten up a day wonderfully, the loan of a book, the gift of a magazine. Alice, just go into the morning-room and see if there isn't a magazine that could be given to somebody. Many of the women who work hard are invalids, and do all sorts of fine, intricate sewing lying flat on their backs. A jar of daffodils would make the little room look much cheerier, and a visitor who would talk for half-an-hour, or let the Thursday's Bairn talk herself and sympathisingly listen, would have the satisfaction of knowing she had given a great deal of pleasure at the expenditure of one little half-hour. It must be weary work sitting all day stitch, stitch, stitching. We have had 'The Song of the Shirt,' but no one has yet written the Song of the Embroidery Frame. Charles Kingsley wrote, 'Men must work and women must weep;' had he lived till the twentieth century he would have seen the women doing both the working and the weeping. Let those who are not obliged to work (they cannot escape the tears) do all in their power to help their less fortunate sisters. It is very grand to have name and fame, and be a very great novelist or a celebrated singer: but the path of Fame is beset with thorns, and though you may walk on roses at the end, you will walk on flint stones at the beginning. We hear of the successful, not of the Rank and File who fall by the way and die in the ditch. For every one who reaches the goal many perish by the wayside. Let the lucky and the fortunate hold out helpful hands to the stragglers on the road, and give a word of cheer to the faint-hearted. I believe even the greatest and most successful women long for a little peace and rest, a little escape from the world that is always with us. It is terrible to think what that

longing for rest must be to the ordinary overworked, tired-out Thursday's Bairn, who has to strain every nerve to keep up in the race to make sufficient to live on, often with others dependent on her. If we know any Thursday's Children working bravely and hard for their living, let us try as far as we can to bring some of the 'small joys' of life within their reach.

Would I were lying in a field of clover,
Of clover cool and soft, and soft and sweet,
With dusky clouds in deep skies hanging over,
And scented silence at my head and feet.

Just for one hour to slip the leash of worry,
In eager haste from Thought's impatient neck,
And watch it coursing, in its heedless hurry,
Disdaining Wisdom's call or Duty's beck.

For I am tired, so tired, of rigid duty,
So tired of all my tired hands find to do;
I yearn, I faint for some of Life's free beauty,
Its loose beads with no straight string running through.

Ay, laugh if laugh you will, at my crude speech,
But women sometimes die of such a greed;
Die for the small joys held beyond their reach,
And the assurance they have all they need.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXVI.—A DISCOVERY IN HARPUR STREET.

AT two o'clock that afternoon we were back in Dover Street, utterly fagged out by our long night-watch among the rank grass and nettles of the damp fenland; and as we took our ease for an hour's quiet smoke, I again referred to the one subject uppermost in my mind—Lady Judith Gordon. But my companion was disinclined to talk, and although I asked him to explain that strange warning he had given me, he declared that he was unable—that he was bound to secrecy.

'But, my dear fellow,' I cried, 'surely, after all these years, we know each other well enough to be real friends?'

'We are real friends, Allan,' he answered, looking me straight in the face. 'In this affair, for instance, I am assisting you because of our close friendship.'

'Then surely it is your duty to me, as my friend, to explain the reason of that strange warning?'

'It is a duty which I am unfortunately prevented from performing,' was his enigmatical answer. 'I have warned you; all I would urge of you, Allan, is not to make a fool of yourself. Avoid her, that's all, and wait until you see my prophecy fulfilled.'

And then he pulled vigorously at his pipe, his dark eyes fixed upon me in all seriousness.

His words puzzled me, and I could not help wondering if, after all, there was any real reason why the love of Judith Gordon was not permitted to me. There was a chance that it might be so. Chance! What is that? Our little coincidences which may be God's great designs.

I saw that it was useless to pursue the subject further, so feigned to treat his warning with the same flippancy as before. But he only sighed and was silent. That silence taught me much.

It seemed certain that the quartette had returned to London by the early train from Thorney or from Peterborough, and had carried back with them the manuscripts they had found; therefore, curiosity prompted Wyman to go forth about four o'clock, in order to try and discover something regarding Lord Glenelg's movements.

When we parted in Piccadilly I went on to the British Museum, for I had been wondering if anything might be preserved there that would give me an accurate ground-plan of Crowland Abbey before its dissolution. If only I could get that I should be able to fix the exact spot where the carp-ponds once existed.

Professor Dawson Fairbairn, Assistant-Keeper of the Manuscripts, had, in the days before my self-exile from London, been one of my personal friends. He was perhaps the first authority upon palæography in Europe, one of the founders of the new Palæographical Society, and an expert upon Latin and early English manuscripts. A man of middle age, he was by no means the dry-as-dust professor whom one would readily associate with such an unattractive study as the deciphering of mouldy vellum rolls. On the contrary, he was a short, stout, round-faced man, of merry demeanour, whose eyes blinked at one good-humouredly through his pair of circular gold-rimmed spectacles.

I found him in his room, busy deciphering a half-effaced page of an illuminated manuscript, but he laid aside his work to greet me. While in Italy I had had a good deal of correspondence with him regarding several rare documents that I had succeeded in finding, and more than one of which I had sent for his inspection and opinion. Of these we commenced to chat.

I did not care to show him The Closed Book, for various reasons. The secret it contained was my own, and I wished to preserve it to myself, for I recollected that he was an expert himself and could read that difficult script at the end of the volume as easily as I could a printed page.

'I am just now taking an interest in the history of Crowland Abbey,' I said presently. 'Do you know of anything in the collections that would give me an adequate description of the monastery as it was in the early sixteenth century?'

'Crowland Abbey! How strange!' he ejaculated. 'This codex I have been examining evidently came

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from there. It was sent to me for my opinion, along with several others, by Lord Glenelg, only a couple of hours ago. All the manuscripts undoubtedly once belonged to that abbey.'

'Lord Glenelg has been here?' I exclaimed.

'No—not personally. He sent them by a queer little old Italian with a hump back. I've met the old fellow before somewhere, only I can't think where. Abroad, probably, when I've been buying for the Museum. He's something of an expert.'

'His name is Graniani,' I said. 'But did his face recall to you any particular incident?'

'No; only I felt that I disliked him.'

'I thought Lord Glenelg was abroad.'

'So did I,' was the great expert's reply. 'I was very surprised to receive these from him,' and he pointed to a pile of heavily bound volumes on the table, those very manuscripts that we had seen unearthed the previous night. 'They've evidently been kept in a very damp place, for they're half ruined and effaced.'

'You received no explanation concerning them?'

'None. Only it seems such a curious coincidence that you should come and inquire for references to Crowland just at a moment when we have this important discovery of the abbey's liturgical and other books.'

'I found a reference to it by a monk named Godfrey in a manuscript I purchased in Italy recently, and it has aroused my interest,' I explained.

'A reference to it by Godfrey?' he echoed, looking up at me quickly through his spectacles. 'Have you actually found the missing Arnoldus?'

'It is an Arnoldus,' I responded; 'but why do you ask? What do you know of it?'

'I know, my dear Mr Kennedy, that if you have really rediscovered the book I mean, you hold the secret of the hidden treasure at Crowland,' was his reply.

'But what is known of the treasure?' I asked.

'All that is known is contained in an old pocket-book belonging to this monk Godfrey now in the Harley Collection. I'll send for it;' and, turning up one of the huge bound catalogues, he noted its number upon a slip of paper and sent one of his assistants for it.

The young man returned with a small squat volume, much worn, bound in a cutting from an ancient antiphonarium, and secured by a small bronze clasp.

'You will see that the book is full of useful recipes, domestic accounts, a calendar of saints' days, and memoranda of all kinds. Among the latter is the entry to which I refer;' and he opened it at a page wherein a slip of paper had been inserted.

There, sure enough, was an entry in Latin, in the same well-known hand as that upon the envenomed pages of The Closed Book. Freely translated, the memorandum was as follows:

'I, Godfrey Lovel, now monk of the Certosa of Florence, and once a brother of the Order of St Benedict, at Crowland, in England, am about to die, and have therefore written a full account of my life and adventures, and have also given full directions for the recovery of the abbey treasures, so that the secret shall not be altogether lost. I have plainly told also where the emeralds of my lady Lucrezia are concealed. All this will be found clearly written in my Arnoldus, which I have now concealed in a place of safety. Let him who seeks to know the secrets beware! He will grasp the hand of Death midway.'

There was nothing else, so the Professor informed me: only that single entry—a few rough, ill-written lines which told that the treasures of the abbey were actually concealed, and that the secret of their whereabouts was contained in the Arnoldus that had so curiously fallen into my hands.

Was it any wonder that his curiosity was at once aroused, or that he sought to know what I really had discovered?

'It is true that I am in possession of the missing manuscript,' I said; 'but unfortunately one folio of it is missing—the very folio which gives definite instructions for the recovery of the hidden treasure. At present I am unable to make investigations, because I cannot find any plan of the abbey, the cloister court, and adjacent buildings. It is to ask your assistance in this matter that I've come to you to-day, although I would also ask you, as a favour, to regard the matter at present as entirely confidential, for I do not wish any one to know that I'm engaged upon a treasure-hunt.'

'I shall, of course, respect your confidence entirely, Mr Kennedy,' the Professor said; 'and if I can be of any assistance in the matter I shall be delighted. It would be a grand thing to recover the treasures of Crowland. There must be a good many valuable things among them, for the place was one of the wealthiest of the Benedictine houses.'

'Well,' I said, 'do you happen to know of any existing plan or any written description of the monastic buildings?'

He reflected deeply, taking off his glasses and carefully wiping them.

'At the moment I really cannot think of anything,' was his quiet rejoinder; 'at least of nothing more than what has already been published in the various histories. You have, of course, seen them?'

I responded in the affirmative; whereupon he promised to make investigations and look through various catalogues, a work which I knew would mean considerable study and research.

I learnt further from Professor Fairbairn that he knew nothing of the man Selby, although he was, of course, on friendly terms with Lord Glenelg, who, as a bibliophile, was frequently at the Museum when in London.

'It is evident from these manuscripts,' I said, indicating them, 'that his lordship is making some careful investigations; therefore I wish that my inquiries should be absolutely secret from him—you understand?'

'Perfectly,' was his reply. 'I am quite as much interested in the Crowland treasure as you must be; therefore I will commence to-morrow to search for the particulars you desire, and will write you. Are you in London only temporarily, or have you returned permanently?'

'I'm staying with my friend Captain Wyman the traveller, at 14A Dover Street. A letter directed there will find me.'

'Has not the other portion of the entry here struck you as curious,' he said, pointing again to the open page of the old monk's note-book—'this reference to "my lady Lucrezia's emeralds"? Can "Lucrezia" actually be Lucrezia Borgia and the emeralds those historic ones which we know were in his possession about 1506?'

I affected ignorance. What could I do in the circumstance? I had asked the Professor's assistance regarding the Crowland ruins, but the other matter I intended to keep entirely to myself. In a few days I would go north to visit Fred Fenwicke in Galloway, and make investigations for myself. Therefore I replied:

'I know nothing of the jewels. Yet it really seems probable that Godfrey, if he had lived in Florence, might have known the notorious Lucrezia Borgia of poison fame.'

'And that warning about meeting death hand-to-hand: what can that mean?'

'Oh, the old fellow's way of trying to frighten the inquisitive, I suppose,' was my response. Then, when I had thanked him for his promise, we took a turn down the long gallery where the English manuscript charters are exhibited in glass cases to the public, and at the door he bade me farewell, repeating his intention to assist me in every way possible, and expressing a hope that, as reward, he might have sight of the long-lost Arnoldus or The Closed Book.

Professor Dawson Fairbairn was an enthusiast, and when he received any rare manuscript he handled it with as much care as though it were fragile china or the most precious gem. The Closed Book, he declared, was a manuscript that the British Museum had been in search of for a century past, ever since the discovery of old Godfrey's note-book among the Harley Manuscripts.

To search at Crowland before being in possession of a plan of the fabric as it was originally, and the buildings surrounding it, appeared to be a useless proceeding. Though Wyman and myself were both convinced of the existence of the treasure there, we were not at all certain of our measurements from the grand altar, nor of the exact position of the filled-up fish-ponds. Therefore, if we could obtain any plan showing the position and extent of the cloister court, the monks' parlour, the refectory, and the chapter-house, all of which must have once existed, the position of the fish-ponds would certainly also be shown, and thus assist us very materially.

Until Professor Fairbairn could complete his search we could only wait, the good rector taking care that no further theft was committed.

Again, some weeks must still elapse before the day and hour appointed for taking measurements at the Castle of Threave—namely, when the sun shone at 3.30 on September the 17th.

Suppose, as is so often the case in Scotland in autumn, the sun was hidden by the clouds? Should we be compelled to wait another year before our measurements could be taken with sufficient accuracy?

This fear haunted me as I wandered through Bloomsbury towards Harpur Street, a sudden desire having seized me to again examine the exterior of that mysterious house. It struck me that a watch should be kept upon that smooth-faced fellow Selby, by which means we might be enabled to foil any attempt to filch the treasure from us.

As I halted at last at the corner of Theobald's Road and looked down the short, sad street, I saw it was deserted; therefore I strolled along it on the opposite side to the house in question, just as I had done on that well-remembered night after my long chase across Europe.

As I lounged past, pretending to be utterly disinterested, I glanced up at those two dingy first-floor windows. What met my gaze there held me bewildered and speechless.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE GAS INDUSTRY.

By a Gas Engineer.

TWENTY years ago or more the gas industry was threatened with many vicissitudes. It had for long held sway in the public and private demand for light. The advent of electricity for lighting purposes threatened the stronghold of the gas manufacturer. To the uninitiated it may appear paradoxical, but it is nevertheless true, that electric light has been a good friend to the gas industry. It has created a healthy stimulus on the part of gas management, serving to clear away the cobwebs which were wont to entangle its own best interests, and bringing about greater economy in manufacture, while increased revenue has been derived from by-products, and greater scientific and technical skill brought into play in the various processes.

The great majority of people must be, and are of necessity, governed by monetary considerations, and cheapness with due regard to efficiency is the factor with which competition can best be met. While the price of gas twenty years ago was not lower

anywhere than three shillings per thousand cubic feet, at the present time it has reached the low figure of one shilling and twopence (Widnes).

In the manufacture of gas great improvements have taken place, the most striking being the doing away with hand-labour and the introduction of machinery; but it is in the distributing department —in meeting consumers' requirements and in the opening up of new channels of business—that the greatest changes have come about; and these, too, have led to an enormously increased use of gas. Comparing the position of matters in 1893 with 1903, we have the following interesting figures:

	Capital of Gas Undertakings.	Cubic Feet of Gas Made.
1893	£60,110,644	110,781,788,400
1903	106,037,135	160,578,787,000

The increase in gas manufactured is equal to about 45 per cent.

'Light, more light,' has been the cry, and the last decade has seen one vast stride towards a higher efficiency of light being demanded, and at the present moment this want has not reached finality. The standard of light, as measured by the demands of private individuals and public authorities, has gone on increasing; and while at one time electricity had the advantage over gas in being able to furnish high-candle-power lamps, yet, since the advent of the incandescent mantle, gas engineers are now enabled with high-pressure intensified systems of lighting to put on the market lamps equal at least to the power of the electric arc.

The mantle invented by Auer von Welsbach may be said to have proved the salvation of the gas industry, and has within certain lines given gas a supremacy which otherwise it could never have attained. Now that mantles and burners are much cheaper than formerly, incandescent gas-lighting is fast reaching the point of becoming universal. In Continental towns fully 90 per cent. of the gas used is with incandescent burners, and when it is used to a similar extent in this country the benefits will all be with the consumer.

To the public the much-vexed question of illuminating power will become a thing of the past; gas will be produced without the aid of costly enriching agents, such as cannel-coal and oil, and instead of *light* value being the standard of requirement, *heat* value is what will best satisfy the consumer. Gas used in incandescent lighting need not be of any prescribed illuminating power. It may be pointed out that the lighting effect produced from an ordinary flat-flame burner is never more than from three to five candles per cubic foot of gas; with the incandescent burner and the same consumpt of gas the value is raised to twenty candles, and in high-pressure lamps to as high as forty candles.

The gas industry and the gas consuming public will benefit largely when the restrictions placed on authorities to supply gas of a stipulated quality are removed. The recent appointment by the Board of Trade of a special committee to look into the whole question of supply would seem to indicate impending changes.

The coal used in gas-works gives gas of about fourteen standard candles, and if gas of still lower quality is to be supplied some new process will require to be introduced in order to reduce the illuminating power. For this purpose water-gas, which can be produced at a very low cost, is likely to play an important part, and will be carburetted only to a slight extent. The proportion of water-gas mixed with coal-gas will be so adjusted as not to unduly lower the calorific value of the mixture supplied.

That the public require to be educated as to how best to develop the lighting power of gas need hardly be enlarged upon. Gas-work staffs are best qualified to undertake this teaching; and that gas departments are eagerly desirous of meeting to the fullest extent the requirements of light-consumers is observed in the creation of a 'maintenance' branch, having for its object the upkeep of burners and mantles in private houses. For this supervision an annual charge is made per burner, mantles and accessories being renewed when necessary.

Undoubtedly one of the chief sources of increased consumption of gas has been due to the introduction of prepayment or 'slot' meters. This department has increased to enormous dimensions, and is a powerful factor in gas-supply. It is calculated that in the case of eighty of the largest companies in England, over 50 per cent. of the consumers are supplied on the prepayment system. In many towns almost the whole of the consumers have this class of meter. We find that the number of 'slot' meters in use in England during 1903 was one million two hundred and sixty thousand three hundred; in Scotland, forty-seven thousand nine hundred; and in Ireland, twenty thousand eight hundred. Scotland shows poorly in comparison; and it may be noted that in Edinburgh the system has not been encouraged to its fullest extent, while in Glasgow it has been almost neglected.

This development of the 'slot' meter business is of comparatively recent growth, as while twelve years ago the system had been barely started, latest statistics go to show that in the area supplied by the London companies, out of a total of fully eight hundred thousand meters, three hundred and forty-nine thousand consumers have their gas-supply through automatic meters. The greatly increased consumpt of the Metropolitan companies, so marked within recent years, can undoubtedly be traced to the enthusiastic and wholesale manner in which this class of business has been catered for. In this direction alone what has been lost owing to the displacement of gas by electric light has been more than made up.

This unique system of supply has much to recommend it. Thousands of the industrial classes who previously chiefly used oil have now the benefit of better-lighted and more cheerful homes. As each

consumer controls his own gas account, the system lends itself to economy in the use of gas, and as he has no quarterly bill to meet, the penny required each time to keep up the supply is not missed at the moment, and likewise gas departments benefit in so far as bad debts are entirely done away with. In many instances, instead of a penny, a florin is frequently made use of, the meter acting the part of a bank to the consumer, the surplus being returned when the money-box is emptied by the collector. The general experience is that a larger amount of gas is used with a 'slot' meter than when an ordinary meter is installed. In many towns where previously gas consumption was at a standstill the output has been more than doubled, and this entirely owing to the wonderful power of the penny.

The meters are made to take pence, shillings, or indeed almost any kind of coin, and the mechanism can be adapted to suit the coinage of any country. They are provided with 'change' wheels or other mechanical arrangement whereby the meter is set to deliver a certain amount of gas for each coin, and adjustment is easily made to suit the varying price of gas in different towns. It may be noted that by far the greater number of prepayment meters are made in our own country, and while each maker has his own particular coin attachment, no master-patent embodying the principle was ever taken out.

The question of the lighting of public streets in the best and cheapest way has for long occupied the attention of lighting authorities. That this department of municipal management was and is capable of much-needed improvement none will gainsay. In this sphere the part which gas plays is chiefly interesting as showing its great resources in face of the keen competition of electric light. While for some time our principal streets were changed over to electric arc lighting pretty much as a matter of course, the claims of gas are now being more fully recognised. Now that the incandescent mantle and lantern have been brought to greater perfection for the purpose of street lighting, gas is able to hold its own, and this is strikingly shown on a comparison being made with public electric lighting. Liverpool, with four miles of streets electrically lighted, has four hundred miles of streets lighted by incandescent gas, and is constantly referred to as one of the best-lighted cities in the kingdom. London is lighted with six thousand one hundred and fifty-nine arc lamps and fifty-six thousand nine hundred incandescent gas lamps, thus showing a pre-eminence in point of number in public gas-lighting, and this in view of the fact that the system was introduced in the streets of London to a slight extent only in 1899. In Paris and Berlin also gas is the most extensively used. The recent decision of the Glasgow Corporation to adopt incandescent gas-lighting for all streets except those already lit with electric arc lamps is pregnant with much hope for the gas industry.

Although Princes Street, Edinburgh, which is lighted with thirty-two arc lamps, has been pointed to as one of the best-lighted streets in Europe, yet that town, while in the forefront with its electric supply, has been slow in adopting improved gas-lighting for its streets. A recent report of the Cleaning and Lighting Committee recommended incandescent gas-lighting, chiefly because of the financial saving to the ratepayers as compared with the increased annual charge necessary if electric lighting was extended. And in this matter it is of importance to note, when in these times money is being so lavishly spent by public bodies, that the capital expenditure necessary to extend cables and arc lamps is enormous when compared with the low first cost required to install an improved system of gas-lighting.

It must not be overlooked that in the change from the old-time burner to the incandescent, gas authorities have lost largely in the sale of gas. This, of course, is due to a less quantity being used for the greatly increased light obtained. What has been gained is the undoubted improvement in the lighting of streets economically and efficiently. While, therefore, gas consumption has lessened for street lighting owing to the introduction of electric light and the use of the incandescent mantle, the present position of gas in this respect abundantly justifies the prospect of its continuing to occupy a prominent position so far as this feature of municipal development is concerned.

Gas-engines have largely displaced steam-power, more especially as regards power requirements for small works. More recently gas-engines of five hundred horse-power and upwards have been installed. In this direction, however, coal-gas has a strong competitor to face in Mond-gas and what is termed producer-gas. These gases, while relatively of a much lower calorific value, are produced at a very low rate from inferior dross and slack.

Coal-gas will in most cases have the advantage where the power required is anything up to about three hundred horse-power. When this point is reached it becomes a question for the manufacturer to consider producer-gas, as this plant can only be installed and worked economically when in large units. To meet this competitor, coal-gas will require to be sold at about tenpence to one shilling per thousand feet, and this having regard to the relative efficiency of the two gases. The calorific value of the producer-gas is about one hundred and twenty Board of Trade units, and of coal-gas fully five times that amount, or about six hundred and twenty Board of Trade units.

The use of gas for cooking and heating purposes has advanced in public favour, and its many conveniences have been quickly recognised. Combined with cleanliness and efficiency, there is greater saving of time than when coal is used for like purposes. That herein lies in great part the solution of the smoke-problem is generally recognised, as it must be admitted that, while to the eye the domestic

chimney is not so prominent an offender in smoke-production as that of the factory, in the aggregate it is the worst.

Taking account of the greatly lessened demand for gas during the summer months, gas officials have for long recognised the necessity of increasing the daylight demand, and so reducing the capital charges per thousand cubic feet. Towards this end liberal encouragement has been given; cooking-stoves are now hired out by almost all gas companies, a small rental being charged for the use thereof, the stoves being fixed free of charge to the consumer. On referring to latest published statistics, we observe that London companies have out on hire four hundred and forty-one thousand stoves; Leicester, thirty-nine thousand; Birmingham, twenty-four thousand; Glasgow, twenty-four thousand; Nottingham, nineteen thousand. These figures, however, indicate only partially the extent to which gas-cookers are used, as many householders possess stoves of their own.

While it cannot be said that gas for domestic fires, if used constantly, is cheaper than coal as a fuel, the gas-fire has come into common use; its cleanliness and saving of labour in household duties, and being always at command, making it an absolute necessity in many cases. While unfortunately gas-fires have been blamed for causing offensive smells, it need only be pointed out that this ought not to be, for if properly fitted so that the fumes can be carried away by the chimney no inconvenience need be experienced.

As the result of this forward policy in advertising and pushing the sale of gas, it is to be noted that in many towns the amount of gas sent out during the daytime throughout the summer months equals and frequently exceeds the demand for lighting purposes only. The extensive field open to gas companies in the use of gas for heating and cooking is almost unlimited; but in order to make its use anything like universal the charge per thousand feet would require to be very much reduced. A rate of about tenpence to fifteenpence would meet with approval. Probably, as improvements take place in manufacture and working charges are reduced, gas at one shilling will become quite common, while a reduced rate for larger quantities used would be initiated.

THE RIGHT HORSE BUT THE WRONG MAN.

PART III.

'SO that young rascal said I was safe to have some trouble on account of this horse before we made Pozo del Monte,' said Kendrick to himself. 'Well, I must be just about half-way by now; and if he means business, I take it it's high time he began. All the same, I hope he won't.'

For at least a couple of miles, as long as the daylight had lasted, the pair had plodded steadily over a surface of dry, bare plain, without sign or suggestion of human presence or habitation. But within the last hour or so the landscape had taken on a different aspect, the road, which, bad as it might be, was still a road, beginning to skirt the foot of a low range of frowning rocks. Darkness was coming on rapidly by this time, and when Kendrick found himself within their shadow there was little daylight left.

It was a somewhat eerie place to be in at that hour, with the twilight fast merging into night, the huge, shapeless masses of rock piled at the foot of the crags taking on fantastic forms in that uncertain light, and the intense silence brooding over all. Kendrick was no coward; but that twisted ankle had brought with it an unpleasant sense of helplessness, and somehow, do what he would, the thought of treachery haunted him. More than once, during that first mile or two, he had fancied he could hear the stealthy tread of following feet, and had turned his head sharply, unable to free himself from the suspicion that one of the fellows whom he had seen drinking in the inn was stealing swiftly after him now, knife in hand, bent on robbery and murder. Nothing had been there, of course, and he had sneered at himself for a fool: but all the same he had got, as he termed it, 'the jumps' pretty badly that night; and when, as he plodded slowly along in the shadow of the rocks, a man suddenly sprang out close to him, he was just about as much startled as his horse.

A man, sure enough, though where he had appeared from was a mystery. A tall fellow, swarthy of skin and muscular in build; and Kendrick could see the flashing dark eyes staring at him in the dusk. Only a peasant, of course, on his way home after a hard day's work, and our traveller, realising that the fellow was probably as much startled as himself, hailed him in a friendly manner.

'*Hola, amigo!* Tell me, is this the right road to Pozo del Monte?'

The man was close up to him by this time, staring hard at both horse and rider.

'Pozo del Monte?' he repeated harshly. 'Yes, señor, you are right. This is the road to Pozo del Monte without a doubt. But, pardon me, before you go farther I have a word to say.'

'One of these eternal whiners of beggars, I suppose,' thought Kendrick wrathfully. 'Rather far from home, but it seems you can't keep clear of 'em, go where you will.—Well?' he demanded impatiently aloud, 'what d'you want? Out with it! I'm in a hurry to get on.'

He had had some experience of Spanish beggars

in the cities; and the locality to which he mentally consigned the fraternity now was slightly undesirable as a place of residence. However, he had some loose coins in the left-hand pocket of his Norfolk jacket, and he shifted his reins into his right hand to get at them in order to choke the fellow off. But the latter interposed with a word.

'Look you, señor,' he said, with a short, grim laugh, 'it is not that I want. There is a small matter of business to be dealt with, at which your attendance is required within a short distance from here. You must have the goodness to accompany me, señor.'

For a moment, utterly taken aback by the cool demand, Kendrick sat staring at the fellow without a word. Then he recovered himself, and his speech too.

'All a mistake!' he broke out roughly. 'I've got no business in these parts. Can't have! I'm a stranger here, and nobody knows me.'

'The señor is too modest,' returned the other, laughing in the same grimly unpleasant way as before, and laying his hand on the horse's bridle. 'He is better known than he thinks he is, or, rather, would have us believe. Is it not so, comrades?' He looked behind Kendrick as he spoke; and the latter, following the direction of his eyes, saw two other men suddenly make their appearance, one on each side of the horse.

Kendrick saw it all now, or thought he did, which came to the same thing with him. Brigands, not a doubt of it; and he, according to the invariable custom of these gentry, was about to be conveyed away into the mountains and held for a heavy ransom. In fancy he saw it all; and at the thought of signing away his money the soul of the stockbroker rose within him, firing him to a pitch of noble indignation.

'Take your hand off my horse's bridle!' he thundered. 'D'you hear, you rascal? You won't, eh? Take that, then, and be hanged to you!' Therewith he swung up the heavy stick he carried, and brought it down with all his strength. But the fellow jerked his arm out of the way just in time, and the blow spent itself harmlessly in air.

'Gently, gently, Excellency,' said the man, with a laugh. 'All that is quite useless, I assure you. Only, if you are going to get into mischief we must put the chance beyond your reach.' As he spoke he seized the stick, and, exerting his full strength, wrenched it easily out of the hands of the little Englishman, leaving the latter disarmed and at his mercy.

No use to try to spring from the saddle and endeavour to make his escape in the darkness. Thanks to that wretched ankle, he had no spring left in him, and there was nothing for it but to sit still and see what would happen next.

To lead the horse aside off the path was the work of a moment; and for about a quarter of an hour after that his captors conducted him in silence, following a rough sort of track running at right angles to the road. But before long the ground became too steep for the horse; and the three, coming to a sudden halt, requested their prisoner in civil enough terms to dismount. There was no help for it, and down he got as best he could. Yet he was no nearer to escaping; for although one of the three remained below to see to the horse, the other two took good care to close in on the little Englishman in such a manner that, leaving his disabled leg entirely out of the question, it would have been a sheer impossibility for him to give them the slip.

It was all he could do to put his foot to the ground, and every step was painful. But Kendrick, despite his inches and his spectacles, was a Briton all through, and would have died rather than bring his infirmity before the notice of these fellows, or appeal for consideration on account thereof, so he stumbled on between the couple in silence. Steeper and steeper became the uphill climb, and more and more painful the tax upon his sprained ankle; but the little Englishman, despite his sufferings, was game to the backbone, and never let a sound through his tight-set teeth.

The climb ended at last on the edge of a hollow, a shallow ravine rather, its far end running away to some unknown distance between two steep incurving shoulders of rock; and Kendrick, standing there on the lip gazing down, was conscious of a sudden eerie sensation, as if he had been an unseen onlooker at the orgies of a witches' sabbath. Down below in the hollow a fire was burning, the flames, leaping up from moment to moment, glowing and flashing on the rocks that shut the ravine in on all three sides; and the dark figures of men crossing from moment to moment looked only the darker for the lurid glare.

There was only time for a moment's glance. One of the men, advancing to the sheer edge of the rock, put his hand to his mouth and whistled sharply, shrilly. The signal was at once answered from below, and the couple turned to him.

'We have to go down yonder, señor.'

'And how the dickens am I to get down, I should like to know?' queried Kendrick of himself savagely. He said nothing aloud, however, but followed, although it cost him many a groan, stifled valiantly between his teeth, before he found himself standing in safety on the turf below, with a set of wild-looking fellows—brigands, as he counted them without a doubt—crowding round him. Dark and swarthy as were the faces of most of them, however, they were expressive only of an interested sort of curiosity; and Kendrick, who by this time was almost boiling over with wrath, looked round for some one bearing evidence of authority, some one to whom and on whom he could, as he expressed it, 'let himself out.' But for some few minutes he looked in vain, until a sudden 'At your service, señor,' at his very elbow made him turn sharply, to find himself confronted by a tall, handsome

man, his face half-hidden in a mass of silky-brown beard. Recognising alike in face and voice the unmistakable stamp of command, Kendrick hailed the sight of him with relief.

'Look here!' he broke out in desperation, translating freely. 'There's some wretched mistake here. These fellows tell me I'm wanted on business; but that's downright humbug, you know. I'm travelling in your country for pleasure, and I've left all my business behind in England. Some stupid mistake, of course; but that doesn't make it any the less inconvenient for me.'

'No mistake at all, señor,' responded the brown-bearded stranger, bowing courteously. 'You have been brought here by special order; and that order, Excellency, was mine.'

The information took Kendrick aback, but for a moment only.

'Oh,' he retorted then, with all the sarcasm he could muster, 'that's it, is it? Then I was right, and you are brigands, after all.'

It was a dangerous speech to make, and he found that out next minute. One of the men standing near, a young fellow with a strong, strenuous face and a keen intensity of determination, amounting almost to fierceness, in his eyes, snarled at the words like an angry wolf, and Kendrick saw his hand clutch momentarily at his belt. But a gesture from the other held him in check.

'Patience, Carlitos, patience,' he said, with a laugh that sounded slightly grim. 'It is only natural, look you.—No, señor,' he went on, addressing Kendrick, 'we are not brigands, as you do us the honour to suppose. Whether you know us or not matters little; it is sufficient that we know you, and that the purpose for which you have been brought here is a good and just one. But time presses, and there is nothing to gain by delay. Have the goodness to follow me.'

Kendrick obeyed sulkily. None the less, the drift of the last speech had considerably piqued his curiosity, and he wondered what was coming now. In silence they crossed together to the fire, and his tall conductor, pointing to one of two large stones placed close together in the full glow of the light, invited Kendrick to sit down. The latter wondered more than ever what was coming, but he was glad enough to comply for his ankle's sake. His conductor took the other stone, and the rest of the men stood or sat in a confused circle round them, looking on and listening. Their captive counted a score of them, all dark-faced, swarthy, muscular fellows, evidently belonging to the peasant class, and the expression of strained, almost fierce intensity in the gaze of each made their eyes resemble those of animals rather than of men. Not the most desirable company in the world for an inoffensive English tourist to have forced upon him; and the latter, sitting there, an incongruous object in his Norfolk suit and spectacles, wished himself well out of it.

He noticed something else, too, in that moment's breathing-time: a large flat stone, set close to his companion's elbow, and evidently intended to serve as a table, since upon it were placed pens, paper, and ink. The sight of it only increased the mystery. Brigands, he believed, invariably required their captives to sign or write the terms of their ransom; but these men—so their leader had distinctly asserted—were not brigands, and the assertion was borne out by appearances, inasmuch as only two or three out of a score or so carried a weapon about them. The riddle was beyond Kendrick, and he gave it up. However, he was clear enough on the score of his own identity at least; and taking advantage of the momentary silence, he stated his case to the man beside him, declaring himself to be simple John Kendrick, stockbroker in a modest way in London, and at present spending a bachelor holiday in the south of Spain. His captors heard him out in silence; but when, having again asserted that all his business had been left behind in England, he began producing letters and papers, his passport, duly visaed, and the rest, as proof of his identity, the brown-bearded man waved them all aside.

'Enough! enough!' he responded sternly. 'You have to deal with men and not with children, señor, and such things, in case of need, can be easily provided. Be advised in time, Excellency, and do not seek to impose upon us or try our patience too far. We are sworn to the work taken in hand, and in no mood to be trifled with. Let us come to the point, señor.'

'Wish you would, I'm sure,' rejoined the perplexed Englishman. 'We may get to the bottom of the mystery then, for I'll be shot if I know what you're driving at now.'

There was a moment's silence, and during the interval Kendrick felt a score of eyes on him, studying every line of his features.

'It is this affair of Pedro Perez,' explained the fellow with the brown beard, speaking curtly and suddenly. 'A bitter wrong has been done, and that wrong, Excellency, has to be set right.'

This was more than Kendrick could stand, and he got to his feet in indignation.

'Pedro Perez! I know nothing of Pedro Perez, or Pedro any one else! Never heard of him in my life!'

'That may be possible, look you,' put in another of the fellows in a low tone, bending forward to address his leader. 'He has been for months in England; we know that well.'

'*Bueno! bueno!*' rejoined the other impatiently, 'you may be right. That does not affect the main issues of the case, however.—Hark you, señor, since it would appear that you are in the dark on this matter, have the goodness to listen and I will explain. Some weeks ago this man Pedro Perez headed a rising in Pozo del Monte yonder, to protest against the price of bread. As a consequence the Guardia Civil and the soldiers were called out, several men killed, and the leader, Perez

himself, thrown into prison. There he now lies, señor, awaiting'——

But he got no farther. Another took up his words, and in a fiercer strain.

'And I,' broke out the young fellow called Carlitos, springing to his feet and speaking in a rush of passionate utterance—'I am the brother of that same Pedro Perez, and have sworn to get justice done him. And that oath, mark you, Excellency, I will keep. Life of a man, *caramba!* What is the life of one man, or of twenty, in comparison with that of my brother? Heed what I say, Excellency, for it concerns you nearly.'

'But—but,' gasped the bewildered Kendrick, who throughout this speech had sat utterly lost in mystification—'what has all this to do with me?'

'This much, señor,' rejoined his chief informant sternly. 'You, in your present position'—he bowed courteously as he spoke—'have influence enough at command to obtain easily a pardon for Perez from the Government; and that influence, Excellency, you will do well, for your own sake, to use. Here is a paper which you, señor, will presently sign, whereby you pledge yourself to use your best endeavours to obtain this pardon, and at the same time to pay over a sum of three thousand *pesetas* in order to make provision for the widows and orphans of the men killed by the Civil Guard.'

Kendrick gasped; he was incapable of more. But the stern, inexorable tones went on:

'The terms are neither exorbitant nor unreasonable, Excellency; for had you given orders to ensure the better payment of those who work on your lands this rising would never have taken place. Since it has taken place, however, our part is to see to the blame being laid in the right quarter, and that the innocent do not suffer for the guilty. The paper lies here, señor, and all you have to do is to sign it.'

'Be hanged if I do!' broke out Kendrick, exasperated beyond endurance, his blood fairly up now. 'Why, you—you idiots, haven't you got any sense or hearing left? Can't you see—no, hear—that I'm English?'

'That you were brought up in England, yes,' distinguished the other, with quiet persistence. 'That is the worst of it. Had you not been brought up in another country you might have been less inclined to spend time there now, and so would have been better informed concerning the wrongs that flourish unchecked in your own. Time presses, and the paper awaits your signature, Excellency.'

Kendrick glanced round in sheer desperation. Was no one there capable of believing him, of understanding how the case stood? But wherever he looked he saw only the same fiercely intent determination on a score of eager faces, the same keen glitter in the circle of watching eyes. Once again he tried to speak, to explain matters, but all in vain. This time some of his hearers laughed out unrestrainedly, and the strong features of the leader relaxed into a contemptuous smile.

'Hark you, señor,' he said at last, speaking with a certain grim menace in his tone that his prisoner was quick to detect, 'I give you until morning to make your choice. You will then either comply with my demands—in full, Excellency—or in case of refusal'——

'Well,' demanded Kendrick hotly, 'in case of refusal?'

'In that case—we should regret it, Excellency—but in that case it would be necessary to send you to the other neighbourhood.'

'You can send me where you please, and be hanged to you!' retorted Kendrick, who was utterly reckless by this time; 'but I won't sign that paper. It would do no earthly good if I did, either. I tell you I'm a stranger from England, and know nothing of the matter you're speaking about. As for this Pedro Perez, I never heard of him in my life.'

The dark eyes of the stranger flashed momentary fire.

'*Caramba*, señor!' he responded coldly, 'I fear your memory is a bad one, both with respect to your knowledge of your mother-tongue and of your own countrymen. And yet,' he added with a sneer, 'your stay in England ought not to have deprived you so completely of the recollection that to go to the other neighbourhood means, in plain words, to die!'

THE LIVES OF THE LONDON POOR.

A NIGHT IN A SALVATION ARMY SHELTER AND AN EVENING IN A DOSS-HOUSE.

By H. JENNER-FUST, M.A.

'ONE half the world knows nothing of how the other half lives.' That has been said over and over again. It has been said so often that it has passed into a proverb. It has come to be insisted upon as a self-evident truth. But I question if the many who glibly repeat the phrase thoroughly realise the depth of their ignorance. Certainly I did not till a few weeks ago. I then decided to see for myself how the poor of London gets, or does not get—and it is too often the latter—its daily bread and nightly rest. The result was a revelation to me.

My investigations led me in the first instance to the shelters of the Salvation Army, and I determined to go as an ordinary tramp and spend the

night in one of them. The one I chose was in Blackfriars Road. Leaving Westminster at six one evening, carefully got up for the occasion, I reached the entrance to the shelter about half-past six. The doors had been open half-an-hour, and the familiar crowd outside had melted away. I went through the outer door and up a short passage, at the end of which was a small office with the familiar legend, 'Pay here,' across the top. I planked down my fourpence, and received in exchange a red card, the size of a railway ticket, on which was inscribed:

THE SALVATION ARMY.
MEN'S SOCIAL WORK.
Blackfriars Shelter, 115A Blackfriars Road, S.E.

This Ticket will secure for the Bearer		
BREAKFAST. Available only on Day following Date of Issue. NOT TRANSFERABLE.	4d.	SUPPER and SHELTER. Available only on Date of Issue.

Passing inside, I found myself in a long passage. On my right was an arch leading into a large hall. The way through was barred by a table at which sat two officials. We filed past. 'Are you a stranger here? Then come back after the meeting.' And we made our way along the passage, and so from the other end into the back of the hall.

And what is this place like in which more than two hundred of London's homeless ones nightly sup and sleep? Imagine a hall some thirty yards long by fifteen yards wide, of distempered brick and floored with wood. Along each side is a double row of bunks, three stories high, reaching half-way to the roof. The body of the hall is occupied by rows of wooden benches. At the back is the bar where are sold bread, cheese, jam, bacon, and tea.

When I got inside I confess my heart failed me. Row upon row of homeless, hopeless, unwashed * humanity is not an encouraging sight. It does not become more so from the fact that one intends to sup, sleep, and breakfast among them. Here were men whose clothes betokened they had known better things; men, many of them, temporarily out of work; men who, on the contrary, had not washed for a week, and probably not removed their clothes for thrice that length of time. The sight of the dirty mass wolfing its food as if for a wager turned me, for the moment, sick. I felt I could not go through with it.

Two minutes unnoticed in a comparatively quiet corner produced better thoughts. I pulled myself together and went up to the bar. Holding out my ticket, I began, 'What does'—— I as nearly as possible said, 'What does this entitle me to?' but, remembering myself with a shock, substituted, 'What can I have for this?' It appeared I had the choice between a hunch of bread and jam, a small bit of bread and bacon, and a hap'orth of beans and bread. I chose bread and jam, and was given an enormous hunch and an old battered pewter full of—tea! Having secured this, and given up half my ticket, I toddled off to a seat, and settled down to my supper. After eating a little I looked at my right-hand neighbour. He appeared sleepy. I cautiously approached him on the subject of the weather; but, having to repeat four times at the top of my voice the innocent remark that it was a nasty night, I decided to seek information in a manner somewhat less public. The man on my other side was hopeless; he was one of an animated group who were discussing with glee how they had achieved their midday meal.

Poor creatures! My feeling of disgust was rapidly giving way to one of infinite pity. To think that in this great London, the richest city the world has ever seen, there are thousands upon thousands whose one and only aim in life is to get enough food to stay the actual physical pains of hunger and a pallet whereon they may lay their limbs at night!

Just then a new-comer put in an appearance. He was considerably more respectable than some, and proved to be a stoker out of work. We had an excellent talk on things in general, and means of getting food and a bed in particular; and he put me up to several places of which otherwise I should never have heard. Pulling out my tobacco-pouch, I offered him a fill. In a flash I saw I had made a mistake. A man in such circumstances may smoke a good brier, but he carries his tobacco in a tin. My crocodile-pouch very nearly gave the show away. I made him fill his tin; but he put the temptation away from him once, and then only half took advantage of my offer. He had begun, he told me, as an engine-cleaner on the Great Western, had risen to fireman's rank, and had afterwards been taken on to stoke one of the company's Guernsey boats. Why was he here? He got boozed, and they sacked him. 'Only once,' he assured me, and certainly a man less like a drunkard it would be hard to find.

So he talked, and I listened, while keeping an eye open for impressions. The man in front of me had long, greasy, black hair down to his shoulders, and was eating a bowl of beans at a pace I would never have believed possible. His next neighbour had just produced a packet of cigar and cigarette stumps, and was breaking them up into tobacco for his pipe. Two men behind me were asleep with their heads on the back of my bench. Some were eating, others smoking, sleeping, and talking—all, with few exceptions, tired, hungry, and footsore.

Suddenly a shrill whistle attracted our attention. An official had climbed on to a stool at the top of the room, and was holding up his hand for silence.

'O Lord!' groaned he of the flowing locks, ''ere's the bloomin' meetin'.'

* In these 'shelters' there is ample opportunity for washing. It is not, however, taken full advantage of.

'Never mind, old cock,' another reassured him; 'it 's soon over.'

'Yus,' remarked a third, 'it 's in at one ear and out at t' other. I wish they 'd drop it.'

It certainly was soon over. The man on the stool opened out into 'Crown Him with many crowns,' and was well backed up by the remainder of the staff. Those of us who knew the words sang with them the two verses; others—not a few—hummed the tune. Afterwards came either a blessing or an address—I could not hear which. Anyway, it consisted only of a few sentences. That ended the business.

It was now eight o'clock, and preparations were made for bed. But we 'strangers' had to get our numbers. We trooped out at the back of the hall into the passage, and worked up in single file towards the entrance. My stoker pal was next me.

'Shall we ask for two together, mate?' he inquired.

The question took me by surprise. I had no idea I was so fascinating; perhaps, though, it was because I was clean. At any rate, this would never do. From him I had got all I wanted, and to talk to others even more destitute was now the business in hand. But the only remark I could think of at the moment was, 'Oh! just as you like.'

'Just as *you* like, mate,' was the grieved answer.

This was distressing.

'You see,' I explained, 'it 's pure luck what bed you get, so it wouldn't be much use.' As I had just been telling him it was my first visit to the place, this must have surprised him. I fear he was disappointed in me.

I was lucky to get a bed in an annex which led out of the main hall, and which, though containing the same accommodation as the rest, was a little removed from the noise. Moreover, the beds were on the ground floor only, and though harder than the bunks, were to me infinitely preferable. From eight to nine I wandered about talking to as many of the submerged tenth as I could persuade to listen. Once again I got into difficulties. A fresh-faced lad of twenty-three or so was describing how he had walked up from Exeter, and got work on the way at some racing-stables in Bath.

'Out of work?' he asked, turning to me. I did not deny it. 'Groom, ain't you?' he went on.

Now, to Eton and the 'Varsity fell the task of educating me; and I thought that, however little I had taken advantage of my opportunities, I had at least preserved my purity of speech. To be taken for a broken-down 'Varsity man, no unknown visitor to these shelters, I expected. But to be mistaken for a groom! Well, there are worse people than grooms.

I admitted the soft impeachment, thinking thereby to save the situation. Never was a greater mistake. He immediately began to question me; and as I knew, to my sorrow, little 'horse' and less racing, I was quickly in a veritable quagmire of difficulties. Thrice I contrived to change the conversation; but always we came back to the same absorbing topic. At last, when he began trying to persuade me to 'tramp' with him next day, I felt that circumstances were getting a bit out of my grasp, and muttering something about 'bread and cheese,' bolted for the bar. Here I was informed that my remaining half-ticket was not available till the morning; so I invested one penny on bread and cheese, which I ate with some relish.

The next two I got into conversation with were in the very depths of destitution. Both had been on the streets the night before, unable to earn enough for a bed. Both had done well that day, one getting three meals, and the other two. Both, in consequence, were happy and talkative. And how they did go for the Salvation Army!

'Reckon these 'ere blokes make a bloomin' good thing out o' this.' I confess the idea had not occurred to me.

'Worf several 'undreds a year to 'em, I know,' chimed in the other. I had nothing to say.

'This place is for us wot 's out o' work, not [impressively] for the likes o' [Hullo! thought I] some who 's 'ere.'

That might mean anything—or nothing; but it occurred to me as an excellent opportunity to inspect my bed! This consisted of a wooden box about six feet long and a shade wider than the ordinary ship's bunk. At the bottom was a hard black mattress, which, I learnt, was made of American cloth and stuffed with seaweed. This unusual stuffing serves two purposes. It does not easily catch fire—which, with hundreds of men smoking in bed, is of importance—and it is not loved by a certain undesirable species of insect. The pillow was of the same materials, but, if possible, harder. A rug of American cloth lying folded at the bottom completed the arrangements. It looked neither clean nor inviting.

In the meanwhile half the hall was in the throes of retiring. To attain the highest of the three tiers was no mean feat, particularly if the people in the 'flat' beneath were sitting smoking, with their legs hanging over the side. In more than one instance I noticed it was a case of try again. Some took off all their clothes, and a funny lot of skeletons they looked, poor beggars; others their boots, trousers, and coats; others again their boots and coats only—a minority these. Personally, I lay down in every stitch of clothing I had, boots and cap included. A king's ransom would not have induced me to strip.

But how hard it was! I used to boast of my liking for a hard bed. I do so no longer. In the morning I was positively sore, and the skin in places was badly scraped. To say that a good night was mine would be to go outside the strict truth. I lay down at half-past nine and got up at six. I think I put in four hours' actual sleep. In the first place, the bed was hard; in the second, a gas-jet shone right in my eyes, and I could not bring myself to pull the cover over my head. And the noise! I would never have believed that even two hundred

and fifty men in one room could make such a din. Almost all were coughing, each on a different note, and the character of each cough differed tremendously. There was the short, hacking cough which betokened lung-trouble; there was the cough in paroxysms which suggested whooping-cough—and whooping-cough I believe it was; and there was the cough which shook not only the man who had the misfortune to possess it but the very building itself. Each burst of this kind ended in a rattling, grating sound impossible to adequately describe. I thought of the vibration of a safety-valve at play, of the jar and batter of a Maxim, of the roar of a rushing avalanche. But the grim reality transcended all these. It was a noise to be heard once in a lifetime, and, I trust, once only.

Men, moreover, kept dropping in all night. Sleep, in short, was well-nigh impossible. Five o'clock found people up and breakfasting. 'What's the time, mate?' said a man just beyond me, and the answer came, 'Turned five; bar's open.' That was how they fixed it.

I lay for another hour, and then went home. But so frightened was I of being discovered in the unkind light of day that I was fain to forgo my privilege of a 'penn'orth o' breakfast.' I learnt afterwards that the superintendent, though he had seen me only two hours before, and was on the lookout for me, utterly failed to recognise me.

My next experience was in a common lodging-house known among the faithful as a doss-house.

I looked at several, and the one I finally fixed on was not a stone's-throw from Victoria Street. The slums of Westminster were once the worst in London. They are so no longer; but if any of my readers wants a stiffer experience than mine, he must be unusually hardened.

I got to the entrance about nine in the evening. Over the door was a flaring gas-lamp with 'Beds for Single Gentlemen, 5d.,' on the glass, and the door itself bore the legend, 'St ——'s Chambers.' Personally, I have always found 'rooms' sufficient for my requirements; but there is no accounting for tastes. At the top of some steps was a small office with bread, milk, bacon, &c. ranged on its shelves. The narrow passage was crowded, one man wanting ''Ap'orth o' milk an' a penn'orth o' bread;' another, 'Bed, please, mister;' while a third was endeavouring to get through the crowd to the kitchen below to cook a raw piece of beastly meat which he held in his hand.

I planked down fivepence, and was given in exchange a metal disc with the number of my bed. Then, shutting my teeth, I descended to the 'lower regions.' I found myself in a long, low-roofed room, the middle and sides occupied by wooden tables on trestles and wooden benches. At each end was a large open fire, and in one corner a large range. Round the fires clustered a dirty, chattering mass of humanity, each man trying to get as close as possible to the comforting blaze. Each table was occupied by men of the same class, some eating dirty food out of still dirtier paper, others breaking up cigar and cigarette fags to put into filthy pipes, others talking in their own choice vernacular, and others again cooking their food at the range.

To describe the filthy condition of the room to those who have never seen a place of the kind is well-nigh impossible. It was accentuated by the litter of paper, bits of meat, &c. on the grimy floor. The room was worse than its inhabitants, for though by no stretch of imagination could the latter be called clean, there were some self-respecting persons among them who at least endeavoured to become so; several workmen, for instance, whose tools were hanging on the wall, and one dear, respectable old gentleman in particular, who was reading the *Sun* through a pair of excellent spectacles.

The babel of tongues was unceasing, and, so far as I could gather, interesting. Talk to me, however, they would not; neither would they allow me, except in a few isolated instances, to discuss matters with them. The reason is not far to seek, though it puzzled me for a time. It is to be found in the fact that every one knows every one else. Men *live* in these places, and sometimes keep the same bed for a year or two on end. Consequently a stranger is left out in the cold. I did, however, pick up a few facts.

The house had six hundred beds. Its proprietor had a place of the same kind in the Borough containing nine hundred beds. He was a rich man, his tenants told me. 'Lor' bless yer,' said one, ''e's got gardens'—with a magnificent wave of his hand—'he's got fawms.' He lingered on the word as if he loved it. ''Op-pickin' in Kent, an' fruit,' he went on. 'Comes up 'ere sometimes an' takes a couple o' 'undred o' us for the job.'

The majority of these men were out of work. Some, the habitual dossers these, never attempted to get any. A few were in regular employment: masons, dock-labourers, and so on. That was the gist of his information.

'What sort o' beds?' growled another, much annoyed at being disturbed. 'Beds are orl right—soft.' 'Yes,' said I, 'but are they *clean?*' 'Jes' depends,' said he; 'some is, some ain't.' This was not comforting, but it was all I could get out of him.

At the next table two boys—for they were nothing more—were eating a bit of bread and meat. I went and sat beside them and listened. Getting into conversation, I inquired as to their day. Both had done badly, earning enough for a meal, but nothing to spare for a bed. They were going out to try and pick it up. 'Which way shall we strike?' asked the younger of the two. 'Victorier?' and they accordingly departed to get their bed, or—walk the streets. 'Must try and turn somebody out for it,' was the expression used. Whether it meant beg or steal I had no opportunity to discover.

Then I handed over my check at the bottom of the staircase and proceeded to explore the 'sleeping

apartments.' There were three floors. Each floor contained five rooms, and each room forty beds. Other furniture there was none, nothing but row upon row of beds, six hundred in all. Half only were occupied. Each had the number over it on the wall; but as I did not know in which room mine was, I had some difficulty in finding it.

This at length achieved, I proceeded to examine it. My cursory investigations in other rooms in dim gaslight had led me to suppose that the beds were much as other beds—small perhaps, but fairly comfortable. I was congratulating myself on this when I happened to catch a fair sight of my sheets. It gave me a shock. True, my bed was as others in shape and size, but the *colour*. The sheets were not white; they were brown—brown with dirt, and a good, rich, honest brown into the bargain. It as nearly as possible finished me, but with a final effort I turned to my next neighbour, who was disrobing, and asked for his experience.

'Are you a reg'ler inmate?' he asked.

I told him it was my first visit.

'Look out for yourself, then; you don't know what was in your bed last night'—this significantly. 'I 've been here,' he went on after a short pause, 'for two years till last week; then I missed a couple o' days. When I came back I ketched five in six nights.'

'Five what?' said I.

Now I am not going to repeat what he said, because it is unspeakable. Before going in for this business I had thought it out carefully, and had bargained for many things unpleasant. I had bargained for fleas and other animals, a species of which is associated with the harvest. I had bargained for possible rough handling if discovered; for a hard bed and a sleepless night; for possible infection of every kind. I had bargained, in short, for most things evil, and was prepared to look on them as all in the day's work. But I had not bargained for one of the worst of the plagues of Egypt.

I fled, and I am not in the least ashamed of myself.

Of other places where the poor get shelter there is little space to speak. Medland Hall, however, the only free shelter in London, deserves a few lines. Opened on 5th January 1891, it has in the thirteen years of its existence given shelter to over two million men, and every one of these has had food as well as shelter. The cost has been between twelve and thirteen thousand pounds.

Every day about four o'clock men begin to assemble outside in the Horseferry Branch Road, and soon a long line of weary wayfarers is to be seen leaning against the fence which divides the Regent's Canal Dock from the street. The crowd gradually increases till at six o'clock the doors open and they troop inside. Every type is in evidence. The majority, of course, are from the United Kingdom; but British and Irish rub shoulders with Colonials, Americans, Germans, Dutch, and, indeed, representatives from almost every country on earth. The inmates have included clergymen, Nonconformist ministers, university men, doctors, lawyers, editors, publishers, and journalists.

The idea of the whole thing—an idea, too, kept strictly to the fore—is to help people to help themselves, and only, so far as possible, are genuine cases dealt with. The habitual dosser is conspicuous by his absence. Each man admitted gets a ticket entitling him to a bunk, for six nights if he wishes, and receives at once half-a-pound of bread and butter; he is thus sure of food and shelter for a few days, and can seek work with a stronger heart. No labour-task is imposed to hinder him in his search, and as a matter of fact the great majority very soon have work found for them or find it for themselves.

The following is a typical case: A man who had come in stated that if he could only lay his hands on five shillings for tools he could start work at once. The tools were provided. At the end of the week came a grateful letter of thanks, saying that the work had been obtained and enclosing a postal order for the amount.

Medland Hall is doing a great work, and it may not be out of place to mention that two pounds two shillings sent to E. Wilson Gates, Esq., The Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, E.C., will provide shelter and food for some homeless wanderer on every night in the year.

And, lastly, there is the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen in Stanhope Street, close to Clare Market, where for those utterly destitute is provided free a bowl of soup. The kitchen opens at 2 A.M., and the men begin to form up long before midnight. Often one thousand apply in one night, and a man told me that on one occasion he waited three hours for his turn.

The pity of it all!

A SONG OF ROSES.

Sing a Song of Roses! Love has come to-day,
Come like early rosebuds, sweet and shy, but gay.
Rosebuds will be roses: love will greater grow;
Only half its sweetness dimly yet we know.
Rosebuds in the garden gathered, Love, for you,
Had they such in Eden when the world was new?

Sing a Song of Roses! Love so great has grown,
What shall we compare it to? Roses fully blown?
Sweetness, fullness, beauty brought by sun and rain!
Is not this our happiness close akin to pain?
Roses in their glory, Love, I bring to you;
Joy approaching agony—roses touching rue.

Sing a Dirge of Roses! sung by one who grieves.
Dead are all the roses, fall the autumn leaves.
But the dead rose-petals keep their scent, and I
In my heart will keep you till the day I die.
Rose-leaves in their sweetness on your grave I strew,
Bitter-sweet with memories of our love and you.

MARIA S. STEUART.

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SIXTH SERIES.

DINNER À LA CARTE OR TABLE-D'HÔTE.

COVENTRY PATMORE wrote a poem which he called 'The Angel in the House,' and if it be your good fortune to have an angel in your house who gives a little thought to the preparation of your dinner you will never find any dinner so good (at Paillard's or elsewhere) as the one you eat at home. When we go into a library we do not all choose the same books; neither when we go into a restaurant do we choose the same dishes. I have never known any one who would not eat strawberries; but I once knew a man who disliked green peas.

The most perfect way to dine is to dine *à la carte*, selecting the dishes yourself, the dinner being specially cooked for you and ready at a specified hour. If you dine at the *table-d'hôte* in the Grand Hotel in Paris (eight francs), and drink as much red wine as you like, it is the same as a specially prepared dinner *à la carte*. The *table-d'hôte* begins at six forty-five, and it is all over by eight. If you dine at the *table-d'hôte* in the Hotel Métropole in London the system is different; the dinner is ready at six, and goes on until eight-thirty, and you may sit down at any time that is convenient to yourself. Under these circumstances many dishes have to be kept on the hot-plate for a time, and you cannot expect your dinner to be so perfect as it would be if you dined *à la carte*. Pascal, the *chef* at Philippe's restaurant in Paris, once observed that the most simple dishes begin to lose value every five minutes after they have left the kitchen. More delicately conceived *entrées* are yet more susceptible; some sauces sulk when they begin to feel cold.

I can recollect the time when, from the point of view of M. Casimir of the Maison d'Or in the Boulevard des Italiens, there was only one restaurant in London where you could dine—Verrey's in Regent Street. How one's heart goes out in sympathy with Verrey's, the little restaurant at the corner of the street that leads up to Hanover Square; the windows partly of stained glass, and above the glass the printed cards, 'Ices, dinners, ices'! It now belongs to M. Krehill. I have never known the time when I could not go to Verrey's and be sure of a dinner *à la carte* nicely served and perfectly cooked. One night I dined at Véfours' in Paris; the following evening I dined in the Café-Royal in Regent Street. In each case I ordered the same dinner. I thought the dinner in the Palais-Royal the better cooked of the two; but that was in the days when Véfours' was one of the most popular restaurants in Paris. The Café-Royal may be said to be the first of the great restaurants on the French system in London. Now we have the Carlton, Princes', and the Savoy, all following in the footsteps of M. Nicol of the Café-Royal. It would be difficult to name a more successful restaurateur than M. Nicol. During the many years I knew him I cannot say I ever saw him do any work in his restaurant; he seldom, if ever, spoke to a customer. He was fortunate in his marriage; Madame Nicol was industrious to a degree. Then came M. Delacoste to help him. If you had a mission to visit the restaurants of Europe, M. Delacoste would be a charming companion. For many years he was the best judge of claret and Burgundy in London, and he did for M. Nicol what Bismarck did for the Emperor William the First.

It has been the custom to speak of the Café-Royal as an expensive restaurant in which to dine. I never thought so. You are charged, say, two shillings and ninepence for a sole; but then the sole is one of the largest and best the market can produce, and enough for two portions. In the less ambitious restaurants you are charged one shilling and sixpence, and two portions will cost three shillings. As a rule, in London or Paris you will find that small prices mean small portions. Tibbie Shiels once let me see a very large plate and a bell which she placed before Christopher North when he dined at her little inn by St Mary's Loch. If Christopher North had been served with the small portions common in the Latin Quarter there would have been strong language in the *Noctes* and much ringing of the little bell.

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In 1862 my father took me to dine at Simpson's in the Strand. We dined in the second box upon your right as you entered, and we had roast beef and green peas for dinner. I had only just left school, and I was much impressed when I was told that I might have as many green peas as I liked. I went the year before last and dined in the same box, and I again had roast beef and green peas. I found the room in which we had dined unchanged; but forty years had proved too much for the *entourage* even of Simpson's. There was no waiter left in the restaurant who had been there in 1862. An old friend of mine to whom I paid my bill did not join the staff until 1864. I have always enjoyed dining at Simpson's: the little oval-shaped tables wheeled up to your side with half of a salmon, half of a large turbot, or a saddle of mutton. You were not limited to portions; it was hospitality in a restaurant. I sometimes think what pleasant dinners we might have with people we have read about in history or fiction. For example, you might give a Charles Dickens dinner, and ask Tom Pinch, Mr Micawber, and Mrs Gamp to dine. I am at a loss to think where one could take Mrs Gamp to dine; you certainly could not take her to Princes'. If I had to give a dinner to Samuel Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, and David Garrick, I would not take them to the Savoy; I would take them to Simpson's.

At times we hear a great deal about doing away with tips to waiters. Up to about 1872 there was no charge for attendance at Simpson's. We gave the waiters threepence. Then they introduced a charge of threepence for attendance, and I do not believe there was a regular customer who did not continue to give the waiter threepence for himself as of old.

The truth is you will never do away with tips to waiters. I remember an old gentleman who used to dine every night in the Café de la Paix in Paris. He always gave the waiter a franc and any odd coppers left after paying his bill; but he had a reward for his generosity. M. le Garçon was a friend of the *chef*, and when the old gentleman came in at night he used to tell him the best dishes on the *carte de jour*, speak to him about the weather, comfort him if he had the gout, and was his best friend; and I am sure that when the day came on which he ate his last dinner *à la carte* and gave his last *pourboire*, no one would so sincerely regret him as the waiter in the crowded restaurant in the Boulevard des Capucines.

If you have thoughts of visiting the theatre, and you are in doubt as to where to dine, try the Restaurant Cavour in Leicester Square; M. Philippe will give you an excellent *table-d'hôte* dinner at a moderate cost. If you insist upon having a *hors-d'œuvre* and drink no wine you will be charged one shilling extra. As a concession to his English friends, M. Philippe has always roast beef or roast mutton on his bill of fare.

Here is the 'Cavour' dinner at three shillings:

SOUP
PAYSANNE.
SALMON SCE. MAYONNAISE. EPERLANS FRITS.
ENTRÉE.
CÔTES DE MOUTONNE BELLEVUE. FRENCH BEANS.
CROQUETTE DE VOLAILLE.
ROAST CHICKEN. QUAIL. ROAST BEEF.
VEGETABLES. CHEESE. DESSERT.

There are many good restaurants in London that you would find difficulty in discovering for yourself. You may call them the restaurants of the Latin Quarter, similar to those in Paris in the maze of streets between the river and the Luxembourg. Only a few minutes' walk from Piccadilly Circus, going eastward, you find yourself in Dean Street. On your right is the Restaurant Européen. It originally belonged to M. Villeneuve, who made a little fortune and has returned home to France to enjoy it. The *chef* Louis has been *chef* for sixteen years. You will have no difficulty in telling that the restaurant is popular; you may count eighty napkins in the boxes on the walls. To save you the trouble of consulting the menu, there is a slate with the names of the *plats du jour: Potage au riz*, twopence; *rouget, sauce capres*, fivepence; *bœuf au gratin*, fivepence.

Upon the same side of the street there is the Restaurant Albert. Albert was head-waiter at the Européen, and being frugal, he saved enough money to start a restaurant for himself; and he has been successful. You may lunch for a shilling: *omelette aux fines herbes*, fourpence; *veau saute carotte*, fivepence; cheese *petite Suisse*, twopence; coffee, one penny. Albert gets a great deal of help from his wife; it is said she can cook as well as the *chef*. She is handsome, and might play the Marquise de Saint Maur in *Caste*. They have beautiful children, and the children sometimes come to the restaurant to see them.

In restaurants of this class it is usual to give the waiter a penny, and he does not expect more. They have no license, and send out for wine, getting a rebate from the wine merchant upon each empty bottle. Having no license, they can remain open all day on Sunday.

France has given us the language of diplomacy and of the cuisine.

I shall only refer to one restaurant in Paris. If you have never dined at Voisin's in the Rue St Honoré, dine there the next time you are in Paris. You will have no difficulty in finding it. As you come out of the Nouveau Cirque, it is one minute's walk on your left; opposite to it is the Church of the Assumption. It is one of the last of the classic restaurants left in Paris. Philippe's, Café Riche, Brebant's, Maison d'Or, have all gone. When you enter from the street you pass at once into the restaurant. On the ground floor there are three modest little rooms in which you dine. In the first room there are two ladies who will make out your bill, and if you fail to salute them upon entering

you need not be surprised if you are charged two francs additional in your bill. You may sit down at one of the snow-white tables, and if by chance a Parisian is beside you who has enveloped himself in his napkin so that he resembles a ghost, do not let prejudice prevent you from doing the same. Very quiet and peaceful is Voisin's. In my recollection they never kept a waiter who could speak English. If you order red wine, the Burgundies and Bordeaux have the reputation of being the oldest and most carefully selected in Europe. The dishes are dear, but you need not order more than three. Order a sole cooked in the way mentioned in the bill of fare. The ways of cooking a sole invented by the *chefs* in France are innumerable. It must be the ambition of every good little sole finally to be taken to Paris and be cooked, say *à la Colbert* or *au vin rouge.* Select one *entrée* and finish with a Chateaubriand *aux pommes*, and your bill, divided by two, will not be a heavy one. If you ordered as many dishes as you find on the menu of the *table-d'hôte* in the Hôtel Continental, madame would make out a bill which would be appalling.

Dining one night at a restaurant not far from the Faubourg St Honoré, I ordered a sole *au vin blanc.* When it was served I carefully removed the white sauce, and I found it was a sole to be greeted unbenignly. Some day I hope we may have a restaurant in London where you may select your food before it is cooked, choose your fish as you would choose them at Grove's in Bond Street, select your fruit and the flowers to decorate the table as you would select them at Solomon's in Piccadilly.

One of the pleasantest ways to spend an evening in London is to dine at Pagani's in Great Portland Street, and to go to a concert in the Queen's Hall afterwards. You will search the Grand Boulevards in vain to find a restaurant in which you will get a better dinner than you get at Pagani's, and the brothers Pagani and M. Meschini are reaping the harvest of silver and gold which comes to the painstaking and honest keeper of a restaurant.

It is not unlikely, if you dine on the first floor, that you may see Mr Henry J. Wood, who is doing for music to-day what Sir Charles Hallé and Sir August Manns have done in the past. Do not forget to see the artists' room upstairs, with the first bars of one of the airs from *Cavalleria Rusticana* written upon one of the walls by Mascagni himself. Here is a dinner for two, for 'Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,' and yourself:

HORS D'ŒUVRE MELON.
POTAGE PETITE MARMITE.
BLANCHAILLES.
RIS DE VEAU À LA VOISIN.
PETITS POIS À LA FRANÇAISE.
POULET DE GRAIN EN CASSEROLE.
SALADE.
SOUFFLÉ EN SURPRISE.

You may order any of the well-known brands of champagne provided it be sufficiently old. A *maître d'hôtel* at Kettner's once observed to me, 'After all, they are very much the same.' Should you order it *frappé*, do not let the bottle remain too long in the ice.

And when you have finished dinner you will only have to cross the street to the Queen's Hall, where Mr Wood will introduce you to music, sometimes in shadow, sometimes in sunshine, beautiful and suggestive, and full of romance as the Rhine between Mayence and Cologne. You may get inspiration from Beethoven as you get inspiration from Traquair or the braes of Yarrow.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXVII.—'IF YOU KNEW THE TRUTH!'

AT first I could scarcely believe my own eyes, for there, placed again in the window just as it had been on that fateful night, was the stuffed bear-cub, the silent signal of what?

Behind the smoky panes of that window was a pale, haggard face peering forth wistfully, yet cautiously, as though in expectation of the passing of some person to whom the signal would convey a meaning—a face upon which anxiety and terror were betrayed—the countenance of the woman I had so suddenly grown to love.

In an instant, at sight of me, she drew back and was lost to view, there remaining only that curious yet fatal sign that conveyed so much to the person or persons for whom it was exhibited.

The house presented the same dingy, neglected appearance as before, the steps uncleaned and covered with pieces of paper and wisps of straw, the jetsam of the street. The shutters of the basement were still closed, and upon the area gate was a stout chain and heavy padlock. It was a roomy yet depressing place, more depressing than any other in the whole of Bloomsbury, a strange air of mystery pervading it from basement to attic.

My first impulse was to ascend those neglected steps and inquire for Lady Judith; but, on reflection an instant later, the fact that she had withdrawn so quickly from the window made it evident that she did not wish me to discover her there—that, indeed, she was in Selby's house in secrecy. With what motive? I wondered.

She had evidently been watching long and vigilantly for some person she expected would pass for the purpose of receiving the sign. The intent, anxious look upon her countenance told me this.

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But instead of the person she was looking for, I, the least expected, had suddenly come upon the scene and detected her. Her mouth had opened as her eyes met mine, and I knew that a cry had escaped her as she had fallen back behind the dusty curtains.

She was still watching me, most probably; therefore I did not glance up again, but merely walked on as leisurely as before, and turned the corner out of Harpur Street.

I stood for some minutes deliberating whether it were policy to go boldly to the house and inquire for her. What could I lose by so doing? Little—very little. What could I gain? A few minutes' chat, perhaps, with the woman who, although she held herself so aloof from me, was nevertheless always in my thoughts.

I was determined to get at the bottom of the mystery of that secret sign; therefore, without hesitation, I drew a long breath, turned again into Harpur Street, and, ascending the steps, rapped loudly at the door.

The place sounded hollow, as a half-empty house always does. But there was no response.

I listened attentively at the door, but the roar of the traffic over the granite in Theobald's Road prevented me from hearing anything distinctly. Nevertheless, my quick ear caught sounds of whispering within. A door somewhere in the hall was closed and locked, and then I heard a man's low, gruff voice exclaim, 'Not yet—not yet, you fool!'

All was silent again, and I waited in patience for a couple of minutes longer. Then I gave another sounding *rat-tat-tat* that rang through the hollow house.

Again there was a movement in the hall, and softly footsteps crossed the linoleum, which was comparatively new, I felt sure, by its stickiness. Somebody was whispering; then a few seconds later the chain was withdrawn, and the door was opened half-way by Mrs Pickard, the little wizened old lady in black cap and dress, the same who had crossed the Channel bearing The Closed Book to England.

Fortunately she did not recognise me, so I inquired, 'You have a lady named Gordon here. She has just recognised me from the window. Will you ask her whether she will see me for a few moments, as I wish to speak with her on a rather important matter?'

'She has noticed you,' was the little old woman's reply, 'and she's just putting on her hat. She'll be down to speak with you in a few moments, if you'll wait;' and she admitted me to the hall, which was covered with a cheap black-and-white oilcloth, and showed me to the dining-room, which overlooked the street—a big, old-fashioned apartment, very dingy, with ceiling and walls smoke-grimed, and furnished in an inexpensive and tasteless style, which bore 'hire-system' marked upon it as plainly as though the chairs and tables were ticketed 'Easy payments taken.' The carpet was one of those Kidderminster squares that always appear in hire-system furnishing, and the furniture was of veneered walnut, covered with dark-green plush. There was no overmantel, no sideboard—nothing, indeed, to give it the slightest air of comfort. The room somehow looked as though it had only just been furnished, and that with some motive, for it was evidently not the dining-room in use.

After making a tour of inspection, I stood before the empty old-fashioned grate listening intently. There were footsteps in the room above—the drawing-room—but no other sound. The dismal outlook, the utter cheerlessness of the room, and the sooty curtains waving slowly at the half-opened window, added to the atmosphere of gloom which pervaded the interior even to a greater extent than the exterior. It was certainly a house of mystery.

Once I thought I heard renewed whisperings in the hall; but only for a moment, then all was silent again.

At last the door opened, and there appeared my pale-faced love, neatly dressed in black, with a small toque that suited her admirably, and a bodice that showed off her figure to perfection. Her sombre attire heightened the pallor of her countenance; yet, as she approached me with a sweet smile and outstretched hand, I saw that she possessed a marvellous self-control.

'Only fancy your recognising me, Mr Kennedy!' she cried. 'I'm so glad. You left Sheringham suddenly, and no one knew where you had gone.'

'I, too, have been wanting to meet you again,' I said, 'and believed you to be still at Saxlingham.'

'I returned to town yesterday,' she answered. 'But if we are to talk, had we not better go for a walk?' she suggested. Then she added, in a low, confidential whisper, 'There are eager ears here.'

Nothing loath to escape from that house, I agreed to her proposal, and she let me out, after considerable trouble with a very complicated lock, which I noted could not be undone by any one unacquainted with its secret—another suspicious circumstance.

Outside, we turned towards Theobald's Road, and I walked beside her in the hazy glow of the London sunset, full of admiration of her beauty, her grace, and her sweetness of expression.

She spoke of her mysterious seizure after parting from me—unaware, of course, that I had been the man who had discovered her and raised the alarm.

Feigning ignorance of it all, I therefore obtained from her a full description of her symptoms, and how she was taken back to Saxlingham Hall in a very weak and exhausted state. I told her nothing. What, indeed, could I reveal to her?

'You, of course, received my letter?' I inquired as we walked together towards Oxford Street.

'I did. But I sent you no reply, Mr Kennedy, because I can give none.'

'I expressed a desire in my letter, Lady Judith, to stand, if not in public, then in secret, as your friend,' I said earnestly.

'But why?' she asked, opening her splendid eyes widely.

'Because—well, because I believe we shall be good friends some day,' I said lamely, for it was on the tip of my tongue there, in that crowded street, to openly declare myself.

'We are good friends now; otherwise I would not be out walking with you here,' she remarked.

'Exactly; but there is still a stronger reason,' I said. 'You will recollect that when I met you on that path across the cliffs you confessed to me your unhappiness—that in your heart there lies concealed some terrible secret which has driven you to despair, and which'——

'My secret?' she gasped, looking at me suddenly with the same expression of terror as I had seen upon her face on that wet night in Harpur Street. 'Who told you of my secret?'

'No one,' I said quietly. 'But to me the truth is apparent, and it is for that reason that I desire to stand your friend. You recollect you spoke of your enemies, who were so strong that they had crushed you. Will you not let me render you assistance against them? May I not act on your behalf? You surely can trust me?'

I asked her the reason of her visit to that house of mystery and the meaning of the symbol of the bear-cub, but she hesitated, just as she had done before. Ah, how blind is man to the beginning of any series of great consequences!

All our previous conversation passed through my mind like a flash, and I saw how utterly I had failed to convince her of my good intentions in her interest.

The curious breach between father and daughter was inexplicable, just as much as their secret presence in London or their association with that dingy house in Harpur Street.

'I know that in ordinary circumstances the small knowledge you have of me would cause you to hesitate to allow me to become your confidential friend,' I went on in deep earnestness. 'But these circumstances are surely extraordinary ones. You are in distress, threatened by enemies who terrorise over you and are driving you to despair; and I believe I am also right in suggesting that you possess no friends?'

She had grown paler, and I knew my words made an impression upon her. We were then walking in the crowd of Oxford Street, and I was compelled to bend and speak confidentially to her, lest others might overhear. Surely that great busy thoroughfare was a strange place in which to court a woman's love! But love is always one of life's ironies. Many are the world's wonders; but surely Honour, Conscience, and Love are the three greatest. They will never be explained, and never cease to be bewildering. Of such are the source and the end of what is wonderful in our life—the sea and the shower, the aggregate whereof is in God and the atom in man.

I saw from her countenance, and knew from the trembling of her hand, that she would confide in me if only she dared. The mystery of it all was maddening. My natural intuition told me that she was not averse to my companionship, yet the mention of her secret—whatever it was—caused the truth to arise before her in all its hideousness, holding her transfixed by the crisis that she knew must inevitably ensue.

'It is true,' she sighed at last. 'I am in sore need of a friend; but I fear your help is impossible. Indeed, if our friendship were known to certain persons it would place me in a position of even graver peril.'

'Then your enemies would be mine,' I remarked quietly. 'This is as it should be. But why would my association with you place you in peril? I don't understand.'

'Oh!' she cried, 'I cannot explain. I would tell you everything if I could—everything. But I cannot, for your sake as well as for my own.'

'For my sake?' I echoed. 'Would knowledge of it affect me so gravely?'

'I fear it would,' was her reply. 'It is best that you should remain in ignorance.'

'But, believe me, I cannot bear to think of you utterly friendless as you seem to be,' I went on earnestly. 'Why do you not let me be your friend in secret?'

'Because if you were my friend it would be necessary for you to know the whole truth before you could help me. Yet, in my present position, I can explain nothing. If I did, it would be fatal to me—and perhaps to you also.'

'You are so very mysterious, Lady Judith!' I said. 'Cannot you be more explicit? What you tell me only excites my curiosity and interest.'

'I can tell you nothing more—absolutely nothing,' she said, quite calm again. 'I am unfortunately a victim of certain strange and incredible circumstances; that is all.'

'But why are you so averse to my friendship?' I said. 'I assure you that I will do my utmost to serve you if you will accept me as your friend.'

'I do not doubt it. I can only regret that our friendship is debarred,' she answered.

'Why debarred?'

'Because of circumstances which, as I have already told you, I am unable to explain. Besides, I have long ago read in the newspapers that you reside abroad. I could not think of keeping you here in England on my account.'

'I intend to live in England for the future,' I hastened to assure her. 'In fact, I'm on the lookout for a home at an easy distance from London, and in the meantime I am the guest of my old schoolfellow and friend, Captain Wyman, of whose recent explorations in Central Africa you may have heard.'

She looked at me with an expression of blank amazement.

'You know Captain Wyman?' she exclaimed in a hard, strained voice. 'Is he really a friend of yours?'

'A most intimate friend. Do you know him?' I asked, recollecting how he had warned me of any association with her.

'Yes,' she answered in the same hoarse tone, 'I know him.'

'And he is not your friend?' I suggested, for I at once gathered from her manner that mention of him was distasteful to her.

'No, Mr Kennedy,' was her quick response. 'I may as well tell you plainly that he is one of my enemies of whom I have spoken.'

'But if he is your enemy, as you say, that surely is no reason why I should not stand your friend?' I pleaded.

She shook her head slowly, and in a low, mechanical voice, almost as though speaking to herself, said, 'I cannot see why you should be so ready to sacrifice everything for my sake. It will be best if we part now, never to meet again. It will be best for both of us, Mr Kennedy, I assure you. Remember, once and for all, that our friendship is forbidden.'

(To be continued.)

LEAVES FROM A PORTUGUESE SKETCH-BOOK.

THE visit in the spring of last year of King Edward to Portugal brought prominently to the minds of the people of both countries that ancient alliance and that traditional friendship which have existed between them for at least the last two hundred years—a long period in the history of national alliances; and the recognition of this historical association has been made more vivid by the frequent visits which have since been paid by our fleets to Lisbon, and the warm welcome invariably accorded to them there.

Under these conditions of national feeling, Portugal is, apart from climatic and other considerations, a pleasant enough country for a subject of His Britannic Majesty to live in at the present time, and life there is not without many attractions and interests. The place in which our own particular lot is cast, fronting boldly to the Atlantic seaboard, and often swept by its strong breezes, is more or less historic ground. It is now practically a British commercial settlement on Portuguese soil, and is located in one of the old châteaux or *quintas* of Portugal, surrounded by its own demesne, and where any day in autumn you may flush a covey of partridges from the grass or see the lively rabbit scurrying about, just as in the neighbourhood of our own country-houses at home.

From it we look landwards towards the beautiful hills of Cintra, themselves a shade of darkest purple, standing out clearly against the blue sky, their highest crest crowned by the ancient Castle of Penna, a strange medley of Moorish and Gothic architecture, and their lower slopes rich in wood and garden. The ground on which we stand no doubt re-echoed, well-nigh a century ago now, to the tramp of British troops in the early years of the great Peninsular War; while in the far distance lie the famous lines of Torres Vedras, covering, it is said, an area of fortifications of nearly five hundred square miles, which Wellington held in the winter of 1810 against Napoleon's celebrated general, Masséna, and from which he began those great military operations which resulted in freeing Portugal for ever from the domination of France, and giving to this portion of the ancient Iberian Peninsula a hundred years of immunity from at least the horrors of foreign invasion. Not that Portugal has, any more than any other country, been without its internal troubles during that period; but, compared with its great neighbours France and Spain, or even with Italy, it has seen no such violent upheavals of social order as have disturbed all those nations of the Latin race.

To-day at least all the land is calm, and it is also very hot! So think we at any rate as we step out of doors into the blazing sunlight; only a light breath of wind stirs the air, and not a sound breaks on the ear save the gentle hum of insect life or the murmur of the breakers as they roll in long majestic lines and graceful curves of white to the yellow beach. We slowly saunter across the fields towards the Rio da Amoreiha. The ground is hard and dry, with cracks traversing the surface in all directions. Yet, although the grass is parched and brown, wild-flowers are blooming under the hot sun, and they give a graceful variety and a charming sense of colour to the scene. Blue cornflowers, ragged-robin, arnica, meadow-sweet, with many others of the commoner and some of the rarer plants, abound.

There is comparatively little water in the Rio at this time of the year, but in winter it changes to a foaming and rushing torrent as it sweeps between the lichened walls, which make it resemble more, at this part of its course, the moat defending some castle of the Middle Ages than an ordinary stream.

What a host of insect life is abroad to-day! Dragon-flies of many hues cleave their brilliant and kaleidoscopic way through the summer air. Emperors, peacocks, admirals, small coppers, whites, and many others of the butterfly order flit from flower to flower; myriads of ants are scurrying over the hard sun-baked ground in all directions, some carrying pieces of thistledown, bark, wood-chips, and other materials for their nests; others vigorously attacking in some seemingly ordered sequence a writhing centipede.

As we follow the Rio down towards the sea we come upon some Portuguese women washing clothes by the water-side. Without all the natural grace and dark, full-eyed beauty of the Spaniard, some of

these Portuguese women, clad in clean, fresh calico dresses, with brilliantly coloured handkerchiefs or scarves tied gracefully over their heads, have a certain picturesqueness of their own. Kneeling down by the side of the stream, they dip and swill the clothes about, generally giving the article a finishing-touch by vigorously smacking it upon a flat stone!

We now reach in our walk the beach of Carcavellos. How soft and grateful to the ear those Spanish names often are! It is exceedingly pretty, and here and there great green-and-brown rocks, some flat, some bold and rugged, stand out vividly against their background of yellow sand. The sea, although there is a long rolling swell coming up from the Bay of Biscay, is comparatively calm, and of a deep delicious blue such as we can have but seldom under our grayer skies at home, although I think that Mrs Oliphant once said of the bay which washes the bold headland on which the classic city of St Andrews stands, that at times it can rival even the Mediterranean in its blueness. To-day, far as the eye can reach, the waves ripple and glisten in the sunlight, and many boats of all shapes and sizes are gliding over the waters. There the royal mail steamer bound for Pernambuco cleaves through the waves, the pulsations of her engines and the throb of her screws heard distinctly in the calm, quiet air, while the water breaks in spray from her bows. Nearer inshore numerous Portuguese fishing-boats are busily at work. Some under full brown canvas are heading seaward; on others in the distance there may be seen the figure of a man silhouetted against the mast as he lazily 'sheets' the sail; while on others again, anchored not far from the beach, the fishermen are casting their nets overboard, reminding one of their brethren of the Sea of Galilee as described to us in Scripture.

To the left in the middle distance rises the picturesque ramparts of Fort St Julian, guarding the mouth of the Tagus. The guns in the fort itself are of obsolete pattern, and it is now chiefly used as a coastguard station; but a masked battery has recently been built behind the fort, the guns of which are believed to be of modern construction, and to constitute an effective armament for the protection of the sea approach to Lisbon.

Our dogs evidently enjoy their scamper along the beach, varied as it is by an occasional swim in the sea, cooling to their superabundant energies. But Portugal is not without its drawbacks for the canine race, for 'ticks' and other insect pests abound, the former especially multiplying at a tremendous rate. These little insects cling to the dog's body with their sharp mandibles, clustering in particular on the ears, and cause much discomfort and suffering to the animal attacked by them.

Farther on we see a large flock of curlews feeding about a hundred yards ahead of us. They do not seem in the least disturbed by our approach, which surprises us a good deal, knowing that they are generally such very wary birds. However, they allow us to get within fifteen or twenty yards of them before rising, and we are able to admire their thrush-like plumage and graceful heads and bills.

The tide is now fast receding, and through the still wet seaweed the rocks appear in varying shades of brown, red, and green. In the rock-pools, where the water is crystal clear, there are a number of small fish darting hither and thither, anon hiding themselves under the stones or resting on the shining shingle at the bottom of the pool. At the end of the rocks a poor old cripple stands fishing. His gear is of a somewhat primitive kind, consisting of a long bamboo rod with strong coarse line and large rough hooks, an iron-wire gaff, and a rush-mat basket. One or two other rock-fishermen are wading about in the deep pools, cautiously feeling in the nooks and crannies with a long iron wire, and as the startled fish rush out into the pool they are deftly captured in a rough sort of landing-net.

As we scramble across the rocks we come upon some of the boys from the Sanatorio Maritimo de Carcavellos paddling in the pools. What a healthy life they live, these little fellows! Picturesquely clad in short khaki-coloured trousers, blue-and-white striped overalls, and large straw sun-hats perched on the back of their heads, some of them are almost always to be seen on the far-stretching beach playing games, building miniature forts of granite boulders on the top of which a coloured bit of rag for a flag flies bravely, bathing in the fresh blue sea, or stretched in little groups on the sands, their brown legs glistening in the sun; and they undoubtedly add an enviable touch of life and colour to the scene. Perhaps the glories of Portugal as a maritime and colonising nation have departed, as the sun of Catholic Spain as a world-power has assuredly set; but old nations like theirs seem to die hard, and there are still some elements of national pride, patriotism, and vitality left in the Portuguese. One of the evidences of this is the tenacity with which, despite financial and other difficulties, they cling to what is still left of their once relatively great colonial empire. Of them, or rather of their country, it may perhaps be said in the words of the old Persian poet, Omar Khayyám:

> But still the vine her ancient ruby yields,
> And still a garden by the water blows.

Time flies apace! The shades of the closing day overspread the sky. A faint yellow which every moment turns to a deeper tint is gradually stealing over the western heavens until it changes to a brilliant crimson, touched here with amethyst and there with gray of pearl. How beautiful these sunsets are! Travellers have told us that even in the shining East they are not to be excelled. But now the crimson slowly fades, and we turn homewards in the fast falling twilight, which passes quickly and imperceptibly into night, under a starry sky and the faint rays of the crescent moon.

THE RIGHT HORSE BUT THE WRONG MAN.

PART IV.

THE words, impressive enough in themselves, had been impressively spoken, and were succeeded by a dead silence. But Kendrick was only indignant, and his indignation found vent now.

'But—but,' he got out, spluttering in his eagerness to speak, 'it—it's downright absurd, you know. There's the British Government to be considered and reckoned with, remember that; and I advise you to take warning and be careful what you do!'

He got no further; and the last words were lost in a chorus of grim laughter from the ring of men.

'British Government!' repeated the leader contemptuously. 'Can the British Government reach you here, think you, or, if it could, who would pay heed to it? Besides,' he added with a sneer, 'the British Government would scarcely take in hand to protect native-born Spaniards, Excellency. No, señor. Your pardon, but we are not yet so bald that you can see our brains.'

Kendrick shrugged his shoulders. Argument seemed hopeless, and he gave it up. Things would simply have to take their course now.

'If you would be kind enough just to say for whom you are taking me,' he suggested, with a tinge of sarcasm, 'it would simplify matters so very much.'

'What need, señor?' responded the fellow, with a sneer. 'We take you for yourself, that is all; and it is surely safe to presume that you know your own identity. However,' he added, standing up, 'you have until morning to make your choice; and for your own sake I counsel you to let that choice be a wise one, señor. I have the honour to wish you a very good night.'

It was all very well to say that, but the evening that Kendrick passed was hardly a pleasant one. He sat a little apart, under the shelter of a rock, rubbing his eyes from time to time in a puzzled endeavour to ascertain whether he was in truth awake or only dreaming. His captors had invited him to come nearer the fire; but he was in no humour for their company at any closer quarters, and chose to remain where he had been first placed for safety's sake. However, the hope, if hope he had cherished, of thereby eluding the vigilance of his guards and making his escape in the night, was doomed to disappointment. Two of them, muscular, powerful young fellows, both well armed, kept close beside him; and although they looked longingly at the fire and the group round it, neither showed a sign of slackening his vigilance over his prisoner for a moment.

They brought him supper—meat and bread, and wine from a pig-skin that was circulating round the fire; and one of his guards, a handsome youngster, not unlike Perico at the inn, only a year or two his senior, rolled him a dozen paper *cigarritos* with his quick, deft fingers, afterwards bringing him unasked a wet bandage for his ankle. But for all this proof of goodwill, he only shook his head when Kendrick tried to get him to talk, and was not to be shaken in his fidelity.

So the hours passed, and the prisoner's meditations were none of the sweetest. It was all very well to feel inclined, as he did now and then, to laugh grimly at the whole adventure as some absurd mistake. There was little of the ludicrous in the faces of his captors: they were in dead solemn earnest every man of them; nor was there much of the ridiculous left about the thing when the reflection came home that, unless he declared himself in the morning ready to sign his willingness to fulfil the conditions imposed on him, he would assuredly find himself knocked on the head without mercy. Nor could he have got out of his difficulty, even if British obstinacy would have permitted it, by asserting his willingness to sign, and leaving his captors to find out their mistake afterwards, when the simple fact of the matter—absurd, but none the less true for all that—was that he did not even know the name of the landowner whom he was supposed to be personating. The only thing clear at present was that he was in the hands of desperate men, who would stick at nothing in order to carry out their ends; and altogether the outlook in the morning promised to be scarcely lively for him.

He sat and watched, hugging his knees, until he saw pretty clearly that all hope of eluding the vigilance of his captors and giving them the slip in the night was useless. They evidently meant to maintain a strict watch over their prisoner, and were not to be caught napping. Our traveller had had no intention of sleeping either; in fact, as he told himself, he had never been wider awake in his life. But a long week of exercise in the open air, and a hard and tiring day at the back of that, proved to be more than he had taken into consideration, and the end of it was that, he never knew how or when, despite his uneasy bed and the pain of his ankle he fell fast asleep.

Kendrick slept until the morning sun, shining on his face, woke him, and he sat up with a start.

He had never spent a night under 'green curtains' before, and every limb was stiff and aching with the unwonted exposure. The air was chilly, for the *madrugada*, the fresh, sweet dawn of southern Spain, even in summer is searchingly keen to a stranger; and he shivered, with chattering teeth, as he stared round him. Yet memory in his case was not a blank; he remembered the incidents of last night only too clearly, nor was he at all likely to forget the pleasant prospect awaiting him at the hands of his captors in the morning.

But where were his captors? What had become of them? Not a human being, not a living creature even, was to be seen, and the silence round him was like the silence of the grave. For a moment he sat there staring blankly, wondering whether it had been all a dream and nothing more. But no! There lay the ashes of the fire, warm yet; there was the stone on which he had sat in conference with the brown-bearded stranger, and the grass on every side still bore the impress of trampling feet. All that was clear enough; it was clear, too, that his captors had vanished; but how, or why, or where was a mystery. However, their disappearance, indeed the possibility of never seeing them again, was a prospect he found himself equal to sustaining without a shadow of regret.

Another thing made itself clearly evident presently—namely, that since he was in that hole, the sooner he got out of it the better. His injured leg scarcely promised to make the task an easy one; but the relief of finding himself a free man again did away with every other consideration, and with the aid of his heavy stick, which he had found on waking lying beside him, he hobbled across the hollow and set to work to scale the rocks at the easiest point available. It was only a climb of forty or fifty feet; and he managed it at last, taking many short rests during the process, and pausing when fairly up, before turning away, to cast a glance down into the mysterious hidden hollow in which he had last night gone through so strange an experience. He had almost been expecting to come upon his captors on the rocks there above; and it was a distinct relief on gaining the lip of the hollow to find himself to all appearance the single living being in a world of solitude. There was little inducement to linger. He had had enough of that locality, he said to himself, to last him for some time; and after one more look at the silent hollow below he set off down the slope in the direction in which he judged Pozo del Monte to lie, at as good a pace as his ankle would let him. But he had barely covered a couple of hundred yards or so when, on rounding an outcropping rock, he came face to face with a man and mule on their way up; and at the sight of them Kendrick stopped and stood staring in amazement. For the man—youth rather—was young Perico from yonder *venta* of unblessed memory.

Perico himself looked little less surprised for the moment, somewhat confused too. But for all that, he was the one to recover himself first.

'Ah, señor!' he exclaimed, a smile lighting up his handsome young face, 'I rejoice to find you here. I feared that you might not find yourself able to walk at all.'

The reply on Kendrick's lips was about to be couched in terms somewhat more forcible than polite; but the lad's quick intelligence had taken in the state of things in a moment, and he gave the Englishman no time to get out a word.

'Look you, señor, I bring you a message. I am charged to convey a thousand regrets—yes, by my faith! and profound apologies—for the mistake made last night and the inconvenience resulting to yourself. And,' he added adroitly, allowing no time for a rejoinder, 'this mule is for your use, and I have orders to convey you in safety to Pozo del Monte. Will you do me the favour to mount him, señor?'

Once again Kendrick, all the smouldering wrath of the night on the point of breaking into flame, was half-inclined to stand on his dignity, and reject the offer with scorn and just indignation. But, like a sensible fellow, he thought better of it, for his ankle was aching most consumedly just then. Besides, his curiosity and indignation were tolerably well matched, and he had discernment enough to see that there was no chance of the former being gratified except through the agency of Perico. However, although the latter, pacing alongside the sturdy mule, was willing enough to talk, he showed himself singularly reticent concerning last night's adventure.

'Hark you, señor,' the lad said with a shrug, 'we have a proverb that "when we think to catch we are sometimes caught," and you, as a stranger, will do well to keep silence respecting those with whom you have had to do last night. Mistakes may be made, even by the wisest; and the past, look you, is past.'

'Oh,' queried Kendrick bluntly, 'that's it, is it? And Pedro Perez, what of him? Is the past to be past with him too?'

Perico shrugged his shoulders.

'Pedro Perez will have to take his chance,' responded he indifferently. 'He is not the first who has had to suffer injustice. Yet he has a good friend in—in one in authority at Pozo del Monte—and the chances are that if—if he does not succeed in other quarters, he will be able to secure the pardon of Perez among those that will be granted in May, when the little king comes to his throne.'

Kendrick rode on in silence, considering. A light was beginning to dawn on him.

'This friend you speak of,' he demanded then, turning suddenly on Perico, 'does he wear a brown beard?'

Perico gave him back look for look, and there was no trace of consciousness in the steady gaze of his eyes.

'No, señor,' he answered simply. 'It is not our custom here. He has been always clean-shaven when I have seen him.'

'But a custom might be broken through for once,' persisted the Englishman, and again he looked hard at Perico.

'It is possible, señor,' rejoined the lad imperturbably. 'I do not say no. I have known stranger things happen than that, when there was occasion for it.'

Kendrick knew better than to ask more. Every country had its own little ways of managing its affairs; and this was probably only a 'thing of Spain,' into which it would be unwise for a stranger

to inquire too closely. If the ends of justice could best be served by the kidnapping of a landowner and compelling him under pain of death to obtain fair dealing for the tillers of his soil, that was no concern of his. He only wondered whether, supposing he had laid hold by chance of that brown beard, it would have come off in his hand; and asked himself, too, if he would know the fellow, clear of his disguise, granting that the pair of them should ever meet. On coming to think things over, it struck him that, taking one with another, he had come off worst in the whole business; and he said so. However, it was not much in the way of consolation to find that Perico scarcely saw the matter in the same light; rather, that the lad regarded the whole thing as being in a large measure Kendrick's own fault.

'I do not deny that had the mistake not been found out before morning things might have gone hard with you,' Perico admitted candidly, 'for those with whom you had to deal were men of their word. But what would you? When two men are as like each other as two blades of grass, and the one appears riding the horse of the other, I would ask, how are those who are on the watch for that other to know that he has kept to the high-road after all, and so reached Pozo del Monte by another way? But, *caramba!* if his Excellency the Duke—by my faith! the name has slipped off my tongue without my knowing it—would remember that Spain, and not England, where he was sent to school, is his country by blood and birth, there might be less occasion for actions such as that which was likely to have cost you so dear. Things would be as quiet as a pool of oil, and he might take solitary rides in safety then.'

'By Jove!' exclaimed Kendrick, a light dawning on him. 'Then it was through the horse after all!'

Perico regarded the Englishman with the air of one who has believed a fact to be patent to his hearer all along. 'Of course, yes, señor. What would you have? I warned you you might have trouble on his account before reaching Pozo del Monte, for I knew him to be well known as the horse of the Señor Duque; but you would not heed me.'

Kendrick hardly heeded him now. He was too busy piecing things together, and he saw pretty clearly how the case stood by this time. Remembering his hard thoughts of the lad Perico, he felt slightly humiliated and small; the more, perhaps, on recalling the very different construction put by himself upon the action of the señora last night. Needless to say, he had changed his mind by now on both points, and more particularly as concerned the lady.

'Oh, my mother!' said Perico indifferently, with a shrug, when the Englishman, smarting still under the sense of having been tricked, had made one or two pointed remarks on the subject. 'My mother, she thought only of the twenty-five *pesetas*, that is all. The horse had been left with us awaiting the Señor Duque, whose whim it is to ride to Pozo del Monte over the sierra at times alone; and if she believed she could make twenty-five *pesetas* out of his hire in the meantime, she asked herself why not. She had no thought of risk to you, señor, and when I represented it to her, called me only a fool for my pains.'

For a few minutes Kendrick rode on in silence. He was wondering how the brown-bearded man and the rest of his captors had felt on discovering their mistake; and being no more than mortal, he was sensible of a distinct sense of satisfaction at the reflection of how completely his kidnappers had been done.

'So they thought they had caught a Duke, and he turned out to be only a stockbroker,' he said, with a grim laugh. 'Pretty well sold that time, anyhow.' And Perico, plodding alongside the mule, although he did not understand in the least what a stockbroker might be, laughed in echo of the Englishman, and in the main agreed with him.

'Yes, señor,' said the lad, 'you are right. They have been given *gato por liebre* over you, without a doubt. *Caramba!*' he went on, seeing the puzzled expression on his companion's face, 'I know not how you say it in England, but when a man thinks he has got a bargain and it turns out to be nothing after all, we say he has had *gato por liebre*—has been given a cat for a hare.'

THE END.

A VISIT TO THIBET.

By Captain J. H. BALDWIN.

PART II.

IN my last paper on the above subject in the April issue of *Chambers's Journal*, I endeavoured to describe a journey through the Himalayas across the snowy range into Thibet.

By the first week in June we had advanced a considerable distance into the country in a north-westerly direction. The farther we went the more people of the country we met coming from the opposite direction, driving their flocks and herds before them. These pastoral Tartars had come considerable distances from the far side of the river Sutlej, which they had crossed by a bridge from the neighbourhood of a place called Gartok. There was a guard of armed men posted at this bridge, and unfortunately I was debarred from

crossing to the northern side by the arrangement I had originally come to with the authorities. It was a disappointment to be thus hindered from seeing more of the country, and probably reaching far better hunting-grounds; but it proved quite useless attempting to persuade the head official of the district, called the *tumpun*, to grant me the desired permission. I had a meeting with this satrap, whom I found to be a greedy, malevolent individual, a confirmed opium-smoker, and a lover of strong drink.

It was with the greatest difficulty, and only by bribing him with sundry presents, including one of a pair of precious red-coloured blankets, which he evidently had set his heart on obtaining, that I succeeded in gaining an extension of time to continue my hunting; but I feared coming to any misunderstanding with these truculent people; for had I endeavoured to force matters and to take my own course in the direction I wished to travel, I should undoubtedly have brought a crowd of mounted Tartars against me, and if once we had come to blows it might have ended disastrously and compromised me with our Government. Moreover, I was now alone in the wilderness, my comrade having left me and recrossed into British territory by the route we had come.

At Tazang, a place I have already mentioned, after many disappointments and much toil I at length succeeded in shooting a male *Ovis ammon*, one of the greatest prizes a sportsman can win. This giant sheep stood fully twelve hands high at the shoulder, and supplied us with an abundance of meat—which was of the greatest importance, for, owing to the watch kept upon us by our Tartar guard, we found it impossible to buy sheep or goats from the pastoral tribes around us.

To show the severity and tyranny of the authorities over their subjects, I will relate what happened to one of my escort for complying with a most harmless request which, unfortunately, I had made to him.

One morning when starting for the hills as usual in search of game, we happened to pass the spot where our escort had spent the night. I noticed that one of the party—the youngest and most pleasing-looking of the group—was seated on the ground repairing the soles of his boots with some narrow strips of hide. Remembering that one of a pair of my own shooting-boots required mending, I asked Dhun Singh to take it over to the man when we returned in the evening, and try to get him to do what was required. On the following morning my boot was brought back to me roughly repaired, but once more fit for use. I sent a small present to my Tartar friend, and thought no more about it. Some days afterwards, while I was in my tent about midday, Dhun Singh called me outside. The poor fellow who had mended my boots was standing beside him. The other three of the Tartar guard were not in sight. Glancing anxiously behind him to make sure that he was not being watched, the man suddenly threw off his sheepskin coat, exposing his back and shoulders, and showing that he had been recently most cruelly and shamefully beaten with the lash. To my astonishment, Dhun Singh informed me that this terrible punishment was the result of the Tartar's having complied with the small request I had made to him to repair my boot.

But the above is only one instance among many I could give confirming the opinion I formed many years ago that the Thibetans are for the most part a brutal, cruel race of beings. Nor do I believe, judging from the reports of recent travellers, that they have improved in this respect or become more civilised than they were at the time I speak of, the year 1863. Evidently the unfortunate man so mercilessly flogged had been betrayed by one of his companions, had then been summoned to appear before those in authority, and for a most trivial act of disobedience in rendering me a little assistance had been cruelly treated in the manner I have described.

But to return to our narrative. I was gratified to observe that the 'dwellers in tents,' the people in charge of the flocks and herds recently arrived from the interior of the country, showed a more friendly spirit towards us. And I may say here that my experience in wild countries has always been that pastoral tribes are as a rule a harmless, peaceable race of beings, and so these poor Tartars proved themselves to be. At first they evidently stood in awe of our escort, and appeared afraid to approach our encampment—which was not to be wondered at after what had recently occurred; but gradually things improved. I noticed a jug of fresh milk every morning on the breakfast-table, with yak-butter to match; and in return I sent a good piece of the recently killed *Ovis ammon* as a 'peace-offering' to the Tartars for their civility. Women and children soon came peeping about, and I gave them a few trifles I had brought with me for the purpose, in the shape of small looking-glasses, beads, and our empty bottles, which latter they were delighted with.

After this the ice was fairly broken, and we were soon invaded by swarms of grubby Tartars of every age and both sexes. As a matter of course, as with all uncivilised races, they proved themselves to be great beggars, continually pestering us for everything they saw and wished to possess; but this I will say of them, that they took nothing away but what we gave them.

I found myself constantly inspected by groups, principally of women, squatting together opposite the door of my tent.

I have already described the dress of the men. The women generally wore long woollen coats of a dark colour; sometimes these loose hanging garments were striped with brighter shades, with a belt or girdle round the waist; long cloth boots kept up by garters completed this rough costume.

The head was left bare, with the hair hanging

down. Some of the women wore strings of beads or coral ornaments round the neck, while others had turquoise stones attached to the hair. I noticed that these latter, though many were of large size, were full of cracks and flaws. The women appeared to be industrious, and were continually occupied in spinning from bundles of wool which they carried about with them.

Both men and women were of short stature; but many of the former were of powerful build, with enormously developed lower limbs, reminding me forcibly in this respect of the porters to be seen about the docks at Hong-kong. These people, although they possessed the usual type of Mongol countenance, were considerably darker in complexion than the Chinese, more of an olive than a yellow tint. Their faces were deeply lined by toil and exposure to the terribly severe cold of these inhospitable regions.

Like most inhabitants of cold climates, these Tartars were excessively dirty. They lived all crowded together in a few large tents. Some of these temporary erections were of circular form and well put together, being made of a coarse dark woollen covering woven from the hair of the yak and supported on bent poles. A hole was left in the centre of the roof to permit of the exit of the smoke from a fire beneath.

The Tartars continually begged for gunpowder; but a traveller should always be careful in complying with this request, more especially in a country containing big game. I remember feeling surprised, however, that from first to last, while in Thibet, I never once saw firearms of any sort; but from the anxiety of the people to obtain gunpowder, it was quite evident that rifles or guns were not far away. The only arms I ever noticed were heavy *dhow* knives, which some of the men carried in their belts.

We soon discovered that the influx of people passing along the valleys with their sheep and goats, the latter guarded by a large breed of dog which kept up a perpetual barking after nightfall, had the natural effect of driving away the game of the country. This compelled us to leave the open undulating plains for higher ground; but we generally encamped within a few miles of some of the wandering Tartars, in order to obtain supplies of milk, butter, and the like. Hitherto I had had no opportunity of personally visiting these people, though my camp-followers constantly passed to and fro. At length came the chance, which I was glad to avail myself of. My guide had one evening crossed a range of hills to a valley where a party of Tartars were encamped, and to my surprise, when I met him the following morning, he told me that one of these people had recently killed a snow leopard, as this animal is commonly called by English sportsmen; but the more correct name is the ounce (*Felis uncia*), a very rare animal seldom come across or shot by either European or native hunters.

Dhun Singh informed me that the Tartars had the skin of the ounce in their tent, and as I had never seen one of these animals, and wished most particularly to learn how they had succeeded in killing an animal which the most successful sportsmen I knew of had failed in obtaining, I at once determined to pay a visit to these people and inspect this valuable trophy. Accordingly we walked across the hills to the Tartar encampment. The skin was produced, and the successful hunter, a shepherd lad, related through my interpreter how he had killed the ounce by dropping a rock upon it from the edge of a cliff above when the animal was lying asleep in the sun at the mouth of a cave, evidently its den. By extraordinary good luck the piece of rock struck the ounce in the centre of the back, crippling it in the spine. The Tartar then descended and despatched the creature by a few blows on the head with his heavy *dhow* knife. On examining the skin, which was that of a female ounce measuring fully seven and a half feet in length, I saw a dark mark about the centre of the back where evidently the animal had been injured when alive, and as I could discover no bullet-hole through the skin I became convinced that the account as related was perfectly true. Unfortunately a splendid trophy had been ruined by the careless manner in which the skin had been removed from the carcass, no attempt having been made to stretch and dry it properly. The consequence was that it had fallen into bad condition, with the fur falling out in several places.

I may here mention that two days later we captured one of the two cubs of the ounce. At first the young creature was in a half-starved condition, but by careful treatment it rapidly improved and became quite tame. I had great hopes of later sending it to England for our Zoological Gardens, but on returning one evening from the mountains I found it lying dead in my tent. I had a suspicion at the time that one of my camp-followers had given it poison. The animal gave my servants considerable trouble when on the line of march. I had left it in the morning apparently in the best of health; but wild creatures, especially when very young, often die in this manner from want of a mother's care.

After inquiring into the death of the snow ounce and ascertaining from the Tartars what game they had come across in the neighbourhood, we discussed some tea my entertainers put before us. I wished to taste the decoction made from the brick-tea of the country which these people are continually drinking. There are several kinds of this brick-tea, which chiefly comes to Thibet from China. Some of the bricks were of considerable size, weighing three or four pounds, and naturally these poor people could only afford the cheapest and coarsest description.

Their ideas of making tea evidently differed from ours. There was a brass or copper vessel on the fire in which the tea was well stewed, and just before presenting me with a metal cup full of the precious liquid one of the men added an abominable yellow mess of thick *ghee* or clarified butter. I managed to gulp down a mouthful, and

after that was glad to turn from the stifling atmosphere of the evil-smelling tent to the pure air outside. Among the Tartar pots and kettles which they showed me I at once noticed a large-sized tin plate with the English alphabet round the outside. In the centre of the plate were two raised figures representing our late Queen and Prince Consort. On my inquiring how they acquired the plate, the elder of the party informed me through the interpreter that an English sportsman visiting Thibet in search of big game several years before had given him it. I parted with these poor wanderers on good terms. They proved themselves to be a simple folk, glad to welcome the English stranger and altogether wanting in the overbearing manner commonly displayed by those set in authority over them. Later they returned my call, and I took the opportunity of giving them a few trifling presents, which sent them away delighted.

A few days later I had the good fortune to shoot a fine male *burhel*. This completed my collection of Thibetan trophies, with the one exception of a bull *bunchour*. It began to be time to think of returning south. The short summer was drawing to a close, and the Thibetan traveller should always beware of delaying his departure too long, for an early fall of snow might cut off his retreat by closing the passes behind him.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

SUBMARINE WARFARE.

RECENT events in the Far East and a terrible disaster in our home waters have concentrated attention upon torpedo warfare and submarine vessels. It is the general idea, perhaps, that the submarine ship is a new thing which has hardly passed the trial stage. This is unfortunately the case so far as our own country is concerned, for we are slow to adopt new devices. But other nations have been more prompt to avail themselves of this type of vessel; and if all the submarines belonging to the navies of the world or in course of construction were gathered together they would make a very formidable fleet of about two hundred craft. Mr A. H. Burgoyne, who has made a study of the subject, contributes to the *Times* a long letter regarding the world's submarines, and we are able to gather from it some interesting particulars concerning vessels of this type which are either actually afloat, are being built, or are about to be built. France takes the lead with a total of fifty-eight; Russia comes next with thirty-four; England has, or will presently have, twenty-nine; Spain, twenty-two; America, seventeen; Italy, nine; Germany, eight; Sweden, six; Portugal, two; and Turkey, two. Other countries are making exhaustive trials with experimental boats, but have not yet any of their own. It is noteworthy that Japan has not apparently deemed it necessary to add this type of vessel to a navy which has lately exhibited its efficiency in such a remarkable manner.

THE RUBBER INDUSTRY.

Little more than a century ago Dr Priestley said that he had 'seen a substance excellently adapted to the purpose of wiping from paper the marks of a blacklead-pencil,' the price of india-rubber, to which he referred, being at that time three shillings for a cubic half-inch. Since then rubber has been found to be so excellently adapted for a great many other purposes that its culture has assumed the position of a very important industry. In the Imperial Institute *Bulletin* for 1903—which has recently been issued under the authority of the Board of Trade, and which is full of matter relating to the economic resources of the oversea dominions of the King—there is much useful information about the cultivation of various kinds of rubber-trees, there being no fewer than eight reports dealing with this subject. We find here, too, a very interesting account of experiments made to find a use for the large quantity of seeds yielded by the Para rubber-tree, which have hitherto been destroyed by the planters. These seeds, we learn, which are like small chestnuts in shape and size, have been examined at the Institute, and the husk and kernel ground together have been found to yield a light-yellow oil useful as a substitute for linseed-oil, and worth about twenty pounds per ton. It is believed, too, that the residual matter, after the oil is extracted, could be utilised as a feeding material for cattle.

ELECTRICITY *v.* STEAM.

The electric-motor is taking the place of the steam-engine in so many industries, to say nothing of its use for locomotive purposes on our tram-lines and railways, that it must be evident to all that it possesses great advantages. In workshops the employment of a motor, which takes up little space, which requires neither furnace nor boiler, and is clean and safe in use, is naturally appreciated. In addition to all these advantages, it is much cheaper to run machinery by electric current than it is by steam. It would appear that this is also the case in the working of electric railways; but the system is so young that it is difficult as yet to get trustworthy data for comparison. The chairman of the Mersey Railway, Mr Falconer, did, however, make reference recently to the first half-year's working of that line by the electric current, and his report is distinctly favourable, with the exception that the bill for repairs was more than double that of the corresponding half-year of 1902, when the

line was worked by steam locomotives. We presume that there must be some special circumstances to account for this increase. As to the other details, they are given as per train-mile under steam and electricity respectively, and in every case, except in the one cited, the figures are in favour of electricity. The total working expenses per train-mile under steam are stated to have been 41·2d., and under electricity only 18·2d.

A WEATHER-FORECASTING PLANT.

Some years ago a good deal was heard of the alleged virtues of the so-called 'weather plant' *Atrus precatorius*, which found an enthusiastic advocate in the person of Professor Nowack, of Vienna. This observer has recently written to the *Times* in support of his theory that this plant, by its behaviour, will accurately foretell not only the state of the weather, but will give notice of a seismic disturbance which may be at hand. He claims that during the Vienna Jubilee Exhibition, a few years ago, he was able by the aid of the plant to forecast from hour to hour, and two or three days in advance, the state of the weather for a period of six months, with a correctness which elicited universal surprise. Shortly after this the plant in question was subjected to tests at Kew Gardens; but the authorities there were not impressed by its behaviour, and gave it an unfavourable character. Professor Nowack claims that the English tests were not carried out under proper conditions nor for as long a period as was necessary, and that the failure of the plant to give accurate indications was only to be expected; and so the question remains undecided whether the plant will do the work alleged or not. It may be, of course, that the *Atrus* finds the climate of Britain an uncongenial one, and refuses to act as it will abroad, where many testimonials have been given as to its efficacy as a weather-prophet. There are several Indian plants which have the same reputation; but they simply become moist when the air is charged with watery vapour—acting, in fact, like the seaweed which is such a popular form of weather-guide in our own country.

PHOTOGRAPHS IN COLOUR.

The discovery of a means of obtaining photographs in the colours of nature has been so often described as an accomplished fact that one is apt to be chary of accepting any statement with regard to an invention of the kind. We have, however, detailed in these columns certain processes which, by the help of dyes, give good results by photographic means—that is to say, the application of the colours is governed by the action of light. A printing process in colours which has novel points has been invented by Herr Szczepanik, and was recently brought under the notice of the London Camera Club. The process utilises a special kind of prepared paper which is coated first of all with collodion or gelatine stained blue, next with one stained yellow, and finally with a surface stained red. The colours are of such a fugitive nature that when the paper is exposed to light they are destroyed. But if during exposure the paper is covered with a coloured original, say a stained-glass window, the colours in that original preserve the colours buried in the paper, and they are not obliterated. In other words, a coloured transparent picture is exactly reproduced on the paper placed beneath it under the action of light. Specimens which we have handled and examined prove the process to be a practical one. The colours remaining on the paper after exposure to light can be fixed by a mordant so as to become permanent. Unfortunately the necessary exposure to light is a protracted operation; otherwise it would be possible to expose the paper in the camera and get a coloured picture direct—that is, a fac-simile of the beautiful image seen on the focussing screen of the instrument. The inventor is, we are told, prosecuting experiments with a view to make this possible. Should he succeed, the art of photography would undergo an entire revolution.

SKIPPING AS AN EXERCISE.

It is recorded of blunt old Dr Abernethy that when a lady consulted him with regard to some nervous affection from which she suffered, he said to her, 'Don't come to me; go home and buy a skipping-rope.' Dr Bond, of Gloucester, is advocating this same kind of exercise, which he describes as an unsurpassed form of home gymnastics; but the skipping-rope which he recommends is an exalted form of the toy-shop pattern, to which he has given the name 'girbola.' Skipping, he tells us in his pamphlet on the subject, is a form of exercise which calls a large number of muscles into activity, and it is of special value as a means of correcting that weakness of the heart which is apt to occur in persons of sedentary occupation. He describes it as 'an unequalled resource for those who wish, at no appreciable expense, and with little expenditure of time except at odd moments that are at the command of every one, to supply the lack of outdoor exercise which their occupation during working hours imposes, by exercise of a kind that is calculated to do for them all that any kind of home gymnastics can offer.' The idea of a judge or a bishop passing his leisure moments in this manner will, of course, be seized upon by the burlesque writer, the comic artist, and other frivolous persons as a most admirable opportunity for displaying their talents. Many serious things have been spoken in jest; and if Dr Abernethy and his modern disciple are right with regard to their estimate of the value of skipping, sensible people will not be frightened from it by any amount of ridicule.

A THAMES LAKE.

The Thames Conservancy have before them a scheme for constructing across the river Thames at Gravesend a barrage which would virtually transform the noble waterway between that place and

London Bridge into a lake. This scheme, which would comprise a dam, with locks which would be available at all states of the tide, a subway for foot-passengers, and an overhead road for vehicles, is estimated to cost between three and four millions sterling. The project has lately assumed more importance from the fact that the Conservancy are restrained by a recent decision from dredging the river above the Thames Tunnel, and a bar is thus offered to the passage of large ships. The making of the dam would ensure a constant depth of water, and tides would not be felt; but it seems probable that adjacent districts might suffer from floods if the dam were established. The proposal will affect many interests and will require serious consideration.

WOOD-WORKING MACHINERY.

With the introduction of machinery in every conceivable field of labour it is a necessity that many handicrafts must for a time suffer, often with deplorable results to those who have been dependent upon them. For ages the Swiss peasants have had almost a monopoly in the making of certain toys, and especially in the carving of the remarkable animals which are peculiar to the miniature Noah's Ark. It was frequently the case that an entire household would be engaged in the carving and painting of these toys; but it is not so now, and many of the Swiss peasants must feel the pinch of poverty, we fear. The reason of the change is to be looked for thousands of miles away in the American lumber-forests. At the sawmills there a vast amount of waste cuttings would quickly accumulate were they not put to some purpose; and the result is that machines have been introduced for cutting all kinds of useful articles, including toys, out of this waste. So that the mill becomes a factory, and will often produce a variety of articles of use in a household, while some have entered into the manufacture of toys upon an enormous scale. In an article dealing with this subject in *Cassier's Magazine* it is stated that in the great woods of New England the factories will turn out in one day more toys than fifty households in the Tyrol could produce in a week.

TO STOP SEA-SICKNESS.

The penalty which many persons pay for venturing upon the sea, although it has always been a favourite subject of jest, is a very serious thing for the unfortunate sufferer, and no end of remedies have been proposed to cure the evil. It will be remembered that ships have been built for the Channel service of special design to abolish *mal-de-mer;* but they have proved quite ineffectual. The last proposal of the kind comes from Herr Otto Schlick, who appears to have taken a hint from the gyroscope, which is used in the modern torpedo to keep it on a straight course. He suggests the use on shipboard of an enormous fly-wheel, weighing ten tons for a ship of six thousand tons burden, which would revolve at a velocity of six hundred and fifty feet per second at the circumference. The weight and the power necessary to keep the wheel in motion would both be grave difficulties, and it is very doubtful if the device would prove effective. The gyroscope does keep the torpedo on a straight course; but a torpedo differs from a ship in that it travels ten feet below the surface, and out of the reach of a choppy sea.

SALMON FOR THE THAMES.

In December 1897 a noteworthy meeting was held at the Mansion House, London, to discuss the possibility and desirability of restocking the Thames with salmon, and as an outcome of that discussion the Thames Salmon Association was formed two years later. Since that time experimental work with this end in view has been vigorously prosecuted, and the hatching of fish for the Thames has been carried on gratuitously by Mr W. C. Gilbey at his fishery at Denham, near Uxbridge. A number of gentlemen interested in pisciculture recently visited this fishery in order to see the collection of young salmon for transmission to the river. These fish, which were in splendid condition, were the offspring of five thousand ova kindly sent by the Duke of Richmond from the Spey, forty thousand from Lord Denbigh's fishery, fifty thousand from Mr Freman's Irish fishery, and four thousand from Mr Powers. So that England, Ireland, and Scotland are all lending a helping hand to stock the metropolitan river with salmon. It is to be earnestly hoped that the efforts of this praiseworthy association and its helpers will be crowned with success, for it is only reasonable to suppose that other streams would be amenable to the same treatment. The re-establishment and maintenance of salmon-fisheries is of national importance.

COTTON-GROWING IN THE EMPIRE.

The wild speculation on the New York cotton-market has precipitated a state of things in Lancashire sufficiently serious to call for notice in the King's Speech at the opening of Parliament; but the calamity will not have happened in vain if it brings about a large increase in the growth of cotton in our own colonies and dependencies. At present the chief sources of supply of the raw material are the Southern States of the American Union, India, and Egypt. But India does not count for very much, as the growers there retain their prejudice in favour of the short-staple variety, which Lancashire cannot be induced to approve, and the bulk of that growth probably finds its way to the mills in Bombay. The Indian Government, however, has taken up the subject of cotton cultivation in a serious manner, and the Inspector-General of Agriculture reports that there are hopeful signs that an improvement may be looked for ere long, especially in Behar and the provinces of Punjab and Sind. Roughly speaking, we depend almost entirely on America for our supply; and, apart from the question of 'corners'

and 'rings,' this is not satisfactory, in view of the rapidly increasing population of that country, and the probability that she will soon require all her production for home consumption. But there are many parts of the British Empire where cotton can be grown with success; and Mr Leigh Hunt, of New York, an expert agriculturist, declares that the Soudan will furnish the finest cotton-fields in the world. There are, he says, thousands of square miles of deep alluvial soil along the ten thousand miles of river-reaches provided by the Nile; while the means of export are among the most sufficient in the world. He recommends, therefore, the importation of negroes from the Southern States of the Union, who will gradually teach the thin population of the Soudan all the methods of cotton cultivation. Mr Leigh Hunt has arranged with the Soudan Government to start a cotton plantation upon these lines at the mouth of the Atbara River. Meanwhile the British Cotton-Growing Association has had its attention turned to Nigeria, and already one or two small consignments have come to hand from that quarter. Rhodesia, too, is said to be exactly suited to cotton-growing; and there appears to be no doubt that the staple could be largely grown in the West Indies, where any accession of commercial activity would be welcome. Next to the rehabilitation of English agriculture, there is no more important question than this of British cotton-growing; and if ever bounty-giving could be justified, it would surely be on behalf of the sorely distressed population of Lancashire.

'WHO'S WHO IN AMERICA' UP TO DATE.

Published four years ago, that handy biographical dictionary of notable living men and women of the United States, *Who's Who in America*, promises to become as permanent as it is useful and indispensable. We noticed the 1901–1902 edition fully at the time in *Chambers's Journal* for 1902, and need only mention now that a thoroughly revised third edition, containing four thousand new names, or a total of fourteen thousand four hundred and forty-three, has been issued by A. N. Marquis & Company, Chicago. Notoriety must come quickly in the United States, for more than half of the fourteen thousand names were not in the first edition. There is some ground of complaint against the captains of industry who were chary of returning their forms filled up with the necessary information, one man giving as a reason, 'I thought you wanted to draw my leg.' Another gentleman furnished materials for his biography in instalments of eight thousand words each. The patriarch of the present book is Charles Haynes Haswell, civil and mechanical engineer, born in 1809, who has written his autobiography, and has a long record of useful work behind him. Messrs Harper announce a seventieth edition of his *Mechanics' and Engineers' Book*. Did Mr Carnegie revise his fifty-line biography? If so, he should not have passed the statement that he was 'Lord-Rector, University of St Andrew, Edinburgh.' His total benefactions for libraries and education now amount to over ten millions sterling. There is no precedent for this in either ancient or modern times. Mr A. Mosely tells us that it was the skill and up-to-dateness of the American engineers at the mines of South Africa that organised these on a sound basis; from them, too, he conceived the idea of the inquiry which resulted in the useful Mosely Commission to the United States, of which the educational reports were published in April 1904. Take it all in all, the United States may well be proud of its fourteen thousand and odd notable people amongst a population of over seventy-nine millions.

SAN MARINO.

A tiny guide to San Marino has been printed by J. Civelli, Florence, from which we learn that the most favourable time to visit the oldest and smallest independent state of Europe, situated on the Adriatic slopes of the Apennines, is from 1st April to 15th October. It is worth visiting because of its antiquity, its fine views, the healthfulness of its air, and the quaintness of some of its ceremonies. The state is only thirty-two square miles in extent, with a population of slightly over ten thousand. The exports are building-stone, cheese, and wine, and there are some brick-making and pottery industries. Mr William Le Queux, author of *The Closed Book*, is a Chevalier of the Order of San Marino and consul of the republic. His Italian residence is at Villa Le Queux, Lastra a Signa, near Florence.

A CALL.

THE lanes are white with blossom,
And all the world 's a-May;
The lavish larks are flinging
Their pearls of song away.
The daisies star the meadows,
The violets arise,
With the secret of the summer
In the fragrance of their sighs.

Each day reveals fresh wonders,
And 'he who runs may read'
In Nature's 'Book of Beauty'
Love's universal creed.
Then leave the dusty city,
With its turmoil and its din,
Its fashion and its falseness,
Its glitter, sham, and sin;

And seek awhile 'green pastures'
And 'still waters' where thou 'lt find
A rest and a refreshment
For body, soul, and mind.
Here thou canst draw a calmer breath,
Here readjust life's load,
And with a 'new song in thy heart'
Take once again the road.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES

CAPTAIN BLACK AND WHITE.

By JOHN OXENHAM, Author of *Barbe of Grand Bayou, John of Gerisau,* &c.

PART I.

IT was a case—several cases indeed—of primitive instinct quickening suddenly into action under force of circumstances.

Jack Rennie was walking quietly along Blue Anchor Lane, as a short-cut into Jamaica Road, when he sighted a pretty little craft in front; and, with the primitive instinct of the young sailor-man endowed with keen appreciation of trim lines, graceful motion, and an unusually neat figurehead, he followed in her wake. Not, I assure you, with the slightest intention of hailing and interviewing her. He was altogether too modest for anything of the kind. But the sight of so pretty a face and figure, after much North Atlantic, set new cheer in his heart. They were very much nicer things to think of than the roaring green seas and whistling gales through which he had recently come.

He had not seen her face, it is true, but he knew by instinct that it was a pretty one. So trim and neat a figure could not but have a face in keeping, he was sure. The very way she carried her head and bent to the wind, with a few stray wisps of brown hair blowing out behind, and the graceful way she held her skirts all proved it, and it warmed his heart just to watch her.

Women had entered little into his life. He had run away early from the place that had never been very much of a home, had been kicked and cuffed up the rough ladder of seafaring life, and at twenty-five held his second-mate's certificate; but, in spite of a first-rate record and plenty of push, was still drawing only A.B.'s pay.

When a young hooligan romping boisterously with his fellows in a side street cannoned against the girl in front, primitive instincts came into play all round.

Young Hooly, with no remotest thought of highway robbery in his mind a moment before, made a snatch at her bag the instant he saw it within his reach—primitive instinct undoubtedly, though the plea is as yet unrecognised in the police-courts.

The Mary Black threw out signals of distress, audible and visible.

Jack Rennie's long leg shot out in front of the pirate as though the snatching of the bag had pulled some hidden spring inside him—primitive instinct again.

It was no primitive instinct, however, but a well-known scientific force which caused young Hooly to measure his length in the mud. But primitive instinct it undoubtedly was which brought him up with a leap and the blood-curdlingly expressed intention of making an immediate and repulsively unpleasant end of some one by the employment of force, in which science would have small part.

Primitive instinct again, *plus* scientific force, which avoided the onslaught and planted Rennie's fist in the exact spot on young Hooly's jaw at the exact moment and at just the requisite angle to bring him to mud again.

And it was primitive instinct and the better part of valour which made Rennie snatch up the fallen bag, grab at the girl's hand, and bolt along the street with the howling pack in pursuit until they turned into St James's Road and were safe.

'I am so much obliged to you,' panted Mary.

'Don't mention it, miss. Tough lot that! Best left to themselves. Your bag, I think.'

'Oh, thank you! It was silly of me to go that way. I generally go by Southwark Park Road; but I thought I'd take a short-cut because of the weather.'

They naturally walked on. Mary's quick glances had told her that she was safe in his hands. Bright face; clear, fresh skin that comes of much weather; honest eyes, sparkling still from recent enjoyment of fist on jaw; square shoulders and well-knit figure in blue pilot-cloth, all told their own story. She had lived more or less in a seafaring atmo-

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sphere all her life, and her instincts did not mislead her.

'You are a sailor?' she said.

'Yes, miss. Lumber trade, Quebec to Hull. London this voyage, by good luck,' he added, with a laugh.

'My father is a sailor too. He's captain of a whaler, and sails from Peterhead.'

'Ah! Long spells out and no news between.'

'Yes, he was away two years once; but he gets good spells ashore too.'

He would have liked to go on walking by her side all evening. But they had turned into Red Bunting Street by this time, and she stopped at No. 24, and said, 'Thank you again, so much.' And he lifted his cap regretfully and she went in.

He strolled slowly along the street and back again, looking carefully at No. 24 as he passed it. To a casual observer there was little to distinguish it from its neighbours. Jack Rennie could have picked it out of all the houses in Bermondsey, Rotherhithe, and Deptford, if they had all been plucked up by their shallow roots, stripped of their numbers, and flung broadcast over Southwark Park.

He spent the remainder of that day and all the next wondering if he dared be in Southwark Park Road the following afternoon about five o'clock.

Finally he decided that he might, on the distinct understanding with himself that he kept out of sight.

He convoyed her at a distance that day, and the next, and the next, just, you understand, to see that young Hooly did not turn up again, and he had several very narrow escapes of being caught when she happened to glance round at shop-windows or passing incidents of the streets.

He wondered much if the trifling assistance he had had the luck to render her gave him the right to call at the house and ask if she was quite well.

After much consideration he consulted his landlady in Blossom Street, knowing no one else well enough to approach on so delicate a matter. He laid a hypothetical case before her, and must have boggled it badly, for the old lady looked at him sternly and said, 'If she comes here, young man, she'll go out quicker 'n she came.' And when Jack was at pains to explain matters somewhat further, in hopes of a more favourable verdict, she said emphatically, 'Don't you have nothing to do with her. Forward hussies! I knows 'em;' so Jack gave her up in despair, and also his idea of calling at No. 24 Red Bunting Street.

His feet constantly carried him that way, however, and fate was kind to him at last.

He was sauntering down the street one night when he saw a burly man coming towards him on anything but an even keel. His path led evidently through stormy waters. He lurched heavily and then stood swaying, in an anxious endeavour to find his bearings.

Before Rennie reached him he was making for port. He tried to enter one of the doors without reference to the three steps that led up to it. The steps rose and hit him, and he fell sprawling with a loud bump of the head against the door. The door opened quickly, and a girl's anxious face appeared. The anxious look turned to one of shocked surprise as she bent over the recumbent figure.

Jack knew her at a glance. She was even prettier without her hat than with it. He went forward quickly, just as she looked round for assistance, and at the same time in evident anxiety lest any one should discover her trouble.

'May I help you?' said Rennie. 'The old gentleman missed the step and bumped his head;' and the girl's face dyed red at sight of him.

He devoted himself, however, to the fallen one, got his arms under his shoulders, and raised him.

'Shall I bring him in?' he asked.

'If you please,' she said quietly; and presently Rennie managed to haul the bulky figure and sprawling legs up the steps and into the passage.

'He's cut his head a bit,' he said. 'If you'll get me a sponge and some water I'll bathe it;' and in ten minutes the prodigal was mopped up and dusted down, and sitting in his own armchair in the parlour, blinking unknowingly at his resuscitator.

He was a stout, well-made man, with black hair and flowing black beard. He was most correctly dressed in new blue pilot-cloth, and, but for the fact that he was decidedly not quite himself, would have looked quite an ornamental member of society. He was a typical sea-captain of the old school. Rennie judged him to be the girl's father, and as to his condition—well, he had seen too many captains to be in the least surprised at it.

He had hardly spoken to the girl beyond a necessary word now and then.

'Now,' he said, 'he'll be all right soon.'

'I'm ashamed to have given you so much trouble.'

'No trouble at all, miss. Only too glad to be of service to you. Your father?'

'Yes,' she said reluctantly. 'It's not often he's this way.'

'Oh, that's nothing. My last captain but one was dr—er—that way mostly all the time.'

'It's terrible,' said the girl.

'I don't hold with it myself,' he said with a nod, 'but it's a way some of 'em have.'

'Mary!' said the object of their solicitude, gripping the arms of his chair and leaning heavily forward and glowering at them, 'who'sh 'at?'

'It's the gentleman who helped you up the steps, father,' she said constrainedly. 'And he helped me the other night too.'

'You tumble up shteps too?' gurgled the captain, with a wheeze. 'Worsh shteps ever shaw.'

'No,' she began, 'it was'——

But the captain was not interested in that. He insisted on explaining his own condition, from which, and the girl's discomfort, Rennie supposed that it really was not very customary with him.

'Vi'lent pains inshide,' said the captain, with a nod. 'Med'sh'n went t' my head.' Then he nodded so sapiently that he fell asleep.

'He'll be all right when he wakes,' said Rennie. 'Would you—would you like me to stop and help you with him?'

'No, thank you. I don't think it will be necessary. He's not often like this. He'll be very sorry when he comes round.'

'They are sometimes,' said Rennie, with a nod.

It was so pleasant talking to her that he did not want to go. The chance might never come again.

He twiddled his cap, got up, still stood hesitating, and at last bolted out his wish:

'May I come and ask how he is to-morrow?'

She looked very straight at him for a minute, with a touch of colour in her cheeks, and then almost smiled as she said, 'If he's forgotten all about it, perhaps he won't like to be reminded.'

'I'll risk it,' said Jack, and wished her good-night, and went.

That was the beginning of it, and he promptly turned up next night. But Captain Sober who confronted him was a very different sort of man from Captain Half-Seas-Over of the night before.

'I came to see how you were, sir,' said Jack, with a touch of confusion at the searching glances that greeted him.

'I'm all right, sir. What d'you suppose is the matter with me, and what business is it of yours how I am?'

'It was my business—I mean my good fortune—to help you when you fell last night, sir, and I thought'——

'Just as well not to think too much sometimes, young man. What's your standing?'

'Second-mate's certificate.'

'Common as dirt. Acting as?'

'I'm expecting the appointment any voyage.'

The captain's nod was compounded of understanding and depreciation. 'They all are. Some of 'em wait a long time. What trade?' he asked.

'Lumber. Quebec to Hull.'

And the captain nodded damnification again.

'I've thought sometimes of having a shot at the whaling business,' said Rennie.

'Shouldn't if I were you,' said the captain. 'Lumber's more your line,' in a tone which, if he had been a younger man and devoid of other considerations, would have compelled Jack forthwith to carry the matter beyond the plane of mere verbal argument.

'What's your ship?' asked the captain, enjoying his annoyance.

'Barque *Iroquois*, MacStingo master, Canada Dock this trip.'

When d'you sail?'

'Day after to-morrow.'

And the captain nodded contentedly. He extended no invitation to him to stop. But Mary was already laying the tea-things, and had set the table for three, and Jack was not an absolute fool, so he sat tight.

He enjoyed his visit in spite of the captain's coolness: chatted with Mary of things he had seen in Canada and elsewhere, talked glowingly of the St Lawrence, and dutifully referred now and again to the captain, but got nothing but grunts for his pains. And Mary listened and chatted also, and he learned incidentally that she was teacher in a Board school, a great reader of books, and a great lover of the sea though she had never been much afloat; that it was six years since her mother died; and that she found things lonely at times when her father was away.

The captain sat and smoked and played wet blanket till the time came for Jack to go, and then he clapped on his hat and went down the street with him, to Mary's discomposure and Jack's discomfiture.

Mary washed up and put away the tea-things with a little red spot on each cheek, and Jack curbed himself to a civil tongue whatever the old boy might say.

What the captain said was brief and to the point.

'Now, see here, young man. Take my advice and sheer off. I understand sailor-men. Come back when you're first-mate and maybe I'll talk to you and let you talk to my girl. Till then I don't want to set eyes on you again.'

Jack restrained himself, said 'Good-bye, sir,' very civilly, and sheered off then and there.

Five o'clock next day found him in Southwark Park Road, and he convoyed his prize safely to the corner of Red Bunting Street. He would have liked to go in and spend his last evening at No. 24, but knew it would not do. So they shook hands at the corner, and Mary wished him 'good-bye and pleasant voyage' in a way that showed she really meant it.

The barque *Iroquois*, MacStingo master, cleared from London next day with a scrappy cargo and orders to put into Hull to fill up. At Hull they got some further scraps, and were kept there ten days trying to pick up more. They sailed at last very light, and looked for a rough passage in consequence.

They got it even worse than they expected. They were buffeted by adverse winds, driven out of their course, and came to final grief somewhere about longitude 30 west and latitude 55 north, where they had no earthly or maritime right whatever to be. The sea was mountainous, the nearest land hundreds of miles away, and they launched their boats with desperately small hope of ever reaching it.

Jack Rennie had been struck by a falling spar, and in the confusion of a hurried embarkation he was overlooked. When he came to himself the ship

was taking her last heavy rolls. He had just sense enough left in him to twist the flying braces of the broken main-yard round his body when the end came and he was left floating on his spar.

When next he came-to he was in a bunk on a ship, which struck him as a decided change for the better; but then he did not know where he was. His broken head still hummed dizzily, and it was some days before he could get about, and then but limply.

He had asked the name of the ship each time he woke up, and forgot it before he woke again. When he woke up finally his nose told him that he was on a whaler. When he climbed up on deck the first person he confronted was Mary's father, Captain Black.

At first glance he had no doubt about it. At the second he was not so sure. At the third he became doubtful.

The same stout, burly figure, the same scowl which the black face had worn that last night in Red Bunting Street. But—well, it might be the wind and the salt, but there was something wrong in the details. And then he saw what it was. This man's hair and beard were grizzling toward white, whereas Captain Black was as black as his name. He could not be certain, but he ventured a doubtful 'Captain Black?'

'Blankety — blank — blank — blank — blank!' roared the captain, with a real Black scowl, while an old salt behind him slapped his leg in rapturous but inexplicable appreciation.

'Beg pardon,' said Jack. 'I was under the impression we had met before, sir.'

'You'll be under hatches with the darbies on, my man, if I have any more of your blankety—blank impudence. We have not met before, or I should remember your blankety—blank—blank figurehead. What's your blankety—blank name, and where in blank do you hail from?'

Rennie supplied the desired information, and in answer to further questions described the wreck of the *Iroquois*.

'Well,' growled the captain when he had done, 'we'll have to keep you, I suppose, unless we chuck you overboard again.' He looked sourly at him as though half-inclined to do it, and then said, 'Get away forrard. Join the second-mate's watch, and just see you earn your salt.'

When Jack got away forrard he found the grizzled old dog who had so pantomimically expressed his delight at his greeting of the captain, and drew from him, between reminiscent chuckles, his reasons for it.

'Why, blam ye, lad,' said the old one, 'ye gev 'im, slick off, the name we calls 'im by behind 's back. Black we call 'im, an' black 'e is, as black as they mek 'em; but 'is name's White, an' 'e knows t'other fits 'im a right sight best.'

'Captain White, is he? And what did you say was the name of the ship?'

'*Lively Sally*, whaler, out o' Peterhead'—which statement set young Rennie to much puzzled pondering. For *Lively Sally* was certainly, unless he was very much mistaken, one of the names Mary Black had mentioned in connection with her father's ships; but whether it was his present ship or a former one he could not be sure, and he could not make head or tail of it.

After much hard thinking he came to the conclusion that he must have got things mixed. Mary had named several ships which her father had commanded from time to time. It was quite possible this had been one of them and was now under another master.

And every day the captain grew less and less like the man he had taken him for. Whether it was the unusually bad weather they were encountering, or whether the captain was aging rapidly under mental stress of some kind, he could not tell. But certainly his hair and beard whitened more with every day that passed. It was somewhat appalling to see him turning into a white-haired, white-bearded old man before one's very eyes.

At last Jack put it to them in the fo'c's'le one night, for he began to fear that, unless the others noticed it too, there must be something wrong with his own eyes.

'Say, what's wrong with the old man?' he asked. 'Don't any of you fellows notice how he's wilting away? He's aged ten years since I came aboard, or else my eyes are going dicky.'

A roar of laughter greeted him, and he gazed round at them all in surprise.

'Ye don't know our old man yet,' said old Timbs, who had explained matters to him before. 'It's same every v'yage. 'E comes aboard each time as black outside as 'e is inside, an' gradual 'e goes white outside, an' whiter 'e gits outside blacker 'e gits inside. 'E's what I calls a paradog. You wait till this flurry blows itself out, my son, an' you'll see. When 'e's ashore 'e puts somethen on 'is 'air outside, I guess, an' when 'e's afloat 'e puts somethen inside 'im, an' I'm thinkin' neither o' 'em's up to no good.'

'Was that 'is wife saw 'im off?' asked one of the new hands.

'Ay, it was; an' 'is daughter too, an' a nice-looking gell she is.'

'How old is she?' asked Rennie, following out his own train of thought.

''Bout fourteen or fifteen, long brown 'air, an' big blue eyes like 'er mother.'

'That's w'y 'e blacks 'is 'air, then,' said the first speaker, 'fear 'e'd be taken for their grandpa.'

Jack puzzled over the matter to no purpose, and at last he gave it up, and said to himself that the crack on his head when the *Iroquois* went down had addled his wits when he first came aboard, and that he was mistaken; for by this time Captain White was about as unlike Captain Black of Red Bunting Street as he well could be, and Jack was surprised at his ever having mistaken the one for the other.

THE GREAT LADIES OF POLITICS.

By Henry Leach.

IF at some future period a person holding the rare qualification that would be necessary for the task were to write the inner and more secret history of the great political movements of the last two or three decades and of the present time, it is certain that some of the most interesting and, to the multitude, surprising chapters would be those which would contain the thousand revelations of the manner in which the political strings had been pulled and twisted by a handful of eminent ladies, who, either by the force of their own inclinations or by reason of the eminent political status which they had acquired by their marriage, exerted an influence and practised what might be best called a stateswomanship for which the utmost respect was entertained in the party councils of Westminster. The great lady of politics of to-day, as distinguished from her predecessors of a more flamboyant period, rarely obtrudes herself beyond her own circle and her own sphere of influence, or that which she desires to be such a sphere; and thus it happens that the puzzled newspaper reader, who worries over various possible solutions to party mysteries and intrigues, takes into his calculations only the men-leaders of parties and has no cognisance of the feminine wire-pullers of the drawing-room. Yet without doubt they are at times of sufficient power to alter the constitution of Cabinets.

This is not the golden era of the great political lady. If any is worthy of such a description it is surely that in which Georgiana, the beautiful and gifted wife of the fifth Duke of Devonshire, reigned as the Queen of Politics for a number of years, dating almost from the time of her marriage, which took place when she was but seventeen years of age. Her enormous influence was such that it has been often said that she could only properly be compared with the celebrated Duchesse de Longueville. She allied herself according to the traditions of the Devonshires with the Whig interests which they had so much at heart, and her enthusiasm was raised in the most strenuous times to such a pitch that during the Westminster election of 1784 she actually canvassed for Fox through all the most squalid parts of Long Acre, exchanging kisses for promises of votes. Walpole in a frenzy of ecstasy wrote of her when she was only eighteen years of age and but at the beginning of her political reputation, that 'her youth, figure, flowing good nature, sense, lively modesty and modest familiarity make her a phenomenon;' and when, ten years later, he was led to make some further observations upon her triumphs, he remarked that she still retained her social supremacy—'a long reign in so unstable a kingdom.' Her passion for political intrigue might never have been so fully developed as it was if it had not been for the spirit of rivalry which possessed her. The Duchess of Gordon—the same who recruited a regiment by kissing the enlisters—was her rival in everything, and it was her dashing example which constantly excited her young Grace of Devonshire to new feats of brilliance. The Duchess of Gordon's political *salon* was the centre of the Tory party of those days, and in her house Pitt was constantly in the habit of giving his Ministerial dinners.

But, though there are not such dazzling triumphs to be achieved in these days by the lady party leader, it may well be that the influence of those members of the sex whose presence pervades the Ministerial and ex-Ministerial circles of the present is in the aggregate even greater than it was in the era of Georgiana. This digression concerning the latter has its excuse in the fact that one of the Duchesses of Devonshire who followed her—she who reigns at Devonshire House to-day—is by the common consent of sapient politicians the most formidable feminine weapon with which any party can arm itself in these times, and is so formidable indeed that, through the influence she exerts, as one observer once declared, she is probably worth to her side at least as much as any two minor statesmen of whom it is possessed. The Duchess, *née* the Countess Louise von Alten, is of Hanoverian birth, and to this day there is the lerst trace of native accent in her speech; and though in all outward respects she is thoroughly English, she shows her sympathy with the Fatherland in divers ways occasionally, such as by a patronage of the German theatre whenever it is revived in London. But as Duchess of Manchester she became passionately enamoured of politics, and those who may imagine that now she wields her authority because she is the wife of one of the foremost party leaders should know that she was described as the greatest force outside the Cabinet long before he had entered into her calculations in the least degree. Rising young statesmen of both parties would in those days gather round her, pour the secrets of their political hopes and fears into her ears, and solicit her help and advice—perhaps her good word with this or that great chieftain whom she had the reputation of influencing just as she pleased within reason. Within the hour of the departure of one of them a rival might sometimes have been discovered wending his way to the court of this lady genius. She listened sympathetically to each, and gave advice which as far as possible was not affected by the facts which in this way had come to her knowledge from the other side. Every secret was at all times safe with her, and so it came to pass that, when harassed with the trend of things at Westminster, young statesmen and others who were not quite so young fell into the habit of confessing at this shrine their doubts and

difficulties, and receiving such consolation as made them feel better.

Almost from the first the Marquis of Hartington was one of the most devoted of these seekers after the light that was afforded by the Duchess. At that time, of course, he was a Liberal; but Disraeli was an interested spectator of these little goings-on. The Duchess's hold over the Marquis increased, and everybody knew that her influence made for Toryism. 'Depend upon it,' said Disraeli, 'she will turn him round.' Very likely it was but the merest coincidence, but it must now be pointed out in this connection that at the first great crisis that occurred in the Liberal ranks after the Duchess had completely secured the Marquis under her sway, he went over to the other side of the House of Commons. Lord Hartington's devotion increased, and the Duke of Manchester had been departed only for such a brief period as society prescribed as a minimum when the political sympathy existing between the two was carried a point farther at the matrimonial altar.

This was in 1892, and from that time until the recent outbreak of the fiscal war in politics the Duchess naturally assumed the position of leading hostess in relation to that party which all the time since then has been identified with the government of the country. In the entertaining of the party she has been considerably assisted by the only other lady who approaches her in importance as a political hostess—Lady Lansdowne, that is—and who was her natural successor as chief Ministerial hostess; but she does not pretend to conduct a political *salon* in quite the same thorough fashion as it is conducted at Devonshire House. In the exciting political times which obtain at present, when once more there is a recasting of parties, the influence of Devonshire House is a factor not to be overlooked, and has not been. The Duke has declared for a view that separates him from a large section of those allies with whom he joined when the great Home Rule schism came about, and there are those who declare with some significance that this was the course which most pleased the Duchess, who, it is said, cherishes no feeling of friendship for at least one prominent personage in the Protection group.

If the *salon* over which Lady Lansdowne reigns is, from the point of view we have been taking, to be regarded as second in importance to the one in Piccadilly, there is no doubt but that in some other respects it is pre-eminent. The Duchess of Devonshire and her ladyship are not at all rivals, because their political idiosyncrasies are altogether different. The one is an argumentative and strenuous politician who wants to discuss 'movements' and influence them; the other is to be regarded more as the apotheosis of social brilliance in the high Ministerial world. Lansdowne House yields to none in its importance as a social centre of London, and it has a reputation for such extreme exclusiveness as inspires awe in the bosom of even the 'nobility and gentry' who bask in the warmest sunshine of Mayfair every year from May until August. But though it is one of the great Conservative headquarters, its chatelaine has conspicuously attempted to rise superior to mere party considerations, and has from time to time introduced some foreign elements to those receptions of members of the Government and their supporters, which may have weakened somewhat the strong flavour of Conservatism, but which have certainly increased their brilliance and attractiveness. It goes without saying that her ladyship has her heart and soul in her husband's career, and her own distinction and capabilities as a hostess were not regarded as the least of Lord Lansdowne's qualifications for the high post he now occupies as the chief of the Foreign Office.

There are two other great political ladies who must be mentioned now, although in characteristics and in political actions they wholly differ from the stars whom we have been discussing. They stand in a class by themselves, they differ materially from each other, and though their fame is less, they are great in a very full sense of the word. The two are Miss Balfour and Mrs Chamberlain, not only the sister and the wife respectively of the statesmen whose names they bear, but each the political *fidus Achates* of the man in whose progress and success she is entirely concerned, accepting his political creed for herself without much thought as to whether it is precisely the one she would have chosen if she had been a free agent and had developed any enthusiasm for the playing of the great political game. They act a simple, unobtrusive, womanly part, and yet they are great ladies of politics.

For Mr Balfour, at any rate, life under present conditions would be almost unbearable if it were not for the kindly ministrations of his sister, who is constant in her endeavour to smooth his path and remove all the little troublesome obstructions which would otherwise be a source of nerve-destroying worry to one of the Prime Minister's temperament. There are those intimates of his who say that his chief reason for so long abiding in the bachelor state is his grave doubt, most seriously expressed, as to whether a wife could in any adequate measure fulfil those functions of usefulness in his life which his sister does so admirably, and by which she has earned his deepest gratitude. Not only does she manage his household for him, but in a hundred other ways she relieves him of those responsibilities which would tend to distract a man of his temperament from political study as they came before him. Thus she takes entire charge of his stables and sees to it that his carriages are all as he would have them. Not only that, but a little while ago she took it upon herself to order a new brougham specially fitted up in such a manner as to be of great convenience to him. Many a time has she bought him horses, and she will open an animal's mouth and with a quick glance at the teeth discover whether the dealer is telling the truth as to age with all the expert assurance of that gentleman himself. And whenever she goes out driving her-

self she takes the second-best horse and carriage, leaving the superior turn-out for the Prime Minister. If 10 Downing Street wants a coat of paint, or if some additional furniture is needed, it is all done without consultation with the Ministerial tenant.

These are simple trifles no doubt, but they aggregate to much in the life of an unmarried statesman of Mr Balfour's importance. In the mornings she will glance through the papers and cut out what she thinks may escape his attention but which he ought to see; at nights, if there is a good debate expected, she will steal away to the ladies' gallery in the House, and from behind the grille will watch for the rising of the brother the assistance of whom she has made her mission in life. To look at her, frail in form and pale in feature, one would not imagine that she had all this energy and determination even for a cause which she has so much at heart; but her face is always bright, and her eyes are never without a sparkle, so that those who attend the Ministerial parties which Mr Balfour gives—is obliged to give—in Downing Street every season, and make her acquaintance in the capacity of hostess, are struck by her very pronounced individuality and her eagerness in all matters which will tend to the party good—which means, as she views it, to the good of her brother.

Mrs Chamberlain is a woman of altogether different mould, and perhaps she would have no claim to be regarded as one of the great ladies of politics if her distinguished husband did not virtually secure the title for her when he spoke of her devotion to his cause and interests. She has no aspirations in the way of a *salon;* the life that is led both at Highbury and Prince's Gardens is of the quietest possible description. But she performs the same enthusiastic service for her husband that Miss Balfour does for her brother, accompanies him on his campaigns, and makes the condition of life as easy and pleasant as she can. She takes the greatest interest in every move he makes, and could give a more intelligible dissertation on the points of her husband's policy than many of the loud-mouthed supporters of it. The tact and charm of the American lady are conspicuous in her. As everybody knows, she was a Miss Endicott, and the story of their meeting and engagement is to the effect that when Mr Chamberlain was in the United States in 1888 he called on a lady friend who happened that day to be giving, unknown to him, a party for girls only. Mr Chamberlain apologised for his intrusion, but his friend insisted on his entering and being the only man present. He did so, and one of his next neighbours at table, whom he then met for the first time in his life, was the lady who is now Mrs Chamberlain.

One should speak here of the possibility that appears to be looming of the permanent establishment of another such devoted political combination of brother and sister as that which has been noted in the case of the Balfours. Its members are Lord Hugh Cecil and Lady Gwendolen Cecil, the only unmarried members of the family of the late Lord Salisbury. Lady Gwendolen, who was the mainstay of her father's household after the death of her mother, is in all respects a keen and studious politician, and one of the most enthusiastic Primrose Leaguers to be discovered anywhere. On many occasions she has written pamphlets for circulation by that organisation which have been among the most effective which it has issued. With her brother Lord Hugh Cecil, a very independent kind of young Conservative, she is in the most complete sympathy. He is nine years younger than she is, and in these days when the old circle at Hatfield has been largely broken up, he finds a comradeship in her which is very welcome.

Her greatest friend is another lady of high political reputation who may very likely in the not distant future achieve the importance of being one of those highly formidable forces which were indicated at the outset. Already she, the new Lady Salisbury, is a magnet of great attraction, and before she attained her present titular and social dignity she had, as Lady Cranborne, enjoyed the advantage of a considerable experience of Ministerial entertaining, and the most effective manner of doing it for the party good. This experience she obtained in acting as hostess for her late father-in-law at the great official receptions which he gave. A highly accomplished lady of considerable literary attainments, she shines as a brilliant political conversationalist and will adorn a *salon* of the future. One of her favourite diversions is a night in the ladies' gallery in the company of Lady Gwendolen Cecil. Certainly if blood and birth can in any way conduce to the making of a great lady of politics their charms must assuredly work in this case, since she is not only the great-granddaughter of Lady Palmerston, but the great-great-granddaughter of Lord Melbourne as well; and it was to some extent for this reason that her marriage to Lord Cranborne gave such intense pleasure to Lord Salisbury, who seemed to see in the union a happy linking of the past, the present, and the future of the political history of the country.

If such a large proportion of our space has been given to the discussion of the ladies whose graces and persuasions are exclusively exercised in the interests of one party, it does not necessarily imply that the other side is deficient in political Amazons; but it is certainly one of the chief regrets of the Liberals that the times have not been propitious during the last two decades for the development of the species. Only power, after all, can properly serve the lady who would shine in politics. She is very human; and when for years in succession she can only gather the leaders of sections about her, and never a Minister, who can blame her if she thinks that there is little charm in this sport, and that from the point of view of mere excitement it cannot be compared with bridge? So there is no Liberal *salon*, and the absence of it reacts upon the interests of the party to an extent that those who have its

interests at heart keenly deplore. One of the foremost of its official leaders said to me in conversation not long ago that if it had a Devonshire House at its disposal the advantage would be incalculable; that whilst there was no such *salon* the brilliant young men must sometimes yield to the social influences that were exerted wholly on the other side. When power comes again to the Liberals a *salon* may rise, and certainly there is no doubt about the existence of most valuable material for the inception of not one but several which, upon their establishment, would surely be characterised by a freshness and eagerness which would quickly render them a major force.

The names of several great Liberal ladies, all in their early youth, are recalled. Take, now, Mrs Asquith, who in the case of a considerable Liberal revival would assuredly be called upon to take upon herself a large share in the party entertaining. As we all know, she is Margaret, the brilliant daughter of Sir Charles Tennant, and her interest in party politics has always been keen. Moreover, she is abundantly popular with all sections. Lord Rosebery is one of her sincerest admirers, and her future *salon* will certainly be one of the headquarters of Roseberydom if the latter continues to retain its individuality in the party.

But in this connection the circumstances attending the position of Lady Crewe, Lord Rosebery's own daughter, have to be taken into consideration, and many of the shrewdest judges and wisest counsellors of the party hold that everything points to her being the chief Liberal hostess of the future. The only doubtful point is as to whether her political zest is sufficient; but a young lady of twenty-three has much time before her in which to develop in this respect. With his wealth, his social status, and his talents, Lord Crewe himself may yet be a considerable factor in Liberal government, and in that event the ascendency of her ladyship and the establishment of a *salon* at Crewe House in Curzon Street of an unusually brilliant order would be a foregone conclusion.

A third lady who will assuredly be one of the brightest stars of the Liberal firmament when the clouds roll away and it appears in full view again is Mrs Herbert Gladstone, the young wife of the chief Whip of the party, who is credited with a hot enthusiasm for politics which only needs an opportunity in order to create distinction of the first order. Her husband's universal popularity and her own personal charm will make a combination that will not be without a highly salutary effect upon the young bloods of the party when they forgather in the drawing-room. A fact which is of interest in relation to this matter is that Mrs Gladstone, being the daughter of Sir Richard Paget, was born and bred in a west-country school which is to be accounted as among the Toriest of the Tory; and how, indeed, this energetic young scion of Liberalism of the most pronounced description ever worked his way to the degree of intimacy with it which he ultimately achieved is a mystery to the friends of both, just as it is to be regarded as a token of his skill in diplomacy and a happy omen for the future.

Many ladies remain on whose behalf there will be partisans to claim high political distinction; but from among them it is only necessary for present purposes to select one who upon every count has an indubitable right of admission to the list. This is the Countess of Warwick, who would have been given earlier mention but that she is something of a political enigma. One hardly knows now whether to say that she is for Liberalism or not. But she is surely not against it, despite the fact that her husband was once a Conservative member of Parliament. If it had so happened that he had been a keen politician of the Liberal persuasion, there is little doubt as to the rôle that the Countess in these days would play. Politics, and not merely academic politics that serve for dinner-table conversation and social machinations, but those deeper, tenser politics which have as their single aim the betterment of the nation and the uplifting of its more wretched classes, are and have always been to her the chief study of her life, and not a day passes but she does something to add to her political equipment.

Here, indeed, is one who might be a great lady of politics; but, like another political enigma of the opposite sex, she ploughs a more or less lonely furrow. At the recent by-election in the Warwick and Leamington constituency, when Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, wife of the newly-made Colonial Secretary, was speaking from the platform on behalf of her sick husband, she was strenuously besought by both candidates to give her support to them. But she declined both invitations; whilst, on the other hand, she definitely promised to appear in support of the Labour candidate in East Birmingham and Wolverhampton. Undoubtedly her sympathies are with the Labour party—an attitude as interesting as it is creditable to the wife of a peer whose social distinction is of the first order. Education is her chief political interest.

When there is a levelling of parties, as there may be soon, there will be a call for the Liberal *salon*, and these ladies, or some of them, will answer it.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

By WILLIAM LE QUEUX.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE STRANGER IN BLACK.

'FORBIDDEN!' I cried, taking her proffered hand and keeping possession of it. 'Why is our friendship forbidden? I thought you had accepted my friendship! I do not know the truth about yourself—nor do I wish to know. I only know that I desire to serve you in every way a man is capable. I ask you to allow me to do this and something more—to love you.'

'Ah, no!' she said, withdrawing her hand. 'It is not just that I should allow you to thus go headlong into ruin. My duty is to warn you of the dire consequences of this reckless devotion to myself,' she added, with that sweet touch of her woman's nature that had all along held me charmed. 'Hear me, Mr Kennedy, I beseech of you. Pause and reflect upon the consequences. You say you are my friend. That may be so; but when I tell you in reply that no friendship is permissible between us, will it not be best if we part at once, even if in sorrow?'

'Part from you!' I cried. 'I cannot—indeed I cannot! My life has been a blank one, an existence for self alone, until I met you. It was destiny. I travelled across Europe at express speed, and encountered you within the first hour of my return to London—not by mere chance surely, but because I am destined to serve you.'

A man's arguments in such circumstances are never very logical. What other words I uttered I do not recollect. I only know that her determination to tell me nothing about herself rendered her the more attractive.

But to all my persuasions, my pleadings, and my utterances she was still the same woman of honour, fearful lest I should come to harm through association with her, fearful lest the unknown fate she dreaded should fall upon us both at the hour of our supreme happiness.

The atmosphere of tragedy that surrounded her was puzzling, for, try how I would, I could not penetrate it. Why was she concealed in that house of mystery, and what connection could she have with that secret sign in the window?

I recollected the exclamation that had escaped her lips on that wet night when I first saw her.

At one moment I felt that I was acting foolishly in thus trying to persuade her into accepting me as her friend, and at others the fact that in social standing I was far beneath her, the daughter of a noble house, impressed itself upon me.

Her connection with Walter Wyman was, in itself, mysterious. I recollected both his words and hers. He was her enemy. In what manner she would not tell me. But had not his observations and warnings already told me that?

For half-an-hour we walked onward, heedless of where our footsteps led us. She told me of her recent travels in the East with her father, of their delightful time in the cold weather in India, and afterwards in Sydney and Melbourne.

'My father has been a wanderer ever since my poor mother's death,' she explained with a touch of sadness. 'He will never remain in England long, because life here always brings back recollections of her. They were a very devoted pair,' she added.

'And so you have accompanied him?'

'Yes, ever since I left the convent-school in France. My journeys already have included two trips round the world and a yachting voyage to Spitzbergen.'

'Well,' I laughed, 'I thought I had some claim to be a traveller; but you entirely eclipse me.'

'Ah! but I am tired of it—terribly tired, I can assure you.'

I told her how I, too, had suffered from that nostalgia that comes sooner or later to most persons who live abroad, that curious indefinite malady of the heart which causes one to long for home and friends, and to waste in the flesh if the desire is ungratified. You who have lived abroad have experienced it. But if you have not been an exile in a foreign land you can never know it.

I told her how I had lived for years beside that brilliant tideless sea until I had become sun-sick and tired of blue skies, whereupon she sighed and said:

'Italy!—ah, yes! I know Italy. I have, alas! cause to remember my visit there.'

'Is the recollection of it so bitter?' I inquired, quickly on the alert.

'Yes,' she answered in a hard voice. 'It is years ago now; but I recollect every one of those incidents as vividly as though they only happened yesterday. Milan, Florence, Perugia, Rome—all are cities whose very names are now hateful to me. Yet I suppose the past should be of the past;' and she sighed again, her eyes fixed upon the pavement.

What could I say? What question could I put to her?

Could it be that her journey to Italy had had any connection with the strange conspiracy that seemed to be in progress, or was it possible that her travels in the South had been fraught with some youthful love episode of a tragic nature?

Her character, sweet and modest, was yet so utterly complex that I could not understand it. I was, therefore, uncertain of the security of my own position, and thus feared to explain to her that The

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Closed Book stolen from Harpur Street was in my hands, lest it might be against the interests of the investigations I had undertaken.

She made no mention of the old hunchback from Leghorn, who had no doubt visited at Harpur Street, perhaps even made the house his head-quarters. Yet I felt sure that she was acquainted with Graniani, just as she knew Selby. The bear-cub, too, was a mystery unfathomable.

Again and again I reverted to my affection for her, begging and imploring her to view my suit with favour, or if not, to at least allow me to stand her friend. But she was obdurate, although my words caused her much genuine emotion.

I saw that, although driven to desperation by reason of some unspeakable secret, she was nevertheless a woman of honour. If I sought to assist her I should place myself in deadly peril of my life, she declared. This she would not allow me to do. Why? Was it because at heart she was really my friend?

I wonder if there are others who have experienced a similar feeling—a desire to commence life afresh guided by a good woman? If they have, they will know the feelings which were mine. I was no mawkish youth, callow in his first affection and carrying his heart upon his sleeve. On the contrary, I had known love, I had enjoyed my allotted share of it, and just as prosperity had come to me the great sorrow of my life had come also to me, and I had gone abroad to bury myself in an Italian village.

Dusk darkened into night, and the street-lamps commenced to glimmer as we strolled on and on westward, through that maze of highly respectable streets and squares which constitute Bayswater, until we suddenly found ourselves in the boarding-house region of Powis Square. Then, at her suggestion, we turned and retraced our steps to the Edgware Road, proceeding towards the Park. The cloud that had earlier fallen upon her seemed now removed, and she grew brighter.

Her father, she told me, had returned to London, and was at home; but she expected they would both leave again to-morrow for the North.

'To Scotland?' I suggested with some anxiety.

'Oh, I really don't know,' was her reply. 'My father is most erratic in his movements. I only know that he goes to the North, and that I go with him.'

'But tell me,' I asked very earnestly, 'has your father ever mentioned his intention of going to Galloway?'

She looked up at me in some surprise.

'Yes, he did so the other day, while we were at Saxlingham,' she responded. 'But why do you wish to know?'

'Because I have a reason—a very strong one,' I answered. 'He goes with friends, doesn't he?'

'With me—I know of no one else who is going. We may be going to Castle-Douglas; but of course I am quite in the dark. Very often I have set out from Charing Cross with him and have not known our destination until we have been in Paris or Brussels. Again, we have, on several occasions, been living quietly at home in Grosvenor Street when all our friends have believed us to be on the other side of the equator. It is quite exciting, I assure you, to live in secret at home, see nobody, and only go out at night, and then always in fear of being recognised,' she added.

'But why does your father do these things? He surely has some motive?'

I recollected that the town of Castle-Douglas was near to the Castle of Threave.

She gave her well-formed shoulders a shrug, and her countenance was overspread by a blank look of ignorance which I was compelled to admit was feigned.

Mystery crowded on mystery. I could make nothing out of it all. Put yourself for a moment in my place, and ask yourself whether you could solve the extraordinary problem surrounding this popular peer and his daughter who, while appearing frequently at the most exclusive functions in London, were sometimes living in absolute secrecy in their own house, or wandering over the face of the world without apparent motive, yet evidently with some fixed but secret object.

The more I reflected the more utterly mystified I became.

'It is impossible—quite impossible!' she said when, at the Park Lane corner of Grosvenor Street, I halted to take leave of her. 'We must not meet again. I hope, Mr Kennedy, you will think no more of me,' she added; 'because it pains me quite as much as it does you. As I have already told you, I would explain the truth if I were allowed—but I cannot.'

I saw that her eyelids trembled slightly, and holding her hand in farewell, I pressed it with a deep meaning which she understood, and to which she responded.

'But we are friends, Lady Judith; we are friends, are we not?'

In response she drew a long sigh and shook her head, saying, 'Mr Kennedy, I know you are my friend, and one day perhaps I shall require to put your friendship to the test. Until then let us remain apart, because it will be best so. You know the fears I have—the fear that evil may befall you.'

'I am ready to serve you at any moment,' I answered.

She withdrew her hand, sighing again, and, filled with emotion by my final declaration, hurried away through the hot, oppressive night.

For a moment, full of vague regret, I watched her departure, then turned on my heel and strolled down Park Lane into Piccadilly on my return to Dover Street, my mind full of that sweet-faced woman.

Those strange words of hers rang in my ears. At what did she hint? Tragedy, deep and mysterious, was underlying it all, I was confident, yet as a man

of action I felt impelled towards that other spot mentioned in The Closed Book—the grim Castle of Threave, that scene of foul deeds, that through the Middle Ages was the home of the Black Douglas. That her father intended to go there was evident, and it therefore behoved us to lose no time in going north and making preliminary investigations, although no accurate measurements could be taken until the 17th of September at half-past three in the afternoon.

The advisability of going north without delay filled my mind until I had become oblivious to all about me, and indeed I was walking quite unconscious of the hurrying traffic in Piccadilly until I felt a slight touch on the arm and heard a woman's low voice exclaim in Italian, 'Pardon, Signor Kennedy, but I believe we have met before?'

I started and turned quickly aside to recognise in the speaker the very last person whom I expected to meet in that busy London thoroughfare—the dark-eyed, well-dressed woman whom I had encountered in the prior's study at Florence—the woman in black who had made confession to Father Bernardo.

MY FRIEND MONSIEUR LE CURÉ.

IT is curious how insignificant a part the parish priest plays in French fiction. One novel ofttimes proves the germ of another, and Balzac's little masterpiece, *Le Curé de Tours*, as we now know, suggested what is not only the masterpiece of another writer but the only great French romance having a priest for hero. *L'Abbé Tigrane*, by the late Ferdinand Fabre, belongs to a series of powerful ecclesiastical studies which stand absolutely alone. All readers who wish to realise clerical life in France from the topmost rung to the bottom of the ladder must acquaint themselves with this not too numerous collection.

Such general neglect is all the more difficult to understand, since the priest constitutes an integral portion of family life in France; the confessor is indeed in some sort a member of the household. Be his part exalted or lowly, whether he occupies a lofty position alike in the Church and in the world, or in a remote village is counted rich on forty pounds a year, the relation between priest and parishioner is the same, one of constant intercourse and closest intimacy, with, of course, exceptions. Here and there are Socialist and anti-clerical circles from which any representative of sacerdotalism is excluded. These, however, are uncommon cases.

On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that there is no analogy whatever between the status of a French curé and a clergyman of the Church of England.

Strictly speaking, there is no State Church in France. The French Government acknowledges and subsidises in equal proportion four religions —namely, the Roman Catholic, the Protestant, the Jewish, and in Algeria the Mohammedan; though it must be remembered that there are about thirty Catholics to one Protestant, and there are only about fifty synagogues in all France. The Protestant pastor, indeed, receives higher pay than the Catholic priest; being the father of a family, he is understood to want a better income. Whenever a Protestant temple, Jewish synagogue, or in Algeria a new mosque is built the State makes a grant precisely as in the case of a Catholic church.

No peasant-born, illiterate, boorish wearer of the *soutane* was my friend Monsieur le Curé. Formerly professor at a seminary, learned, genial, versed in the usages of society, how came such a man to be planted in an out-of-the-way commune of eastern France, numbering a few hundred souls only, and these, with the exception of the *Juge de Paix*, all belonging to the peasant class?

The mystery was afterwards cleared up. The highly cultivated and influential residents of the château, situated at some distance from the village, were on good terms with the bishop of the diocese. As it was their custom to spend five months of the year in the country, they depended somewhat upon the curé for society, and Monseigneur had obligingly made an exchange. A somewhat heavy, uneducated priest was sent elsewhere, and hither came Monsieur le Curé in his place. Agreeable intercourse, unlimited hospitality, and sympathetic parochial cooperation during five months of the year doubtless went far to compensate for isolation during the remaining seven. Yet, taking these advantages into consideration, how modest such a sphere of action, how apparently inadequate its remuneration!

M. le Curé's yearly stipend was just sixty pounds, in addition to which he received a good house, garden, and paddock, about half an acre in all, and the usual ecclesiastical fees, called *le casuel*, the latter perhaps bringing his receipts to a hundred pounds a year. As the patrimony of both rich and poor is rigidly divided amongst sons and daughters in France, it may be that this village priest enjoyed a small private income. In any case, only devotion to his calling could render the position enviable.

When I made his acquaintance M. le Curé was in the prime of life, too florid, too portly perhaps, for health, but possessing a striking and benignant presence. Extremely fastidious as he was in personal matters, his *soutane* was ever well brushed, his muslin lappets spotless, the silver buckles of his shoes highly polished. Nor less was he careful in clothing his thoughts, always expressing himself choicely and with perfect intonation. During my repeated visits to the hospitable château I renewed an acquaintance which finally ripened into friendship.

At the dinner-table the conversation would, of course, be general; but whenever he called in the afternoon we invariably had a long theological discussion, never losing temper on either side, and, I need hardly say, never changing each other's way of looking at things by so much as a hair-breadth. Upon other occasions everyday topics would come up, M. le Curé showing the liveliest interest in matters lying wholly outside his especial field of thought and action.

It will happen that such cosmopolitan tastes are sometimes hampered even in these days by episcopal authority. A village priest has not much money to spare upon books or newspapers, and the *châtelaine* used to send frequent supplies of these to the presbytery. Upon one occasion, as he was leaving after dinner, she gave him a bundle of the *Figaro*, a newspaper without which no reading Frenchman or Frenchwoman can support existence, and which costs twopence daily. As he tied up the parcel he turned to his hostess, saying with a smile:

'I shall take great care, madame, not to let my bishop catch sight of these numbers of the *Figaro*.'

It seemed odd that a middle-aged priest could not chose his own newspaper; but was not the immortal Mrs Proudie capable of rating a curate for a lesser offence than smuggling a forbidden journal?

With the benevolent intention of bettering his circumstances, the *châtelaine* advised her friend to take an English pupil or two. In order that I might be able to furnish any information required of an outsider, M. le Curé showed me over his house. A well-built, commodious house it was, and the large fruit and vegetable garden bespoke excellent husbandry.

'You occasionally amuse yourself here, I suppose, M. le Curé?' I asked, knowing that many parish priests are very good gardeners.

'No, indeed,' was the reply. 'My servant keeps it in order. Ah! she is a good girl' (*une bonne fille*).

This good girl was a stout, homely spinster between fifty and sixty; but, no matter her age, a spinster is always *une fille* in the French language. Cook, laundrymaid, seamstress, housekeeper, gardener, M. le Curé's *bonne fille* must have well earned her wages, whatever they might be.

My friend had enjoyed unusual opportunities of travel for a village priest. He had visited, perhaps in an official capacity, Ober-Ammergau, witnessing the Passion Play, with which he was delighted; Lourdes, in the miracles of which he firmly believed; and, lastly, Rome.

The most charitably disposed man in the world, M. le Curé dilated with positive acerbity on the slovenliness and uncared-for appearance of his Italian brethren. 'I assure you,' he said to me, 'I have seen a priest's *soutane* so greasy that boiled down it would have made a thick soup!'

'But is not the French curé rich by comparison with an Italian *prêtre*, and might not such well-worn robes be thought a matter of necessity rather than inclination?'

M. le Curé's thoughts were now bent upon London. There was only one point on which he had misgivings. Could he without inconvenience retain his priestly garb? French priests never quit the *soutane*, and on the settlement of this doubt depended his decision.

'Nothing would induce me to don civilian dress,' he said—'nothing in the world.'

I assured him that although in England ecclesiastical habiliments had long gone out of fashion, English folks were peaceful, and he was not likely to be molested on that account. To London a little later accordingly he went. Indefatigably piloted by English friends, he contrived during his three days' stay to see what generally goes by the name of everything—the Tower, St Paul's, the Abbey, the museums, parks, and civic monuments, winding up with an evening at the House of Commons. And the wearing of the *soutane* occasioned no inconvenience.

I must here explain that by virtue of his age M. le Curé had escaped military service, now in France as in Germany an obligation alike of seminarists, students preparing for the Protestant ordination or the Jewish priesthood. In case of war French seminarists would be employed in the ambulance, hospital, and commissariat departments, and not obliged to use arms.

That journey was M. le Curé's last holiday. A few months later I was grieved, although not greatly surprised, to hear of his death from apoplexy. He had never looked like a man in good health, and one part of his duty had ever tried him greatly.

We used after mass to say 'How d'ye do?' to him in the sacristy, and upon one occasion I observed his look of fatigue, even prostration.

'It is not the long standing and use of the voice that I feel, but protracted long fasts,' he replied, with a sigh.

With many other parish priests I have made passing acquaintance, most of these being peasant-born and having little interest in the outer world. Whenever any kind of entertainment is given by country residents, or any unusual delicacy is about to be served, the curé is invited to partake. The naïveté of these worthy men is often diverting enough. When I was staying in a country house near Dijon some years since, my hostess had prepared a local rarity in the shape of a game *pâté* or open pie, a vast dish lined with pastry and filled with every variety of game in season—partridge, quail, pheasant, hare, venison, and, I believe, even slices of wild-boar. This savoury mess naturally called for the exercise of hospitality. The curé and his nephew were invited, and after dinner I had a little chat with the uncle.

'Who will succeed the Queen on the throne of England?' he asked.

I should have thought that not a man or woman in France, however unlettered, would have been ignorant of the Prince of Wales's existence and his position.

Many village priests, as I have mentioned, are excellent gardeners. One afternoon some French friends in the Seine-et-Marne, wanting some dessert and preserving fruit, took me with them to the presbytery of a neighbouring village. Very inviting looked the place with its vine-covered walls and wealth of flowers. The curé, who told us that he had been at work in his garden from four to six o'clock in the morning, received us in quite a business-like way, yet very courteously, and at once conducted us to his fruit and vegetable gardens at some little distance from the house. There we found the greatest profusion and evidence of labour and unremitting skill. The fruit-trees were laden; Alpine strawberries, currants, melons, apricots, were in abundance; of vegetables also there was a splendid show. Nor were flowers wanting for the bees—for M. le Curé was also a bee-keeper—double sunflowers, mallows, gladioli; a score of hives completing the picture, which the owner contemplated with pardonable pride.

'You have only just given your orders in time, ladies,' he said. 'All my greengages are to be gathered at once for the London market. Ah, those English! those English! they take the best of everything.'

Whereupon I ventured upon the rejoinder that if we robbed our neighbours of their best produce, at least our money found its way into their pockets. I need hardly say that, whether lettered or unlettered, the parish priest in France is anti-Republican and out of sympathy with existing institutions.

SNAILERIES.

THE rearing of snails as a food-product is by no means a new industry, and it is to-day carried on in various European countries, especially in France and Italy. Many species are regarded as edible, but the large white snail (*Helix pomatia*) seems to be the snail that is generally preferred. The Romans reared this species in enormous quantities in gardens or enclosures, banked or surrounded with ashes and sawdust, so that the snails could not get out, feeding them on bran and sodden wine. These snaileries are said by Pliny to have been invented by Fulvius Herpinus some time before the civil wars between Cæsar and Pompey; and from another Latin author, Varro, we learn all about snail-stews and how to make them. It is from the Roman period that snails as delicacies have descended to us. According to Varro, the Romans also grew their snails so large that the shells of some would hold ten quarts!

Besides rearing these wonderful snails in *cochlearia*, they also drew supplies from Capri, Sicily, and the Balearic Isles, as we learn that from these places came the snails that were most prized in the Roman market. The Romans further acclimatised this gasteropod, and spread their taste for it, in all the provinces they conquered, Gaul or France retaining the taste to this day.

The *Helix pomatia* is in England an introduced and not a native snail, and is called the Roman snail, because it is generally supposed to have been brought here by the Romans, though tradition has it that it was first introduced by monks into Cambridgeshire, and also that it was introduced into Surrey—where it is known as the Italian snail—by one of the Countesses of Arundel. The *Helix pomatia*, however, whether introduced or not, is now found from Finland to Lombardy.

All edible snails are nocturnal hermaphrodites, and belong to a family which are distinguished into three groups: sea, fresh-water, and land snails. Our interest at present lies with the last-named. Besides *Helix pomatia*, the other snails that are used as food are *Helix aspersa* (the common garden-snail) and *Helix nemoralis* (the wood-snail). In the Midi of France they prefer *Helix vermiculata*, *H. aperta*, and *H. pisana;* in Italy they eat *H. lucorum;* and the edible snail in Mexico is *H. buffoniana*. In the United States edible snails are frequently to be seen exposed for sale; but they are not raised in that country, and those on sale have been shipped to America alive from Europe. In Vienna, again, during Lent there is a large snail-market, the snails coming in barrels from Swabia. The great centre for the consumption of snails, however, is Paris and some of the French provinces. There is, indeed, a very large trade in this commodity in France, the large white snail being in special demand in Paris, while the garden and wood snails are in common use among poorer consumers in all parts of France. Snails are a recognised dish in French menus, and the *maître d'hôtel* can serve you snails *à la Cettoise*, or *Marseillaise*, or *Parisienne*, or *Bourguignonne*, or *Bordelaise*, all being excellent ways of disguising the snail. For example, if we take the last-named, *Bordelaise*, it is simply a combination of snails, red wine, butter, and garlic. Frenchmen also take snails medicinally for phthisis and catarrhal troubles, preference being given to preparations made from or with raw and uncooked snails. Under the name of *hélicine*, a powder is also sold in France which is said to have absorbed the juice of the snail.

It must be confessed that snails by themselves make a very insipid dish, but this is relieved by the strong condiments that are generally used; yet

owing to their glutinous nature, snails still remain a difficult morsel to digest—that is, if the condiments used do not excite the secretion of gastric juice. They should generally be consumed immediately after they are gathered, after having been purged of all noxious vegetable substances that they may contain. Instances of poisoning have been known to occur when the snails were picked off henbane, belladonna, and other plants of like nature; but accidents of this kind are avoided when snails so gathered are first subjected, as is the usual custom, to a lengthened period of fasting before being used.

The production of snails in France is now not equal to the demand, and large quantities are yearly imported from Italy, Switzerland, and Germany. During the Paris Exhibition of 1900 there was such a scarcity of snails in the Paris markets that at one time prices rose as high as fifty-five francs per thousand. The wholesale trade in snails in Paris is carried on in Pavilions Nos. 9 and 11 of the Halles Centrales, and here from sixty to eighty millions of snails are received yearly. Commercially, only two kinds of snails are known, the one called *gros blanc* (large white) or *escargot de Bourgogne*, and the other *petit gris* (the small gray).

In this snail-market there are two seasons, called respectively *coureurs* and *bouchés*. In the first period, which extends from 15th April to the end of May, *gros blanc* sells at from eight to ten francs per thousand, and *petit gris* from two to three francs. The second period is divided into two: the first, called *voilés*, extends from 1st September to 15th October, the price for *gros blanc* ranging from twelve to fourteen francs, and for *petit gris* about four francs; the second is the *bouchés* proper, extending from 15th October to April, and in it prices average about eight francs for *gros blanc* and five francs for *petit gris* per thousand.

The snails that are sold in the period of *bouchés* have generally been kept in snaileries (*escargotières*), where at the first frost they inter themselves about ten to fifteen centimetres deep, and secrete a slime, which, mixed with the earth, forms a cement. The snails sold during the *voilés* period are those which have not been placed in preserves after being picked up, but have been simply shut up in pens, where through want of nourishment or from unnatural conditions they have only formed at the entrance to the shell a simple veil of slime.

Snails, as has already been noted, are nocturnal in their habits, moving about and eating during the night, especially so during the rains of spring. In the period known as *coureurs* they are gathered on dewy mornings or after heavy showers; consequently when there is a wet spring enormous quantities come to hand in the markets of Paris. It may be added that they are 'moist goods' to handle, and therefore become easily heated, and deteriorate in three or four days. It is during this season that they are sold in the streets of Paris from small carts. The snails that are despatched to the Halles Centrales are packed in cases, baskets, or sacks containing from five hundred to two thousand each, the cases being pierced with holes for aeration. With respect to the snails that come to hand in the *voilés* and *bouchés* periods, these are generally sold by private contract to grocers, pork-butchers, wine-sellers, and restaurant-keepers, who prepare them and sell them to consumers.

Independently of Italy, Switzerland, and Germany, the Parisian supplies of *gros blanc* are principally drawn from Somme, Aisne, Sarthe, Seine-Inférieure, Limousin, Savoy, and Auvergne. The snail crop or harvest in these regions principally comes in as *coureurs*, but an important quantity is also received as *bouchés*. The supplies of *petit gris* are drawn from Manche, Calvados, Pas-de-Calais, Charente, Vaucluse, and Deux-Sèvres, and come almost entirely as *bouchés*, being forwarded in cases or baskets or in kegs.

The collecting of the snails is carried on in the provinces all day long by men, women, and children, who with iron hooks search for them at the foot of thorn-hedges and under ivy, and in winter in old walls. If lucky, a good searcher will collect from one thousand to fifteen hundred snails. These are paid for according to their weight, about a thousand snails averaging ten kilograms, and the payment varies with the prices current in the Paris market, but it usually ranges from twenty to forty centimes per kilo. This work, therefore, cannot be said to be well paid. The result of allowing children to collect them has been that they pick up and bring in snails that are unsaleable, and as these are thrown away, broken, or in other ways made useless, the snail-population of the country, through the loss of immature young, is rapidly decreasing.

Generally the slack time in the snail-market is during May and June, when the collectors endeavour to restrict their collections so as to place more on the market in August and September. In some cases, instead of being sent to market the snails gathered are held in reserve by being kept in snail preserves or gardens. The size of these snaileries, or, as the French term them, *parcs à escargots* (snails' pens), vary greatly according to the number of snails they are intended to stock. In these pens are a number of shelters about two metres long and one metre broad, and each of them looks like a wooden roof laid on a bed of soil having a slight slant. They are so placed that round about each of them food for the snails may be grown, and every morning the keeper has to pick up and replace the snails that have wandered about during the night in search of food.

Snail gathering and preserving does not seem to be at all profitable, and curiously enough we now find many French authorities expressing the opinion that snails, as an edible commodity, trade a good deal on their ancient fame. Only last year, according to *Le Journal d'Agriculture Pratique*, the question was put, '*L'élevage de l'escargot est il possible*

économiquement?' and to it the answer was given, '*Nous répondrons sans hésiter: Non.*' It is possible, therefore, that snails will some day be a lost or exceedingly rare commodity so far as French cooks and gourmands are concerned. Undoubtedly the edible snail is getting very rare in certain parts of France, and it is possible that there may come a period when a few edible snails will be kept and exhibited at the Jardin des Plantes in Paris as unique specimens of an animal which through man's gastronomic voracity has disappeared. The loss will not be felt in England.

THE DEAD SEA OF THE NEW WORLD.

THE Great Salt Lake of Utah has been called the Dead Sea of the New World, and with good reason, for it bears a striking similarity to the famous body of water described in the Bible. The Great Salt Lake, however, is one of the greatest mysteries of nature. For fifty years its rise and fall have been studied by scientists in an effort to account for the changes; but to-day they have reached no solution of the problem as to what is the principal cause of the decrease in its depth. But it is known that this great inland sea is passing away. Those who are familiar with its depth and the shrinking of its size each year say that at the end of twenty-five years the bed of the lake will be nearly all exposed, with the possible exception of a few shallow pools of water. Then the mystery connected with it will probably be solved.

The lake is truly a sea in its dimensions, being about seventy-five miles in length and fifty miles across at its greatest width, and therefore containing over two thousand square miles of surface. The New World also has a Jordan River, which is the principal water-supply of the lake so far as known. This is an important stream, draining a very large area of the mountainous country as well as three large lakes of fresh-water. During the season when rainfall is prevalent in this portion of the United States, several creeks ranging from thirty to seventy-five feet in width and from one to five feet in depth also empty into the lake; but it has no visible outlet in spite of the fact that the Jordan has been pouring its waters into the lake for centuries. Proof that it is drying up is given by the tables of its rise and fall which have been prepared since the year 1863. These show that during the last thirty-five years the lake has fallen at an average rate of one foot in every three years. During some periods it has risen from one to two feet; but this increase has been counteracted by the decrease, which, as the tables show, has amounted to over ten feet during the period mentioned.

The change has brought about some curious conditions. Near the shores the water is so shallow that there are places where a man may wade out from the beach for a distance of over a mile yet will not be immersed up to his shoulders. The buoyancy of the water is such that it is almost impossible for a person to remain on his feet at a greater depth, his body being lifted up as a strip of wood thrown into the water in a vertical or oblique direction like a dart is returned to the surface in a horizontal position. In fact, it is believed that the Great Salt Lake will support more weight to a given volume of water than even the Dead Sea. It is a very popular resort with bathers for the reason that it is impossible for a person to drown unless he should deliberately place his head under the surface or tie a weight to his feet. The bather can float upon the water, lying on his back or chest, and keep his head entirely above the surface with no effort of the arms or legs. He can also lie upon his back, keeping his legs down to the knees out of the water, and both of the forearms.

The large quantity of salt in solution is the principal reason for the buoyancy; and as the lake recedes, its bottom is shown to be composed of a heavy crust of salt, which is almost pure, lying upon a stratum which consists principally of sand. In this respect the bed of the lake is very similar to some of the deserts in the south-west, which once contained bodies of water equal in size to that in Utah, or even larger. The most striking indication of the rapidity with which the lake is receding is the present location of the principal bathing pavilion. This was constructed in 1893, and forms one of the most elaborate pleasure-resorts of the United States, for it comprises not only the bathing-houses, but a music hall, a hotel, and other structures under the same roof. The edifice is over one thousand feet in length, and when it was built, rested upon thousands of wooden posts driven into the lake at a distance of no less than four miles from the shore. To-day, however, the pavilion is half a mile from the water's edge, and bathers must go a mile from the houses before they can reach a depth of water sufficient to completely immerse themselves.

It is known that the Great Salt Lake loses a large quantity of water yearly by evaporation; but estimates of this quantity indicate that it is far less than that annually poured into the lake from the rivers and creeks entering it. As already stated, no natural outlet thus far has been discovered; but the lake supplies an irrigating system in the country adjacent to it which requires a quantity of water yearly equal to a depth of four inches of the present area. This is a very small proportion of the volume

which enters it through its feeders; so the scientists know that the water escapes in some other manner than by the irrigation canal or by evaporation. This is proved by the fact that the increase in the quantity which enters the lake at a rainy season at times does not increase its depth, and the records show that actually it has sometimes fallen immediately after the Jordan and the other streams have contributed a larger volume than usual. The curious nature of the bottom is indicated by the attempt to build a railroad across the lake, which has been in progress for the last two years. In places near the centre the engineers have discovered what appear to be enormous beds of quicksand or of mire, into which the longest posts cannot be driven to a firm foundation. In an effort to construct the railroad-track across these places thousands of carloads of earth and rock have been emptied into them; but most of the material has sunk to a point where it cannot be touched by the sounding instruments. There are some spots in these portions of the lake where material has been thrown almost daily for over a year without thus far finding solid bottom. Several of the railroad engineers who have carefully examined the conditions have a theory that the depressions which it seems impossible to fill are at the entrance of an underground river, so that as fast as the rock is thrown in the current of the river carries it away, and that this outflow is steadily increasing each year, causing the decrease in depth. Near what is called Antelope Island is another indication that a subterranean opening exists. Frequently the waters near the island are so violently disturbed that people in the vicinity call this place the 'maelstrom' and carefully avoid it when on the lake in boats. A number of years ago a sailing-vessel loaded with sheep chanced to approach too near the 'maelstrom,' and, in spite of the strong breeze which was blowing, the force of the water was greater than the power of the sails, the vessel being drawn into the middle of the disturbance and capsized. Although sheep are naturally strong swimmers, and land was but a few hundred feet away, not one of the animals escaped, and most of the carcasses went under water never to appear again.

While the buoyancy of the water is so great that it will support a person without aid, the boats which are designed to be used upon the lake must be constructed especially to counteract this feature. The ordinary wooden vessel when empty is actually too light to be navigated with safety upon it, since such a small portion of it would be immersed. Therefore care has to be taken, in building sail-boats especially, lest they be top-heavy. For this reason navigation is very dangerous on the lake when the wind is blowing even moderately, unless the sailing-vessel is heavily loaded so that it sits deep enough in the water to counteract the buoyant tendency. The quantity of salt held in solution is so great that it is dangerous for one to swallow even a mouthful of the water, as it is liable to cause strangulation. Several deaths from this cause have ensued among persons who have ventured into the lake.

THE SKYLARK'S SONG.

It is told of Oliver Wendell Holmes that all his life he was haunted by an ardent wish to hear the skylark sing. In old age this wish seemed to have found fulfilment. He came to pay England a visit, and, driving on Hampstead Heath, saw the lark soar on high and pour down a flood of song. But, alas! the keen hearing had grown too dulled to catch the sounds from such a height. His desire had been granted too late; the song was gushing forth in liquid melody, but he could not hear it!

A DREAM stole to a poet's heart
As summer breeze that bloweth,
And whispered of a golden song
Our sea-girt island knoweth—
A song whose echoes never stirred
The dawn, the noontide glory,
Of skies that spanned his native land
With their own wonder-story;

A dream that went through all his days—
To hear the skylark singing
Those wild notes which for English hearts
Each summer sets a-ringing.
Sweet choristers have Western woods,
Their matin songs repeating;
But never one—oh! never one—
To match the brown bird's greeting!

With no refrain of earthly pain
Nor faintest hint of sorrow;
The joy of life! the joy of life!
To-morrow and to-morrow!
Where England's daisies star her fields,
Where fairy grasses quiver,
That song floats down, as angel's harp
From yon side of the river.

Life's evening to the dreamer comes
Ere time brings hope's fruition;
Across the Atlantic roar he wins
The dreamland of his vision.
The winds bear scent of heather-bell,
The breath of thyme and clover,
And see! the lark is soaring high
And hangs the meadows over!

Hark! hark! the ecstasy of life
Those joy-bells are a-telling;
The air vibrates, the poet waits
To hear the anthem swelling.
Alas! alas! his ear can catch
No sound of song descending,
As fairy gold, gone while we hold:
Such is his long dream's ending.

Nay, not the end. There comes a dawn
On hills eternal breaking,
And there the dream of earth shall be
Fulfilled in the awaking.
The music missed, its meanings clear
Ring forth with tenfold sweetness;
For there—soul-satisfied at last—
Shines Life in its completeness.

MARY GORGES.

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'THE GARDEN OF ENGLAND:' ITS LITERARY FERTILITY.

By W. Scott King.

BEFORE drawing attention to the evidences of literary fertility in 'The Garden of England'—the primary aim of this paper—a preliminary matter calls for a passing notice, a pause at the garden-gate, so to speak. Of the three names to which the Isle of Wight lays proud claim—the Roman *Vectis*, the Saxon *Wight*, and the modern poetic *Garden of England*—it is perhaps scarcely fair to select as a headline the one for which there is least, not to say no, authority. After all, 'The Garden of England' is less a name than a description; not a word of history, geography, or ethnology, but a criticism, an estimate, and an appreciation, and in honesty it must be added, a description and an appreciation to which many familiar with Devonshire, Dovedale, and Surrey indignantly demur. It will be as well to face this question at once before moving to less contentious subjects, always bearing in mind, however, that what to one temperament is a Garden of Eden may be to another a Slough of Despond. The debatable word is Garden. 'Is it a garden?' asks the man of books, thinking of quiet seats beneath the apple-trees and undisturbed arbours. 'Is it a garden?' ask the lovers, shyly intent upon sequestered shrubberies and terraced walks of dappled moonlight. 'Is it a garden?' asks the cook, anxious as to the supply of potatoes, mint, and thyme. Is the Garden of England a kitchen or a flower garden? The cynic, remembering the stolidity of its natives, its narrow, lonely lanes, its wind-swept downs, and thinking perhaps of some other 'garden that I love,' promptly answers the former; while the jaded society dame, the city man, the lover of peace and beauty, and of course the consumptive, enthusiastically answer the latter. Ah, well! when did not truth love to dwell in a mid-way house? As a matter of verifiable fact, the Isle of Wight is not to be exhaustively depicted by any one adjective, neither fair nor fruitful, neither gloomy nor barren. To cross the Solent expecting to find soft breezes from January to January, never-withering flowers, unwearied sunshine, and a paradisiacal languor and glamour, is but to encounter bluff cliffs, stormy headlands, desolate moorlands, endless narrow and in winter unspeakably muddy roads, and all the year round, with the grateful exception of primroses and daffodils, roses and hyacinths bought in Covent Garden market and on sale at famine prices. In fact, we are back again here, as with most other things at all lovable and admirable in this lower world, at the old test—and you must love the Isle of Wight, as Tennyson and Keats loved it, and George Macdonald, 'Maxwell Gray,' and 'John Oliver Hobbes' love it still, ere to you it will seem worthy of your love.

Leaving this insecure ground of poetic nomenclature a moment for the hardly surer footing of science and history, we are struck by the turbot-like shape of the island. Those who have a taste for geometric precision will be pleased to be informed that the Isle of Wight is in configuration an 'elongated rhomboid,' whatever that verbal monstrosity may denote, or, in other words, looks on the map like a turbot. Its extreme length from the Foreland to the Needles is about twenty-three miles, and its breadth from Cowes to St Catharine's Point about thirteen miles. The boatman who sails you round will probably tell you—with a view to his fare—that it is sixty miles, and if he had said fifty-six he need not fear the witness-box. Of that dim past day—if there ever was such a day—when no 'choppy' Solent separated the island from the mainland, hardly a hint remains. And the Solent keeps her secret tight, as she heaves beneath her burden of battleships and liners, till the day when, with all her mighty comrades, the Pacific, the Atlantic, and the rest, she will have to give up her dead. Some have professed to find a glint of evidence that the Solent was fordable within the historic period in the old Roman name of *Vectis*. This, it is suggested, may

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have been the *Iktis* of Diodorus Siculus, to which the British tin was brought in carts at low-tide. The Romans much appreciated the island, we know, and with them its history emerges into daylight, the Emperor Vespasian conquering it under the name of *Insula Vectis*. After this date the mists of uncertainty again settle somewhat over it, as they have the uncomfortable habit of doing in our day when the unwary tourist ascends its downs in winter. Cerdic the Saxon is reported to have reduced *Vectis* in 530, but it did not definitely fall under Saxon rule till later. After William the Norman had come it was 'made a present of,' if you please, to William Fitz-osborne, but was soon forfeited again by his son, and passed to the Redvers family, who then took the sounding title of *Lords of the Isle*. At Quarr there are yet to be seen traces of the Cistercian Abbey founded by Baldwin de Redvers, second Earl of Devon. In the year 1292 Isabella de Fortibus—a lady whose name comes pat from the lips of the coach-drivers in the summer-time—'sold' *Wight*, as it was now called, to King Edward I. From this date the story of this oft bought, captured, stolen, and given away little island is fairly easy to trace. As a receiver of stolen goods it won a great reputation, and smuggling tobacco and spirits seems to have been the chief 'industry' up to comparatively recent times. In fact, it is not difficult even now to find an old islander who will confess, with the light of other days in his eyes, that there is not a cliff—or 'clift,' as he will be certain to call it—that he has not scaled at the rope's end, and scarce a cave or hollow in which he has not been in hiding with his kegs from the hated 'Gov'ment men.' But the other day when mildly suggesting to one such old smuggler that his trade was hardly legal, the present writer was met by the casuistical reply, 'But us paid for the rum! Us was only cheating the Gov'ment.' Exactly—'only'!

The most notorious memory of the island is, of course, of the royal martyr, Charles I., who was imprisoned in Carisbrooke Castle, just outside the little market town of Newport. A painted board nailed to the roofless walls informs the curious that here 'King Charles I. was imprisoned,' and a few steps farther another similar board tells that 'In this room the little Princess Elizabeth, King Charles's infant daughter, died.' After the tourist has inscribed his name, and that of the London suburb from which he usually hails, on the crumbling plaster, he will be exhorted to notice the legendary cracks and anonymous crevices through which the martyred Stuart is reported to have crawled. So much for the history of the Isle of Wight, the fossils, so to say, that may be dug up in the 'garden.'

Whether the island soil can be pronounced rich in literary productiveness depends on a comparison of quantity with quality, and so the answer shall here remain ungiven. Certain it is that two or three classics grew in this southern garden—Tennyson's *Maud* and Keats's *Lamia*, and a few other flowers of poesy and prose that we would not willingly let die. Of course the highest literary honours paid by the 'islanders' are to Lord Tennyson, who early in his married life made Farringford House, near Freshwater, his home. Line after line, verse after verse, might be quoted which describes in vivid flashes the sights and sounds around Farringford. Who that has wandered o' nights on the downs can fail to be haunted by such lines as these in *Rizpah*?

> Heard! have you ever heard, when the storm on the down began,
> The wind that 'll wail like a child, and the sea that 'll moan like a man?

It was in November 1853 that Tennyson took the lease of Farringford; and the profits of *Maud*, ever his favourite among his poems and so redolent of the island, enabled him later to purchase it. He always held that Freshwater was 'the most noteworthy part of the island, with an air on the downs worth sixpence a pint.' Lady Tennyson once wrote of their home thus: 'At sunset the golden green of the trees, the burning splendour of Blackgang Chine and St Catharine's (that is our view from the drawing-room), make altogether a miracle of beauty. We are glad that Farringford is ours.' Again, the Laureate himself spoke of seeing Freshwater cliffs from Bournemouth: 'The Isle of Wight looked like a water-lily on a blue lake.' Farringford is unquestionably the literary Mecca of the island. Here Prince Albert came, having driven over from Osborne; Garibaldi, of whom Tennyson remarked that he had 'the divine stupidity of a hero;' giant-like Phillips Brooks of America, greeted in the hall by the poet with 'Well! you *are* a man;' F. D. Maurice, to whom Tennyson wrote:

> Where, far from noise and smoke of town,
> I watch the twilight falling brown
> All round a careless order'd garden,
> Close to the ridge of a noble down.

Here *Enoch Arden* was written in 'about a fortnight,' in a 'little summer-house in the meadow called Maiden's Croft, looking over Freshwater Bay towards the downs.' Among Tennyson's closest island neighbours and friends was Ward—'Ideal Ward,' as he was named from his famous book—most cultured and generous of Ultramontanes. The Ward family still own large portions of the western part of the island.

If we hark back to the beginning of the last century, there are at least five names that with more or less intimacy will always be linked with the Isle of Wight—the names of Legh Richmond (author of *The Dairyman's Daughter*), Keats, Dr Arnold, poor John Sterling, and Edward Edwards (called by Dr Richard Garnett the 'apostle of free libraries'). The Rev. Legh Richmond was appointed to the joint curacies of Brading and Yaverland—then out-of-the-world hamlets—in the year 1805. At this time there lived in a little cottage in a hamlet known to-day as Hale Common a pious farm-girl whose simple life her pastor embodied in an evangelical tract, which has carried his name and the name of

the dairyman's daughter over the world. It has been translated into eight foreign languages, and the cottage, now rebuilt, is one of the lions of the inland part of the island. Keats's association with the Isle of Wight is unfortunately rather obscure. 'Like a flickering sunbeam he passed over "leafy Shanklin,"' it has been said, but the exact spot where he stayed is not known. Mr W. M. Rossetti in his biography of the poet makes two allusions to it. In Chapter II. he says: 'Keats had previously been at Carisbrooke in the Isle of Wight, but had run away from there, finding the locality, while it charmed, also depressed him;' and again, in the same chapter: 'Towards the end of June 1819 Keats went to Shanklin, his first companion there being an invalid but witty and cheerful friend, James Rice, a solicitor; and his second, Brown, who co-operated at this time with the poet in producing the drama *Otho the Great*.' We are also told that *Lamia* was composed 'in the summer of 1819,' so that islanders may be pardoned if they claim that poem too. It was also 'Off Yarmouth, I. of Wight,' as the heading of the letter testifies, that Keats penned the pathetic letter to Brown in which occurs the well-known passage beginning, 'I think, without my mentioning it, for my sake you would be a friend to Miss Brawne when I am dead. You think she has many faults, but for my sake think she has not one.' So to-day, on sunny Sabbath mornings after church, the gaily-dressed visitors parade the soft turf of 'Keats's Green.' The hold which the island has upon the memory and fame of Dr Arnold is admittedly slight, for it only knew him for the first six years of his life. Stanley begins his great biography with the record: 'Thomas Arnold . . . was born on June 15th, 1795, at West Cowes in the Isle of Wight, where his family had been settled for two generations.' He goes on to say a few lines farther on, 'His father was collector of the Customs at Cowes.' This is all very slender; at the same time the 'yachting metropolis of the world' likes to recall the name of the great schoolmaster and liberal theologian as belonging to one of her sons.

Memories equally noble and pathetic attach themselves to the half-forgotten name of Edward Edwards. He had an appointment in the library of the British Museum, and his evidence before the committee of inquiry into the management of the Museum very largely led to the passing in 1850 of the Free Public Libraries Act. He obtained later the chief librarianship of the first important free library established under Mr Ewart's Act, the library at Manchester. After seven years he retired and gave himself up to authorship, settling 'in this remote village,' as Dr Garnett said at the unveiling of the memorial to Edwards at Niton the other day. Niton lies some five miles along the coast from Ventnor, towards Freshwater, and overlooking the renowned Undercliff. Here, alas! the man whose good offices have conferred such an incalculable boon on millions of his country men and women found himself confronted by the dread of want and the actual presence of debt, most galling to his independent spirit. Standing last February in the little churchyard, amid the nameless graves of many a shipwrecked seaman, and in the distinguished company of Mr Frederick Greenwood and many other leading literary men and educationists, Dr Richard Garnett told in a few words the end of the tragic story: 'And so it came to pass that one winter's night, alone and despairing, he almost perished in the snow not far from the spot where we are now standing.'

Poor John Sterling's association with the island is very intimate and pathetic, and may be read in detail in the wonderful Life which his friend Carlyle wrote to his memory. In his tragic pilgrimage in search of health in the June of 1843, Sterling came to Ventnor and purchased a house known as Hillside, still standing, surrounded by pleasant grounds. Carlyle, writing of grounds and house, pronounced them 'both improvable.' Here Sterling valiantly set to work once more on the poem which, alas! he left in the end unfinished—*Cœur-de-Lion*. Of this poem his biographer says, 'It will serve to place Sterling's poetic pretensions on a much truer footing.' Carlyle prints in his heart-breaking biography of his friend several of the wistful, passionate letters written to him from Hillside. Notable among them is the last he ever sent to that Chelsea address:

'HILLSIDE, VENTNOR, 10*th Aug.* 1844.

'MY DEAR CARLYLE,—For the first time for many months it seems possible to send you a few words; merely, however, for remembrance and farewell. On higher matters there is nothing to say. I tread the common road into the great darkness without any thought of fear and very much of hope. Certainty, indeed, I have none. . . . Heaven bless you. If I can lend a hand when *there*, that will not be wanting. It is all very strange, but not one hundredth part so sad as it seems to the standers-by. . . .—Yours to the last, JOHN STERLING.'

And now there is no place more frequented by English and American visitors than the beautiful little burying-ground around the miniature, picturesque little church at Bonchurch, where lies the worn-out, passionate, sensitive body of John Sterling, whose earthly immortality is for ever linked with that of his giant friend Thomas Carlyle.

Coming to our contemporaries as we close, we find that four or five well-known writers have made their home in the Isle of Wight. At Calbourne, near Newport, lived until recently Miss M. G. Tuttiett ('Maxwell Gray,' as she calls herself), the invalid authoress of that old favourite, *The Silence of Dean Maitland*. Visitors to Newport have pointed out to them the famous Red House of the story. A couple of miles from Ventnor, up the Undercliff Road, lives 'John Oliver Hobbes,' in a house fantastically pretty, with its interlaced white and black beams, overhanging gables, and window-

blinds of amber. A mile nearer to Ventnor lives Mr Morgan Richards, her father, in Steep Hill Castle, once the residence of the ill-fated Empress of Austria, and later of the Hamboroughs, whose son was suspected of being murdered by Monson in what was known as the Ardlamont case. Last, but hardly least, until a year ago Shanklin was the residence of that versatile physician, playwriter, poet, journalist, and novelist, Dr Dabbs, who for a quarter of a century was the friend and medical attendant of the late Poet-Laureate.

Here is, in brief, the record of the literary fertility of the Isle of Wight—not a great record, in truth, but enough to fill the reading-hours of any visitor who does not stay longer than three months, and more than enough to disprove the charge, if charge it be, that the 'Garden of England' grows nothing but 'furnished apartments.'

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXIX.—SOME EXPLANATIONS.

MY first thought, of course, was that the woman was a thief, for it was she who had so cleverly stolen The Closed Book from my study at Antignano and carried it to Paris, there transferring it to the hands of old Mrs Pickard, of Harpur Street.

My first impulse was to tax her with the theft; but fortunately I saw a necessity for careful tact, and therefore responded pleasantly in the same language, 'Yes, signorina. It was one afternoon not long ago in Florence, if I remember aright.'

'It was,' she said quickly. 'I wish to speak with you in private. Where can we go so as not to be observed? I know so very little of London.'

For a moment I reflected. If she really wished to give me any information I ought to secure it at all hazards. Her manner was that of one who feared recognition in that public thoroughfare, and wished to speak with me in private; so I hailed a passing hansom, and as we were getting in I recollected that at this hour we might secure a quiet table in the upstairs room at Scott's, at the top of the Haymarket. Therefore, to that famed restaurant I told the cabman to drive.

She seemed from her manner as though haunted by a grave suspicion that she was being followed, and during our drive along to Piccadilly Circus she scarcely uttered a single word save to express satisfaction at finding me in a giant city like London, and to drop the remark that she had been following me for an hour past—the latter proving that she had seen me with Lady Judith, and had probably noted my tenderness towards her.

My wooing in those crowded London streets that evening had certainly been strange, but really not extraordinary when one considers how many declarations of love are made among London's millions amid the roar of traffic and the hurry and scurry of outdoor life. There exist few places in the heart of London that are adapted for lovers' walks and lovers' talks, and those few spots are so well patronised that the majority of lovers carefully avoid them. Romance is enacted among the smoke-blackened bricks and mortar of London just as often as in the brier-scented country lane or on the shingly beach of the popular seaside resort. The quiet thoroughfares of London, where one knows not his neighbour, are always more private than any country lane, with its sneaking yokels and the local gossip of its nearest village.

Still, the mystery with which this handsome, dark-eyed woman had accosted me, and the rapidity with which we had driven away, caused me to reflect. She was either my enemy or my friend—which, I intended to discover.

In the upstairs room of the restaurant we found a quiet corner safe from intrusion or observation, and when I had ordered a light dinner I asked for her explanation.

'I arrived in London three days ago,' she explained in Italian, 'and have been in search of you ever since. I saw you leave that house in Bloomsbury together with the signorina, and have been following you ever since—oh! so far that I am very tired. But I kept on, because I desired to speak to you. The risk I have run is very great;' and she glanced around apprehensively at the half-dozen diners scattered about the room. 'If I am discovered, then the worst must come.'

'Why?'

'Because they do not know that I am in London, or that I am determined to warn you.'

'Of what?' I asked eagerly.

'Of this plot against you.'

'By whom?'

'By the persons you believe are your best friends,' she answered, bending across the small table towards me, and speaking in a low half-whisper.

'And why do you wish to give me this warning?' I inquired suspiciously, recollecting that this woman had acted as a thief, and had evidently herself participated in the plot—whatever it might have been.

'Because I am ordered to do so by one who is your real friend.'

'And what is his name, pray?'

'Padre Bernardo of Florence. It is at his orders that I have sought you to-night.'

Her reply surprised me. The fat, good-humoured Prior of San Sisto had certainly been very friendly towards me; but I had never believed, after what

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had occurred, that he was actually my friend. Had he not, by means of a ruse, endeavoured to induce me to withdraw from my bargain over my precious Arnoldus? Was he not an exceedingly clever and ingenious person this Bernardo Landini? His actions had been puzzling from first to last, rendered, indeed, doubly mysterious when viewed in the light of my discovery at the end of that rare volume, and by recent events in London and at Crowland.

It was surely curious that he should send this woman to me, of all other persons. Yet somehow she seemed to be in his confidence. If not, why had they talked in his study with closed doors?

Suspicious that this woman had approached me with evil object, I nevertheless allowed her to explain. She was attired very much in the same manner as when I had first encountered her—namely, in plain black, a gown of apparent Parisian make, and a stylish hat that suited her dark beauty admirably, yet not at all loud in design.

She leaned her elbows on the table, and bending forward, with her gloved hands held together, thus explained her object in seeking me:

'I have been sent to warn you,' she said, with a strange look in her eyes—those eyes that had once haunted me in that sun-blanched city by the sea.

'But you called at my house at Antignano and obtained possession of the manuscript which I had bought of Father Bernardo,' I said. 'Why?'

'Because its possession constituted a danger to you,' was her answer, still speaking in Italian.

And I wondered whether she were aware that its vellum leaves were impregnated with a deadly venom that had not yet lost its potency.

'Surely that was no reason why you should steal it?' I said rather bluntly.

She raised her wine-glass to her lips and drank slowly in order to reflect; then, setting her claret down, exclaimed:

'Ah! my action was under compulsion. You should have been warned by the Prior of the evil that possession of the book would bring upon you.'

'Well, now tell me, signorina—for I haven't the pleasure of your real name'——

'Anita Bardi,' she interrupted.

'Well,' I said, 'I wish to inquire one thing—namely, whether our friend the Prior has any idea of what the Arnoldus contains.'

'No. He is entirely in ignorance of it. If he had, he certainly would never have been a party to this dastardly plot against you.'

'But what is the motive of this conspiracy?' I inquired, much puzzled.

'Your death,' she answered without hesitation. 'Your enemies intend that you shall die.'

'Very charming of them,' I laughed, pretending not to take her words seriously. 'But why, I wonder, are they so anxious for my decease?'

'Because you have gained their secret—you are believed to have read and understood what is contained in that newly discovered manuscript.'

'And if I have, I surely purchased the book at the price asked for it!'

'Ah! you see, the Prior had no right to sell it to you. A mistake was committed from the very first. How did you first know of its existence?'

'Through a dealer in antiques in Leghorn named Francesco Graniani, an old hunchback.'

'I thought so!' she exclaimed. 'I hear that he is in London. All this goes to show that you should be warned.'

'Of Graniani?'

'And of others also. I saw you with Lady Judith Gordon, and—if you will pardon me—you seemed attracted towards her.'

She spoke frankly and looked me steadily in the face with those great dark eyes of hers.

'And if I am?'

'I presume you have not been long acquainted with her?'

'Not very long.'

'Then, before you allow yourself to fall beneath her spell, as you seem to be doing, just make a few inquiries. It will not be difficult, and may be the means of saving you from dire misfortune—perhaps even saving your life.'

'How? I don't understand.'

'Possibly not. I only ask you to heed my warning. I am not here to explain the motives of others.'

'But you can surely tell me why I should hold aloof from Lady Judith?' I demanded, nevertheless recollecting Walter's dark hints.

'No, I cannot,' she responded, speaking in broken English for the first time, and apparently forgetting herself in her excitement. 'If you are not warned it is your own fault.'

'You say you know her,' I observed. 'Where did you meet her?'

'In Italy—under strange circumstances.'

'With her father?'

'Yes,' she answered after a moment's hesitation, and across her countenance there spread a strange look of mystery. 'But we need not discuss that subject further,' she added, lapsing again into Italian, which she spoke with a Florentine accent. 'I wish to ask your forgiveness for stealing your book. I can only urge leniency on the ground that I acted at the instigation and under compulsion of others.'

'I forgive you if you will tell me who instigated you to commit the theft,' I said.

'No, I cannot do that. I ask your forgiveness, and in order to atone for what I have done I came here to warn you of the great peril which threatens you. Beware of your association with Judith Gordon!'

'What!' I cried; 'do you mean to insinuate that she is my bitter enemy?'

'Beware of her is all I say.'

'And how do you suggest I should act?' I demanded, much surprised at this strange allegation against the woman I loved.

'You should again obtain possession of the Arnoldus. It may help you,' was her curious recommendation.

It was on the point of my tongue to say that it was already in my possession; but my natural caution again asserted itself. The woman was one whom I should deal with diplomatically in order to learn her motive.

'Perhaps you can tell me where it is?' I suggested.

'In the hands of an Englishman named Selby, who lives in that house in Harpur Street which you quitted this evening.'

Then she was evidently unaware that Selby had suffered its loss, and as far as I could judge she seemed dealing honestly with me. This fact puzzled me more than ever. Suddenly I recollected that mysterious sign in the window, and I asked her the meaning of the bear-cub.

'Yes,' she answered with a sudden gravity that had not hitherto fallen upon her. 'I saw it there to-day,' she added slowly. 'It has a signification, as you suspect.'

'An evil one?'

'Yes, an evil one—stranger than you could ever guess.'

'Will you not tell me?'

But again she shook her head, and declared that a silence was imposed upon her regarding it, as upon other matters. She had merely sought me in order to warn me, an innocent and unsuspecting man, against falling into the cunningly prepared trap laid for me.

She was quite calm, determined, unemotional. Once or twice, as new-comers entered the dining-room, she betrayed fear of recognition, but beyond that seemed absolutely cool and unruffled.

From her I had gathered two facts—namely, that Graniani was somehow at the bottom of the whole of the strange affair, as I had all along suspected, and that the woman I had grown to love was carefully plotting my ruin. This I refused to believe, and frankly told her so.

She allowed me to go on without a word of contradiction. Her manner was that of a well-bred woman, about thirty I judged her to be, her gesture and speech betraying refinement, and her eyes large, expressive, and sparkling. Indeed, she was a woman who might attract any man, and I dare say I should have found myself lost in admiration had it not been for my passionate love for Judith.

'I have only told you the truth, Signor Kennedy,' she answered quietly in Italian. 'I would, however, ask you to promise me to tell no one of our meeting. Remember that if you wish for advice in the future you have only to write to me at the *poste restante* at Charing Cross, and I shall duly receive your letter.'

The Charing Cross post-office is the usual address of foreigners when travelling in England; therefore I knew not whether she suggested that place because of secrecy or convenience. She made no mention of Lord Glenelg or of his search after the treasure; and, thinking that discretion were best, I did not refer to it, for I intended to keep my own counsel even though her allegations and the fact that she had so boldly accosted me formed in themselves an additional mystery.

So we finished our meal, and after some further desultory conversation which showed that she, on her part, was somewhat disappointed at the manner in which I had treated her confidences, I gave her my club address, saw her into a cab, and then we parted.

THE RAG FAIR OF ROME.

By G. G. Chatterton.

AROUND the Piazza of the Cancelleria in Rome lies the Campo dei Fiori, the market for flowers and fruit and vegetables, and here one day in each week spreads as well the Rag Fair, which offers so picturesque a study of Italian ways and people.

This wide space was in ancient times the scene of many tragic and sinister events, for it was the favourite place for the execution by fire of heretics. A fine bronze statue of the martyred Giordano Bruno now marks where he was burnt alive. In it, too, is the exact spot where Cæsar sank, betrayed and murdered, on his way to the Capitol. And now each Wednesday here establish themselves the sellers of garments ancient and modern, of things useful and useless, of articles of value and of rubbish; the ground on either side of the intersecting street covered with their booths, patronised in numbers by the Italian peasants purchasing their necessary or their decorative garments, and in still greater numbers by the foreign visitors to Rome in quest of curios in *bric-à-brac*, ancient laces, embroideries, or brocade: subjects for cajolery and cheating who are watched for and welcomed by the venders of these wares.

Conscious of our position in this respect, let none of us, however, hang back from the idea that knowledge of the Italian tongue is necessary to defend our weakness. A mere mastery of its cardinal numbers, backed by a power of facial expression and of repudiative gesture, proves a fair equipment in the science of its bargaining, which, for the most part, can be carried out by very simple wiles. You look, sufficiently indifferently, at the object of your fancy, and you inquire its price by dumb show or by word of mouth, according to the enlargement of your education. On hearing it you promptly offer one

quarter of the sum named; and on this being declined you walk determinedly away, to return, should such be your desire, to open fresh negotiations.

Beyond themselves, the portion of the fair where congregate the native peasantry offers but little interest, its goods being mostly mere ordinary necessaries; and as I start along it my arm is seized by a woman, who drags me towards her stall forcibly to direct my attention to night-dresses laid out stiff and starched. Recovering from the surprise of this unlooked-for friendliness, I free myself from her grasp, assuring her by expressive pantomime that night-dresses are not my need—are not among those things for sake of which I have travelled to Rome from London—and I come against a seller of corsets. A veritable living booth, she stands amid the walkers with a quaint effect: corsets in either outstretched hand, corsets slung bulkily around her person, corsets dangling from her neck. Pedlars hinder me, desirous that I purchase combs, buttons, hairpins. Pedlars of food, too, block my way, driving a brisk trade in cakes, and compounds of boiled fruits, and strange-looking cooked foods which I cannot pretend to class. These, though actually brushing against their customers, shout aloud their delicacies in tones that pierce the ear, and the humming chatter of the other traffic around makes a running accompaniment.

Peasant women, indescribably dirty and frowsy in attire, yet have their masses of hair, jet black or not seldom rich red, coiled carefully with pins and combs high on their heads, and they wear long earrings of gold set with coral and pearls. Their features are finely cut and classical, heads well poised upon their necks, and there is much natural dignity in the carriage of their tall and well-knit figures; whilst in their arms the tiny black-eyed babies, stiffly upright against the board beneath their clothing, gaze upon the surrounding world as from a point of vantage with a superiority denied to English ones laid low and wobbling in their guardians' keeping.

I pass on to where the stalls grow rich with antique lace, antique embroideries, antique brocades and silks—everything is avowedly *antica*—and here I commence and develop my initiation to the bargaining and the counter-bargaining of the Campo dei Fiori.

'How much?' I begin, indicating lace which appears to me may possibly be genuinely *antica*. 'Twenty-five lire,' I am answered in the tones of a set price; whereat I immediately offer ten. 'Signora!' And unsympathetic pen-and-ink cannot convey the pained reproach in the seller's voice as he dumps his lace down in its place.

Unruffled, I proceed to other stalls and look at more lace, and at rich embroideries in stoles and priestly vestments, at pieces of brocade and silk and of gold and silver tinsel; then, turning, pass again the stall with the lace that I had bid for, and find the man so far recovered from the shock that I had dealt him that he now holds it out to me, offering it for twenty lire. 'Ten,' I again return; and in rapid, broken, mingled French, English, and Italian, he explains how he cannot accept this sum, he himself having given fifteen lire for it; and to impress this clearly on my foreign understanding, he seizes an old newspaper, and on its margin writes in numbers, '15.' But again I leave him to dawdle over other booths, then to return to him—for the seven devils of the bargain-driver have entered into me—again to offer him ten lire for his lace. 'Fifteen,' he responds. Monotonously I reiterate, 'Ten.' It is impossible, he expostulates, he himself having given twelve lire for it, and, reproducing the old newspaper, on its margin he this time inscribes '12.' But 'Ten' I repeat firmly, and turn from him with resolution.

Three steps have I taken, when he is at my elbow, the lace wrapped in the newspaper, making it over to me for ten.

Proud of my success—for surely to have secured for ten lire what was originally priced at five-and-twenty may be called good business—and pleased as well by the triumph of the English over the Italian which is due to English superiority, I proceed towards the other side of the piazza, there further to exploit my powers.

Along the street that cuts between, approaches an equipage with the hearse-like appearance which marks that of a cardinal. A pair of large black horses, a large black carriage, plain black harness, and coachman and footman in plain black, such is the prescribed and somewhat dismal turn-out in which the cardinals must drive—to walk their rank forbids them—through the streets of Rome. I peep to see whether it is occupied by His Eminence, and in its black interior recognise him by the red cord round his hat and the small patch of red visible at his breast beneath his black overcoat. Close behind this sombre chariot of the mighty, in piquant contrast, comes one of the picturesquely gay wine-carts from the country. The great padded blue leather hood on one side that shelters the driver is patterned in yellow and red and white; the little dog lying among the wine-barrels which it guards has red rosettes upon its collar, and the sorry little horse is tricked out with head-plumes and dangling yellow fringes and cords with red worsted balls. And then I cross to the booths aglitter with gold and silver, second-hand jewellery and strings of garnet beads, little dishes of unset amethysts and topazes and carbuncles, and with *bric-à-brac* in general; booths with discoloured pots of beaten copper, and tarnished silver lamps and candlesticks, with bronzes green with verdigris, and ornaments of glass dim and imperfect—all, as is impressed upon me, *molto antica*. So in truth they look; and yet do I hang back, feeling who am I that I may tell between 'very antique' things which do stray here and the faked ones of the artistic Italian who buries his modern copies, to exhume when earth and damp shall have sufficiently veneered them with

assumed antiquity for the accommodation of his foreign customers?

I inquire of a wrinkled crone the price of a copper pot which hangs above her head, and her reply, 'Twenty lire,' seems so absurd that I at once cross to the stall opposite. The sharp Italian 'Pss-t!' rings in my ears. She is after me. 'Signora! what you name?' Fragments both of French and English many of these peasants pick up. But I name nothing, as I do not really want the pot, and tell her so with hands pushed forth, palms out. 'Ten lire,' I hear her insist as I am at the stall opposite, where lies a rosary in agate beads I covet. Thirty lire the man asks for it, and when I offer ten I so outrage his finer feelings that in silent, wrathful disgust he turns his back on me.

I wander along to look at corals and garnets, at Capo-di-Monte china and old fans, old reticules, old odds and ends of every description, and fall to wondering how many of them came here. An English rosewood workbox, such a one as our great-grandmothers loved to have near them, its tray with partitions fitted with mother-of-pearl winders, bodkins, étui-case, scissors, thimble, each with its little dainty velvet cover—what turn of Fortune's shifting wheel slipped it into the Rag Fair of Rome? Almost it seems making mute appeal to me to take it from this scene of foreign barter and restore it to the tranquil dignity of some English manor.

I ask the price of a damaged old cornelian seal. Eight lire. So I offer four whilst moving on, as I do not care about it. But Nemesis pursues and overtakes me. Wrapped in a bit of paper, it is thrust on me for four lire—wherefore must its worth be about two—wherefore am I taken in. But keep it I must, pushed right inside my hand; and as the man looks raggedly poor and needy, I console myself that I can enter the sum in my accounts as charity, and work my way on until I reapproach the stall where the agate rosary tempts me. Instantly the old woman from opposite darts on me, and with bony and unutterably dirty fingers clutches my arm to draw me to her pot, still hanging where I had the ill-fortune to observe it. 'Eight lire,' she says, and then insists on hearing 'what I name.' 'Six,' she hisses as I free myself to struggle towards the rosary, and, with a certain shame about my earlier bid, make an advance to fourteen lire.

'Impossible!' the man cries in Italian, explaining with intermingled broken French how it is of real pebble and real gold, and is, of course, a veritable *antica*, and has cost him fifteen lire. I may have it for twenty.

Strong in the belief that to possess it for fourteen lire is but a matter of a short time, I decline, and wander on anew, to be asked absurd sums, and to decline to give them; to be plucked by my sleeve to say what I 'name;' to be more than ever confirmed in the proud and proper faith that Britons never shall be slaves to Italian tradesmen. I fancy a hat-pin. Three lire. One and a half I 'name,' and straightway it is handed over to me. I return towards the rosary, deftly eluding the threatening grip of the seller of the fatal copper pot, who now screams 'Five lire' at me, and again I make my bid of fourteen for the rosary.

'Impossible!' But for fifteen I may have it.

This further fall in its price is so convincing to my cunning that I decline to go the extra lira, and once more proceed to dawdle until I renew the attack. I cross the street and walk again the round of the booths on its other side, and watch the peasants at their bargaining, fingering gaily-coloured petticoats, critically extending and examining men's trousers; buyers and sellers alike with their little *scaldini* of burning ashes hung upon their arms, for it is very cold. The *tramontana* is upon us, and the *tramontana* is a wind compared with which the keenest blast of our own from the east comes as a balmy zephyr. Regarding climatic arrangements we dwellers in England have but little for which to render gratitude; but for this one boon at least let us arise and give thanks and praise, that in our isle the *tramontana* does not blow. In street, in house, in very bed, it searches to the vitals of mankind, triumphant over defence against it. I have had my fancy that undergarments fashioned all of sealskin, with thrown over them a coat-of-mail, might turn its edge; but before having proved the outfit I would not go surety for it.

And then, for the last time, I advance to the seller of the rosary. The beldame of the copper pot has renounced me and my shortcomings, and unassailed I for the last time, as I make clear to him, offer him my fourteen lire.

Can I quite trust my understanding, at once quite realise the supreme astonishment of the day? Without a second's hesitation he has picked up his rosary, and, with it dangling from his fingers, 'Thirty lire!' he shouts into my face. 'Thirty lire!' he flings at me insolently, then turns to his customers.

Thirty lire! The sum he originally demanded of me. I stand snubbed and defeated—I who had scored my successes elsewhere, and but awaited one more here. And of all that I have seen I most desire that rosary, and now I must return without it. For one lira it had escaped me—for the difference of one lira, urged by the foul fiend of the bargain-driver.

I feel somewhat foolish, and think the time has come to get back to my hotel. The *tramontana* blows cold, and lunch and shelter will be comforting. The Campo dei Fiori, without doubt, is an interesting spot—but one can get enough of it. And its people are untruthful and unclean.

Still, justice makes me recommend all visitors to Rome to go and see it. And as to its people, a like justice compels me to acknowledge that I admire—that I admire and I respect—that man who would not sell to me his rosary!

CAPTAIN BLACK AND WHITE.

PART II.

OLD Timbs was quite right as to Captain White's development. As the gale blew out and better weather prevailed outside the ship, it grew continually stormier inside. The captain drank heavily most of the time, and when he was not lying logged in his cabin he gave the men fits, cursing them high and low with an exuberance of profanity that made their own feeble efforts in that direction sound like the prattling of infants in arms.

'E 'as a gift,' said old Timbs didactically, 'but 'e don't use it right. But 'e 'as the devil's own luck in the fishin'. It's queer, you know. I wus once on a ship w'ere we 'ad prayers every blessed mornin', but we didn't git one 'alf the luck old spitfire gits, not one 'alf. Now, if I wus in charge, I 'd give the old man such a rot-an'-tommy time 'at 'e 'd go down on 'is knees to ask for somethen better, an' if 'e didn't I 'd send 'im 'ome empty. 'Stid o' that, the fish comes fairly pokin' their noses at 'im 's if 'e deserved the best that 's goin'. 'Tis a queer, lop-sided world, I tell you.'

Rennie found that old Timbs was right. Captain White, though he rarely forgot himself to the point of physical violence, rendered his ship almost unbearable by his constant and lurid fault-finding. But once they reached the fishing-grounds he braced up and was most amazingly successful. He had got the reputation of a lucky man, and men flocked to his ship in spite of its known discomforts in other respects.

Rennie, with a natural objection to being loaded with unnecessary vituperation, kept out of his way as much as possible. Whenever they chanced to meet, the captain delivered himself to his heart's content at the mere sight of him, and Jack bit his tongue raw in trying to keep it quiet.

The *Lively Sally* had a most successful cruise, with only one untoward happening, wherein her master's proverbial luck deserted him for once. Perhaps Dame Chance had got tired of his lack of response and everlasting growlings, and administered a rap over the knuckles by way of hint that unless he mended his ways she might transfer her favours to a younger claimant.

However that may be, and however it came about, the fact remained that one day when Captain White's boat's nose was bumping on a right-whale's back, and he pulled the trigger of his new harpoon-gun, which was guaranteed to beat any harpoon-gun yet invented, something very material went wrong. Instead of the barb plunging ten feet deep into the body of the whale, a piece of metal came flying out of the rear of the gun and chipped off the third finger of the captain's right hand as neatly as a surgeon's knife could have done it. His boat's crew reported an appreciable rise in the surrounding temperature; and the scandalised whale, uninjured save in its feelings, took itself off to a less volcanic atmosphere.

Captain White unshipped the gun and flung it overboard, bound up his hand, and played Mont Pelée till it healed. But just how much he lost when he lost that finger he did not appreciate till afterwards.

Still, on the whole, they had a most successful cruise. They were back at Peterhead, full to the last bung, under nine months, and Jack Rennie found himself reported dead, but very much alive, and with more money in his pocket than he had ever had at one time in his life before.

He got away to Hull as quickly as he could, and called on the owners of the *Iroquois*, and gave them particulars of her loss. None of the boats had turned up, and apparently he was the only survivor. They offered him a berth as third-mate, but he would not book until he had been to London, and next day found him rapping on the door of 24 Red Bunting Street.

The door was opened by a strange woman. The Blacks had left many months ago. The woman could give him no information as to their whereabouts, and he wandered away disconsolate.

He had never learned where Mary's school was, so was unable to trace her through that. All he could do was to prowl about the Southwark Park Road in hopes of sighting her, and he prowled there till the constables on duty began to keep a suspicious eye on him.

But he might have haunted Southwark Park Road till doomsday and never come any nearer to her. It was pure chance, or the kindly feeling of the powers up above who proverbially keep watch on the life of poor Jack, that set him in the right way at last, and a somewhat astonishing way it was, and led him beyond his expectations.

He was drifting hopelessly along the Strand one night, with a vague trend towards mental alleviation through the medium of music-hall or theatre, when his roving eye leaped to a placard outside a mission hall, which announced a meeting of the friends and supporters of the Seamen's Mission for eight o'clock that night, and went on to state that 'Captain Black, the well-known advocate of the Deep Sea Temperance Crusade, would describe some of the temptations and trials of the seafaring life.'

All friends were cordially invited, and Jack accepted the invitation instantly. His intention was to hang on to Captain Black's coat-tails until he found Mary, if, as he hoped, this Captain Black turned out to be the Captain Black of Red Bunting Street. And if not, well, it would be interesting to hear what the speaker would say about a subject

which one, at all events, of his hearers knew from truck to keelson.

It was past eight o'clock, and the hall was crowded. Captain Black was evidently a man of note. They were just finishing a hymn, and Jack took a back seat without attracting any attention. Then the chairman stated that as they had all come to listen to Captain Black, whose eloquent and earnest advocacy of the temperance cause among seamen was well known, he would not stand between them and their expected enjoyment; and he called at once upon the speaker of the evening.

Captain Black stood forward amid a storm of claps, and Jack Rennie sat back in his corner with a gasp. For, unless his eyes deceived him—and they were not in the habit of playing tricks—Captain Black, the eloquent and earnest advocate of temperance, was not only his very own Captain Black of Red Bunting Street, whom he had on one occasion assisted up the steps of his house in a state the record of which would hardly have furthered the cause of temperance in the mercantile marine or anywhere else; but he was also and undoubtedly Captain White of the whaling-barque *Lively Sally*, whose eloquent and earnest language would, in its native luxuriance, have electrified the gathering beyond its wont.

Jack had not sailed with the man for nine months without getting to know every line of his weather-beaten face, and this time he was certain he was not mistaken, in spite of the black hair and beard which knocked ten years off his looks.

Jack sat back in his corner and tried to think it all out, but felt like a small fish tangled up in a net. Meanwhile Captain Black was enlarging on the dangers, individual and collective, of drink. He spoke in a large voice and with much feeling, described the havoc it wrought among the class he was chiefly acquainted with, told of the steps he personally took to eliminate it from the ships he had from time to time commanded, and expressed a vociferously cheered wish that others would do the same.

Jack Rennie held himself with a tight hand. He took a grip of his leg inside his pocket to make sure of himself.

Could this possibly be the man who reigned aboard his ship like a full-blown Boanerges? Could he have got converted and become a changed man in these last seven days? Could he? But no. Captain Black was telling them now of the way in which he conducted his own ship, and of his endeavours thereon to counteract the evil tendencies of the age. He told it with the flowing eloquence of an oft-told story, and Jack Rennie printed his impressions of it on his leg in characters that remained in evidence for weeks.

'My friends,' the captain was saying, 'one is tempted at times to think that what one man can do to dam the ever-swelling tide of vice is so little that it is not worth while to make the attempt. Now I tell you, friends, that is the devil's own suggestion. It is a suggestion fraught with evil consequences; it is a suggestion that blasts all initiative towards good.' And Jack began to feel quite at home on hearing the big voice piping some of its usual notes. Divorced as they were from their usual meanings, stripped of their usual trappings, and wedded to most unusual innocency, he could still distinguish in them the germs of the thunder to which he was accustomed. And he grew more and more certain in his own mind that this very white Captain Black of the mission hall was the very black Captain White under whom he had chased the lively whale in northern seas, in an atmosphere that never dropped below one hundred degrees in the shade when the captain opened his mouth.

What was this the eloquent speaker was saying? 'It was one Sunday morning. We were all gathered by the poop for our simple service. Since ever I have been my own master on a ship, and that is over twenty years now, I have never once let the Sabbath pass without holding some kind of service for the poor fellows in my charge.' (Cheers.) 'We had not been fortunate in our fishing that voyage so far, and we were all feeling rather depressed. I remember I had just given out the hymn you all know, "I need Thee! oh, I need Thee!" when the mate suddenly shouted, "Thar she blows!" and, sure enough, what we had been looking for for over two months was spouting close alongside—a fortune running to waste, and we needing it badly. Well, the men looked at the whale, and then they looked at me. And I looked at the whale, and I looked past it, my friends. And looking past it I was able to do my duty. It was a sore temptation, friends—a very sore temptation. There was two thousand pounds in sight down there to be had for the picking up, so to speak, and we hadn't struck a fish for over two months. But I looked past that whale, and I said to myself, "Am I going to damn these poor fellows' souls for the sake of a whale? Not for all the whales in the world!"' (Cheers.) 'So I said to my men, "Sing up, boys; sing up! That whale'll wait all right till to-morrow, but our souls can't wait for salvation!"' (Loud cheers.) 'And I tell you, friends, it was pretty sore on them too, for every extra barrel of oil meant so much more in their pockets, and they sang that hymn pretty dolefully, and I saw their eyes following that whale wherever it went. It was gone before we had finished our service, and the men were in very gloomy spirits at missing the chance. Next day we got three whales'—(tempestuous cheers)—'and these men had learned a lesson they'll never forget.'

Then he moved them to tears with a graphic description of how he had heard the ship's boy praying by the bunk of his head-harpooner, who was dying from injuries caused by the stroke of a whale's tail.

The dying man had been a strict disciplinarian,

and had ever scrupulously endeavoured to inculcate the rudiments of whaling with a rope's end. And when the speaker told how, when the man was just about going, little Tommy fell on his knees by the bunk and prayed for him, and Big George stretched out his great hairy hand, burst into tears, and said, 'Tommy, lad, I'm sorry,' the female portion of the audience used their handkerchiefs freely, and the men sniffed and cleared their throats.

Then came a collection on behalf of the Seamen's Mission; a vote of thanks, couched in terms of high eulogium, to Captain Black, coupled with the earnest wish that many more in his position might be moved to follow in his steps; then another hymn and a prayer, and they began to stream out; and Jack Rennie girt himself for battle.

He had been thinking hard while Captain Black worked upon his audience, and drew the tears from their eyes and the silver from their pockets, and he had made up his mind what to do.

He waited in a quiet corner of the entrance-hall till Captain Black came out with the secretary of the society and passed out into the Strand. He followed them quietly till they turned into an A B C shop. He slipped into a corner behind them, and watched the captain stow away four poached eggs on toast and two large cups of coffee.

By that time he had seen all he wanted, and knew there was no mistake. For a man may change his name from White to Black, and dye his hair and beard any colour he chooses, and take off as many years as he can from his proper total; but nothing he can do will enable him to count four fingers on his right hand when one of them is missing. So Jack Rennie fortified himself also with poached eggs and coffee, and when Captain Black and the secretary had finished their meal and concluded their business, which included the payment and reception of an honorarium for services rendered, they got up to go, and Jack followed them like an unobtrusive shadow.

He followed them out and waited till they parted. Then he ranged up alongside Captain Black and hailed him with a brisk 'Hello, Captain White! How are you, and how's Miss Mary?'

He saw the heavy jaw working under the black beard, and knew just the kind of thunder it was growling. But he held all the trumps in this game, and he was rather enjoying it.

'You're making some mistake, my man,' began the captain as soon as he dared open his mouth without danger to the passers-by.

'Oh no, I'm not, captain. I've not sailed with you in the *Lively Sally* for close on nine months, and sat listening to you in the mission hall for the last hour, without knowing what I'm talking about. I'm going home with you now to see Miss Mary.'

'Blankety—blank—blank—blank!' said the captain under his breath.

'Yes, that's a bit more like yourself than the mission hall business. Now you'll feel more comfortable. Maybe you'd like a chat with me before we go home. I've got one or two things to say that perhaps you'd sooner Miss Mary and other people didn't hear. About Mrs White and family in Peterhead, you know'——

If the friends and supporters of the Seamen's Mission had seen their pet speaker just then the results would have been disastrous all round.

The captain glared at him with a volcano in each eye, and then turned on his heel and led the way towards Waterloo Bridge.

'Now then,' he growled as they left the crowded Strand and found themselves in more open water on the bridge, 'what is it you want?'

'First, I want to marry Miss Mary, if she'll have me. And you won't interfere.'

'Go on!'

'Second, I sail with you next voyage as second-mate. Tomson said he'd not come back if you gave him half the take.'

'Go on!'

'You'll behave yourself to me on board.'

'Anything else?'

'That's all just now. I don't know that I'm right in holding my tongue; but as far as I see I do no harm by it. I'd be sorry for Miss Mary to hear all the story, and I've no wish to harm your other wife and family in Peterhead. It's their misfortune, not their fault. And I'm not sure you're doing any harm in helping the Seamen's Mission ashore. You get them some money out of the public, I suppose, and I know you get paid for what you do. It rather turns one's stomach to think of it all; but that's your affair, and it might do more harm than good to show you up. It's possible you think you make up by this long-shore business for your brutal carry-on at sea. You'll find out for yourself whether that is so or not some time. I have my doubts. Anyhow, you'll keep a civil tongue to me, or I'll know the reason why. Now, is it a bargain or is it not?'

'Blankety—blank—blank—blank!' growled Captain Black-White. 'I agree.'

'Then we'll go home to Miss Mary,' said Jack; 'and you'll introduce me to her as your new second-mate.'

THE END.

ROMANCE OF THE POTATO.

IN the spring of 1903 not a little surprise was felt when it became known that a novel variety of potato was being eagerly bought up for planting at twenty shillings a pound, the usual price of seed potatoes being from two pounds to four pounds a ton. A still greater surprise was awaiting at the end of the year when tubers of another variety—El Dorado—were sold at prices ranging from one hundred pounds to two hundred pounds per pound avoirdupois. As numbers of potatoes average two to the pound, the altogether remarkable sum of one hundred pounds must have been paid for many of the single tubers. It must be a puzzle to the general reader whose knowledge of this humble esculent does not perhaps extend beyond a daily renewal of acquaintanceship with the cooked article, and to whom all potatoes are alike, to understand how such things can be. It will partly explain matters if we say that during the last thirty years potato-growers have been continually on the lookout for improved varieties of the potato—varieties producing larger crops and unsusceptible, or slightly so, to potato-disease. So remarkable has been the success of potato specialists, whose business it is to produce from the potato-apple new varieties, that whereas formerly six tons of tubers to the acre was considered a fair crop, in 1903 the sort called Evergood produced from fourteen to eighteen tons, and in a year when disease was more than usually prevalent the crop of that sort was quite clean. Evergood had of course made its name previous to 1903; but when the specialist who produced this variety declared that he had succeeded in obtaining a superior variety to that, which on trial produced such enormous crops as, roughly, one to one and a half hundredweight from a pound of 'seed,' with fifty to ninety tubers to a single plant, the desire to secure such an extraordinarily prolific potato can easily be understood. What is said to be an even superior variety came into notice during 1903. It was to be sold to the public in 1905; but a few pounds grown in England got upon the market and sold at the prices already noted. Orders are being solicited for the autumn of 1904 at the reasonable price of five guineas a pound, or for a ton the alluring figure of eleven thousand seven hundred and sixty pounds. The present value at two hundred pounds a pound avoirdupois is the startling one of four hundred and forty-eight thousand pounds per ton, and what a field of a few acres in extent planted at these prices would be worth is too stimulating to contemplate.

No doubt it will occur to those of an inquiring turn of mind to ask how potatoes costing two hundred pounds a pound for planting can be made to produce a paying crop at five guineas. The cost of production need hardly be considered, as the prices are so abnormally large as to be unaffected by rent or wages. It is clear that if only one hundredweight is secured from each pound planted the crop at five guineas a pound will amount to five hundred and fifty-eight pounds, yielding a not unhandsome profit. But astute potato-cultivators have reverted to a method tried some sixty years ago, whereby the seed-potato is made to provide a largely increased number of sets. Usually the potato-tuber is prepared for planting by cutting it in pieces each provided with one or more growing 'eyes,' which become the potato-plant. By starting these 'eyes' or shoots into growth by means of artificial heat, they may be removed when large enough and rooted in flower-pots; and when these have grown somewhat the tops of the shoots may be cut off and also rooted in the same way; and so on till the advancing season renders it impossible to proceed with profit. Meanwhile the tuber produces more shoots, which in turn are treated as above; and once this method of propagation comes to an end the tubers themselves are utilised for planting. By these methods the producing power of a tuber is increased according to the number of times each shoot is increased; hence it is apparent that by a comparatively small outlay the value of the crop can be increased to an enormous extent.

No potato has ever gained so much notoriety as El Dorado, raised by the famous Scottish grower, Mr A. Findlay, of Markinch. There was considerable excitement in Peterborough market over the sale of a specimen of the famous El Dorado potato. The tuber weighed a little under half-a-pound, and was disposed of at the record price of eighty pounds. 'The story of this potato,' says the *Gardeners' Magazine*, 'is quite romantic; the very name was a stroke of genius. The promise fulfilled by Northern Star assured for El Dorado a hearty reception; but the output of seed was so small and the competition for tubers wherewith to raise stock was so great that prices bounded up. Mr George Massey, of Spalding, was one of the very first to obtain stock, and from him Mr Zech. Gray, a well-known grower at Everton, Sandy, purchased a stoneweight for twenty pounds. This set the ball rolling, and as Mr Findlay resolved not to further distribute El Dorado until the autumn of 1904, the demand for the small stocks available was doubled and trebled, and so the prices rose. Messrs Dennis, the Covent Garden salesmen, and Messrs I. Pond & Sons, of York, possessed supplies, and the latter firm found a purchaser of four pounds at a hundred and fifty pounds per pound. This determined them to obtain further stock, and so, at the Smithfield Club Show, a member of this firm, finding that Mr Massey had a limited stock for disposal, made him an offer of a thousand pounds for a stone; Mr Massey refused, as he wanted fifteen hundred pounds, but eventually the bargain was struck at fourteen hundred pounds. Subsequently Mr Massey sold a relatively small quantity for two

thousand pounds, so that his original transaction brought him a very handsome return.'

Some people are inquiring how so many potatoes can be used when at present the crops in a favourable season produce a glut in the markets, and prices are so low that the margin of profit to the grower comes sometimes perilously near the vanishing-point. As in many other cases, it would appear that also in this an outlet is waiting for any increase in crop that may occur. Potatoes are already being used in the production of petrol, at least one large factory being in course of erection for the transformation of the tuber into oil. As to whether these abnormal prices are likely to be maintained no one can say; possibly they may for a year or two, but it can hardly be for long.

ARE THE STARS INHABITED?

By ALEXANDER W. ROBERTS, D.Sc., Lovedale, South Africa.

THIS, after all, is the supreme question of astronomy. Compared with it all other inquiries dealing with the size, distance, movements, composition, and evolution of the heavenly bodies seem somewhat trivial and uninteresting. In one sense, what does it matter to humanity how big the stars are, in what depths of space they swing or circle, whence they have come, and whither they are going?

Could we answer all these questions with a precision absolutely faultless, we should after all be in possession of only a few numerical facts. We determine the distance of the sun, say to a mile, and there is an end of the matter. We exhibit his path through space with unerring accuracy, and there that inquiry also terminates. We place a measuring-line round the sun's circumference, cast his great bulk into scales, analyse his light-pulsations in a physical laboratory, and the problems involved are of the same human interest as measuring, weighing, and testing a piece of coal.

But let it be known to-morrow that men have been discovered on Mars, that, moreover, we have been able to interchange ideas with them, and all the world would be agog at the news.

Who are they? What are they? Are they creatures like ourselves: loving, hating, blessing, cursing, hoping, fearing; some vicious, others virtuous; a few wise, many foolish; a minority rich, a majority poor? Does sin and sorrow, sickness and death, throw a shadow over Martian homes as over those of earth?

What a tumult of tossing thoughts would agitate our little world! What a new realm of ideas would be opened up for man's conquest! At street corners and in the clubs, in shops and in churches, on trains and on steamers, in great cities and in lonely villages, nothing would be spoken about but the stupendous discovery. Theologians, scientists, philosophers, carters, cobblers, and kitchen-maids, all would have something to say on a matter of such world-wide moment.

Of world-wide moment! for the fact would touch humanity intimately. It might mean the destruction of much of the world's storehouse of garnered experience. To know what another race, a race so differently conditioned from ours, did and said and thought would of necessity revolutionise many of our most cherished conceptions. Who knows what scientific, political, and social views would have to go by the board the day our world received an intelligible message from Mars? There is indeed all the possibility of catastrophe in the discovery of other worlds than our own.

For my own part, I can conceive of no discovery that the future may hold hid in its lap so calculated to alarm and agitate the world as this, that human beings, men of like passions with ourselves, exist outside the domain of earth's sovereignty. Even the remote possibility of such being true startles the human mind.

Seeing, then, that the question is one of such grave interest, to seek to obtain some kind of answer to it is well within the range of legitimate human desire.

Now, we could straightway give one of two simple yet mutually antagonistic answers to the question which stands as the title of this paper, 'Are the stars inhabited?'

We might dismiss the subject without further inquiry, averring that we have no pooof whatever, not even the shadow of a shadow of proof, that life, either in its highly organised forms or in its most rudimentary state, exists on a single planet, satellite, or star that shines in our midnight sky. Accordingly it is futile wasting time and words in argument for or against men on Mars or on any other planet. After we have written much and thought more on the matter, are we any nearer the solution of the question? We are not, for the very conditions of the inquiry place it, happily for the peace of mankind, beyond the reach of an immediate solution. Our appliances are too limited in range and power, our minds too finite, to deal with a problem so infinitely complex.

We might as well go puzzling our brains as to what the other side of the moon is like. Certain of her secrets Nature has hidden from the ken of men in her innermost chambers, and it is useless to try to wrest them from her. Thus some reason.

On the other hand, it is urged that in a boundless universe there are boundless possibilities; that there is not a single star shining in the sky but *may* have a retinue of life-laden planets circling

round it. To regard the whole universe as a vast garden-ground teeming with rich and abundant life, manifold in form, persistent in vitality, is held to be not only a noble but a true conception of nature.

To those to whom this view appeals, it seems unreasonable to imagine the majestic suns of space wasting all their light and heat and force on the barren emptiness around them. It seems much more in accordance with the fitness of things to suppose that the warmth and brightness and power which streams out in such prodigal and bountiful richness from millions of glowing suns are laid under tribute by circling worlds, on whose surface, as on our own, men live and love and die.

Such a conception fills boundless space with illimitable worlds, each world thronged with a great humanity. What of that? Why should we give to ether and matter, hydrogen and iron, common clay and common salt, the run of the wide universe from shore to shore, and shut up the noblest thing we know—man—to a parcel of ground no bigger than a dust-speck! Thus others reason.

Now, these two views of the question under consideration are mutually antagonistic. They arise from two extreme ways of regarding scientific truth: excluding all conceptions that we cannot uphold by the most direct and indisputable evidence, or including as possible all that our mental and moral sense does not distinctly condemn as untenable.

There is a middle and a much more hopeful way of dealing with this or any other difficult question. Let us use both our reason and our imagination; let us draw upon facts and fancies. The one will correct and stimulate the other.

Are the stars inhabited? There are four considerations which bring us at once into close grips with the question. These four considerations are: (1) what about gravitation? (2) what about density? (3) what about temperature? (4) what about atmosphere? Take the first consideration. Men cannot exist on any planet or star if their feet are chained to the ground by the compelling force of gravity. How absurd to imagine a man carried about from place to place by a steam-crane! But that is just what would happen in Sirius or Arcturus or Aldebaran if by any chance an earth-born creature reached its shores, and, having reached them, desired to set forth on a voyage of discovery before he returned again to his familiar, homely, kindly earth.

On the sun's surface, for example, an ordinary man would weigh over two tons. His clothing alone would weigh more than a hundredweight. He could with ease play golf in a solar drawing-room (ten yards would be a magnificent drive), and ordinary field-tennis would take the place of ping-pong. There are always, in nature, some compensations for loss.

Now, the sun is by no means a large star. It is, compared with many other stars that could be named, a very small star.

There are stars, indeed, both bright and dark, on whose outer surface a year-old baby would weigh a hundred tons.

Life as we know it, life with every part finely balanced, every heart-throb carefully measured, every nerve and muscle perfectly adjusted to meet earth's stress and strain, would be utterly impossible under such conditions as we have indicated.

The delicate mechanism of the body would go to pieces instantly under such a stupendous pressure. It would be crushed into a shapeless mass by the sheer force of its own weight.

There is no star—we exclude planets—at present known to astronomers where man could live without dire distress or move without enormous exertion. And this holds equally good of both bright stars and dark.

What about any planets which may circle round the stars as central suns? As yet no planet or group of planets has been discovered revolving round a star, for the simple reason that we have no means of making the discovery. It would require a telescope with a tube stretching from Edinburgh to the moon and an object-glass as large as the earth itself to reveal the disc of a Sirian planet, if any such existed.

But since the sun is also a star, what is true of it may be true of every yellow star that shines in the sky. On this understanding let us consider the force of gravity on the surface of those planets that we know about, those that are companions to our earth in its circuit round the sun.

On the surface of this earth everything weighs more than three times what it would do if it were transferred to the surface of Mars. Thus a man on Mars would be three times as swift, three times as strong, and therefore able to do three times as much work as he could on this toil-laden earth. This fact has frequently been brought forward as an explanation of the so-called Martian canals. On Mars digging even a Panamá Canal would not tax unduly the energies of a municipality, not to speak of the resources of a State.

On Mercury the same man would be half as heavy, and on Venus, Uranus, and Neptune almost as heavy, as he is upon the earth's surface.

If by any means he found himself travelling in Saturn, a penny in the slot at a Saturnian railway station would reveal to him that he was only a few pounds heavier—nothing to speak of—than he was when last he weighed himself at some terrestrial railway station. On the planet Jupiter, if he were a man of ordinary proportions, he would turn the scale at a quarter of a ton.

The opposite of this is true of the moon. Over the glassy surface of one of the lunar planes a young athlete could bound with a speed equal to that of an express train, for his weight at most would be only twenty or twenty-five pounds.

Given lungs that require no air, blood that will not freeze or boil under the greatest extremes of temperature, lips that are never parched with thirst, bodies that crave for no sustenance, and a lunar holiday would be a perfect delight. It would not be globe-trotting; it would be globe-leaping and vaulting and bounding and flying. But human lungs do need air, warm blood readily chills, and water and food we must have or we perish.

However, the consideration before us at this point is weight or pressure, and we have to consider the question: Would the force of gravity be so powerful on some bodies and so weak on others that a human body would be crushed in the one case and go sprawling helplessly through space in the other? The answer is, that no life that we are acquainted with could stand the enormous pressure which exists on the surface of the stars. As far as gravity alone is concerned, men could walk without inconvenience on any of the planets with the single exception of Jupiter; on this giant planet movement would be impossible.

We come now to the second consideration: What about density?

Man is so constituted both physically and morally that he must have something solid, something unyielding, beneath his feet. He cannot walk on clouds or on vapour, or find a sure foothold on the shores of a misty dreamland.

No planet or star, therefore, the density of whose substance is equal to that of air or even water can be the abode of man as we know him.

Now, the density of the great majority of the stars is less than that of water; some even are composed of matter 'light as air.'

Therefore, if a man tried to walk on the surface of these gaseous orbs he would as certainly sink into the depths beneath him as a stone would that sought a lodgment on the surface of a placid lake, or an Alpine traveller who essayed to step forth on to the rolling sea of cloud that hid from his view the abyss below.

The same holds true of three of the planets, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. The density of these three planets is less than that of water.

With regard to these three bodies, ingenuity has suggested a solid shell covering a liquid interior. The idea is an utterly impossible one. The tidal strain on the liquid core of such a planet would rend the confining shell into fragments. Further, we cannot conceive of a star or a planet growing concentrically more dense from the centre outwards, like a bamboo stalk. Dynamical laws demand an opposite development.

Life as we know it is therefore impossible upon three at least of the planets.

On Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune there are no towered cities, no busy hum of men, no meadowland sweet with flowers, no pleasant lanes or crowded streets; nothing but rolling waves of liquid matter, ever surging and swelling under a dismal and practically sunless sky. From pole to pole there stretches a gray heaving plain, with neither rock nor shore to break the vast, weary monotony.

On Jupiter the conditions of life are not much better. His outer crust must be of the consistency of mud or treacle. From this semi-molten sphere there rises also great volumes of vapour which the swift rotation of the planet drives into equatorial cloud-belts.

Should an inhabitant of earth land on Jupiter, his condition would indeed be a deplorable one. A man trying to skim over a lake of boiling pitch would be in happier circumstances. Now, there may be beings to whom the heated fumes of half-molten iron, sodium, magnesium, and carbon are as zephyrs that have drawn their sweetness from southern spice-gardens; but he must be indeed a strange mortal who can enjoy all this tethered to a Jovian rock lest a cyclone sweep him out into the night. Can life be possible on such a planet?

Mars? There is little fear that anything less bulky than an elephant should sink through the Martian soil; for on Mars the rocks are one-half the density of those that form the ribs of the earth. As far as density is concerned men could quite easily live and work on Mars.

The same holds good of Mercury, whose density is not much different from that of the earth.

It has always appeared to me remarkable that the minds of men have not been drawn more to Venus than Mars as a possible world.

Not only is it almost the same size as the earth, but it is practically of the same density —that is, the materials which go to form our earth are probably those of which Venus is also composed.

An inhabitant of the earth would, therefore, not find the morning or the evening star a strange dwelling-place.

We come now to the third consideration: What about temperature?

I think we may leave the stars out of the question in this consideration. Men are not salamanders; and a temperature ranging between one hundred thousand degrees and one million degrees is sufficient to prevent, even in our dreams, a voyage to Sirius or Canopus or any other giant star.

What, then, of the planets, of the moon? Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune, especially the latter two, are so far distant from the sun that the chill of space lies round them like a shroud.

It is possible that some primeval heat remains conserved in their vast bulk, so that there streams up from the Uranian and Neptunian soil enough warmth to compensate for that lost by reason of their distance from the sun. But, alas! even in such circumstances, what worlds to live in the two outer planets must be, with no sun to brighten the day and no moon to beautify the night; always gloom, always darkness, always sadness; no changing seasons, no pleasing variations of climate, no dawn

dappling the sky, no long-drawn-out twilight hours; a gray world, a cold world, a sad world, an uninhabitable world! On Mercury the opposite of nearly all this is true. Fierce, scorching sunlight turns the Mercurian sky into a blinding dome of light; the sun is no longer beneficent and life-giving, but baleful and terrible in its destructive power. There is no place for man in a world like this.

Only on three of the planets would it be possible to live if we consider the sun's heat alone—namely, Jupiter, Mars, and Venus. With regard to temperature, Mars and Venus cannot be very different from our own earth. Indeed, on Venus there would be no inhospitable polar regions for ever barred against man's dominion, while the equatorial realms of the planet would not be more than ten degrees warmer than the average tropical temperature of terrestrial lands.

Thus, as far as extremes of heat and cold go, man could enjoy life to the full on either Mars or Venus.

We have only now the fourth consideration left: What about air?

Man must have air. On the moon he would instantly die, for not a trace of atmosphere exists on that dead world. Would he have sufficient air on the other planets? We cannot tell.

There is an atmosphere of some kind on all the planets, but we are unable to say of what gases each atmosphere is composed. Probably those on Venus and Mars are similar to the terrestrial atmosphere both in composition and density.

A grave uncertainty, however, surrounds the whole question, an uncertainty which will not be removed until we are able to determine from reflected light the character of the reflecting surface. This at present is beyond our knowledge.

Now, to sum up the whole matter, we find that the conclusions of modern astronomy on the possibility of the stars being inhabited are somewhat as follows:

It is impossible for any form of life to exist on a lucid star. It is possible for life of a kind to exist on some of the dark stars that are known to astronomers. This possibility, however, is extremely remote.

Lucid stars may be accompanied by planets forming stellar systems similar to our solar system, and life might exist on such stellar planets. There is nothing in the wide range of astronomical fact to negative such a possibility; but there is also nothing in the whole circle of astronomical knowledge to affirm the existence of such planetary bodies.

It is utterly impossible for life to exist on the moon. Novelists may discover holes in which selenites hide, but science turns these holes into graves and buries the dead selenites in them.

It is beyond our conception how life can exist on any of the planets (other than our own) except two. The justification of this conclusion are the facts stated in this paper. The two planets on which life might exist are Mars and Venus. The soil of these two worlds is solid enough to form a footing for man and his inventions. The air of both, though rare, is probably sufficient to enable him to live and work. There are times and seasons, day and night, on both planets; certainly on Mars. There is also mist and rain, sleet and snow, on both planets. Again we say, certainly on Mars.

There are high mountains and deep valleys on Venus, vast plains and gigantic waterways on Mars.

There is much that would go to make a habitable world on both planets, only as yet no trace of life in any of its forms has been discovered on the surface of either Mars or Venus. It must be remembered, however, that the outlines of no object less than fifty miles in diameter can be clearly discerned on the nearest of the planets, and thus human beings may exist on either Mars or Venus although we are not able to see them.

Well, but are there men on Venus or Mars? some one may urge; and in true Scottish fashion I pass on the question and ask, What does the reader think?

THE WATCHER OF INISHAIL.

Inishail is a small island in Loch Awe, with a very ancient graveyard. The Celtic superstition is that the last buried watches through the night until relieved by the next comer. It is a long wait on Inishail.

O SWEET 's the dark, till dawning fair
Makes all the stars grow pale!
But are you not weary waiting there,
O watcher of Inishail?

Last of the dead in the grasses laid,
What shades come wandering by,
Where the low green graves beside the waves
In deepening slumber lie?

And while you wait, through the crumbling gate
Comes Love, with softened tread,
And looks in your face with the saddening grace
Of glad days long since dead.

Around your feet the fair and brave
Sleep softly evermore;
And through your dreams the whispering wave
Sings old songs on the shore.

Does the dim place fill as night grows still?
Do the sorrows of those that sleep
Awake to be in the dark by thee,
And with thee vigil keep?

What do the sighing waters sing
As they tremble along the strand?
What messages do the soft winds bring,
Blown from the silent land?

Tired are many by Life's sad gate,
Where hopes and dreams grow pale.
Not you alone by low graves wait,
O watcher of Inishail!

LAUCHLAN MACLEAN WATT.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

AN UNDERSTUDY.

By Arthur O. Cooke.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

I AM a silent man. I was a silent boy. I even believe I was a silent baby; at any rate, I have heard my mother say that when I arrived in the world I failed to make my presence known in the usual way—by crying. I am told there is a German proverb about speech being silver and silence golden. I don't know that the saying makes any reference to diamonds; but I do know, and so does my master, that there came a day when my habit of never opening my mouth unnecessarily meant diamonds, but not to my master or me—very much the reverse.

My father was a small tenant-farmer on the estate of Sir Andrew de Boinville. Sir Andrew was a rich man and a good landlord; but, all the same, my father and the farm were always more or less 'under the weather,' as the saying is. I did not take to farming or any outdoor occupation, and was never so content as when sitting by the fire with a book or helping my mother about the house. I was the only child, and a regular 'mother's boy.'

One day when I was about fourteen, and almost ready to leave the village school, it happened that Sir Andrew, who had been walking over the farm with my father to see about some repairs to gates and such-like, had to take shelter in our house from a thunderstorm. My mother had twisted her ankle on the dairy-step a few days before, and could only move about with a stick. I was laying the dinner, a job I often did for her, when Sir Andrew came in. My mother had been parlour-maid in a good family, and always had a neatly laid table, though it was but a deal one; and she had taught me to set the knives and so on in a way that would have passed muster in a duke's castle. Sir Andrew stood with his back to the fire, talking pleasantly to my mother as she sat with her foot on a stool. He was a proud man; but in the thirty years I lived with him I never had anything but civil words.

'That lad seems useful,' he said presently, after watching me for some time.

'Willie's a good boy, Sir Andrew, and wonderful neat and tidy about a house,' my mother replied, looking very pleased.

Sir Andrew continued to watch me, but did not make any further remark; and presently, the storm clearing off, he went away.

But I suppose my neat ways, or my silence, or something or other, had taken his fancy; for a few weeks later he offered to take me into his service to train under Mr Dyson, his confidential servant, half-butler, half-valet. To get into service at such a house as Boinville Court was a better opening in life than most small farmers' sons got the chance of in those days, and glad enough I was to go.

A mighty silent house was the Court. Sir Andrew was a bachelor, and hated noise or talking. No doors ever banged, no footsteps ever echoed; for the doors were padded with rubber, and even the stone floors of the servants' quarters were matted all over. Sir Andrew kept but few servants about him, paid them highly, and treated them with every kindness. It was not difficult to learn his ways; the great thing was never to speak an unnecessary word, and that I never needed to learn, for silence was my nature, as I have said.

Besides the Court, Sir Andrew had a town-house in a quiet street off Park Lane, where he spent much of his time. I had never been there; but I knew that it was as quiet as the Court itself, and the only servants were the town-butler and his wife, the latter acting as cook-housekeeper, with a maid under her. A small lot of servants; but Sir Andrew never entertained, unless perhaps a gentleman to dinner.

I had been at the Court about fifteen years, when Stevens the London butler died suddenly of heart disease. A few days later Sir Andrew asked me if I was willing to go to London in Stevens's place, and of course I went.

I was not altogether new to London, for I had often

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taken advantage of an excursion to spend a day there, and once or twice had gone for a week or so to stay with a brother of my mother's, who was a draper in the suburbs. But though naturally I had more than once walked by my master's house out of curiosity, I had never been inside it. Very small and poky and dark it looked to me after the great rooms and broad windows of the Court. Otherwise it was comfortable enough, and almost as quiet as the country. There was not a great deal of traffic in the street, which was, of course, wood-paved; and Sir Andrew had gone to the trouble—and no small trouble he had had with the vestry, as I understood—of having the pavement in front of the house laid with some expensive stuff like india-rubber, which made no noise when you walked on it.

Fifteen years had made me well used to my master's ways, which were just the same whether he was in town or country. He gave an order in as few words as might be, with only a motion of his hand when that was possible; and, unless a reply was absolutely necessary, I merely bowed to show that I understood him. Mrs Stevens, who stayed on still as housekeeper, was silent and quiet like every one else about Sir Andrew; and between us we did not give the maid much chance of talking—indoors at any rate.

And now I am getting to the diamonds—rather slowly, I am afraid. Sir Andrew was a great collector: books, curiosities, precious stones—especially the latter. Anything particularly small appealed to him. He had books that would go in your breast-pocket and yet were worth hundreds of pounds; little gold vases and cups; ivory statuettes and carvings; little bits of porcelain. Being a very wealthy man, he had no difficulty in gratifying his taste. He had a great collection of fine cameos too; and, above all, a magnificent lot of diamonds and other precious stones, nearly all unset.

I dare say there were books and knick-knacks in the library of the London house, which was the front room on the first floor, to the tune of thousands rather than hundreds of pounds; but the smaller and more valuable things were kept in a large safe, almost a strong-room, let into the wall of his bedroom. The latter communicated with the library by folding-doors, which Sir Andrew always threw open at night, so that he had, so to speak, all his treasures as much under his eyes as they could well be while a man is asleep. When he was out of town everything but the books were packed away in the safe, and the keys sent to his bankers; but that happened less often of late years, for my master seemed to get fonder of his collection, to which he was always adding some new treasure, and went less and less to the Court. His few gentlemen friends, mostly collectors like himself, would sometimes express surprise at his leaving such a lot of valuables so insecurely guarded; but my master always replied that his servants were few, carefully selected, and absolutely trustworthy, and that he had no fear of burglars. He had some reason for his confidence. No servant of his had ever betrayed him; and he had an arrangement with the police authorities by which a constable patrolled the street night and day, and as it was a short one, my master's house was never lost sight of. And yet—But I 'll tell you.

As I have said, Sir Andrew's few visitors were collectors like himself. Every now and then one would be invited to dine and examine some new purchase, a book or piece of carving, or perhaps a diamond or ruby; and at such times it generally ended in nearly all the treasures being got out and looked over. I saw all there was to be seen; for my master not only put full trust in his servants, but, as the saying is, he did not believe in keeping dogs and barking himself. He rarely carried a tray or box to or from the safe, but had me in attendance to fetch what was wanted. He was a proud man, and particularly proud of his knowledge of character; he sent me into the back room to fetch a tray full of loose diamonds just as coolly as another man would send you out with a halfpenny for the evening paper.

He lived so retired that, great collector as he was, it was not often his doings got into the papers. But it is rather difficult to keep quite dark the purchase of a hundred and fifty thousand pounds' worth of diamonds; and when one evening I read in the *Globe* about the 'Lalonde collection of diamonds having been bought intact by a well-known connoisseur,' I knew pretty well who was meant—and so did others. Even a hundred and fifty thousand pounds' worth of diamonds don't take up much room, and I can't say I knew when Sir Andrew brought them into the house; but bring them he undoubtedly did.

It was in the summer of my fourth year in London that my master purchased this famous collection. The summer went by and the autumn, and November came in, as foggy as November in London can well be. I was used to country fogs, for the Court lay low and near a sluggish river; but you generally get some idea as to when a country fog is coming on, while a 'London particular' is on you without a minute's warning. Sir Andrew left the housekeeper and me to ourselves in the matter of evenings out and such-like arrangements; he never refused a favour asked of him, and consequently I for one did not like to presume on his kindness, and never asked to go out at inconvenient times. Sir Andrew nearly always lunched at his club, and almost as regularly dined at home, so that if I wanted to go out for a few hours, to my uncle's or elsewhere, I usually selected the afternoon. Thursday was a favourite day of mine for getting off, for my uncle's shop—down at Lewisham he lived—closed early, and I could get a chat and a cup of tea with him, and be back in time to see to my master's dinner at seven.

Well, I was going down to see the old man one week this month—the third week, Thursday the 15th. But all Wednesday the fog was so thick that I said to myself, 'No Lewisham for me to-morrow'—which

you won't wonder at if you know anything about the South-Eastern Railway and foggy weather. However, Thursday morning was a surprise, bright and clear. It was tempting; my uncle liked a walk, and so did I; and it would be just the day for a stretch across Blackheath and into Greenwich Park. So, after my morning's work was done and I had had a bit of dinner, away I started.

I caught the 2.30 from Charing Cross all right. But there 's something about the South-Eastern Railway that attracts fogs, I think—or makes them. Before we were at Lewisham it was as thick as ever, and you couldn't see two yards in front of you; pea-soup wasn't in it. My uncle's shop was near the corner of a road which led up on to the Heath, and I knew the way there as well as I knew our garden-path at home; but after I had been walking five minutes I felt I had missed my turn somewhere. It 's hard to tell in a fog whether you are walking up hill or down, and before I knew where I was I found myself on the edge of the Heath. While I paused to consider how I should get my bearings again, a little man suddenly appeared out of the fog close at my elbow.

'Can you tell me where Chestnut Road is?' he said.

'Never heard of it about here,' I replied. 'I want to find Heath Road, and I 'm blessed if I can make out where I am at all.'

'It is thick, isn't it?' said he, glancing behind him. 'What 's about the time, sir?'

I was buttoned up to the chin, with a topcoat and muffler on. I unfastened a button or two of my overcoat and then of my jacket to get at my watch, and at last thrust my cold fingers to the vest-pocket where it was. At the same moment the little man at my elbow thrust a leg behind mine; a pair of unseen hands clutched me like a vice by the throat and hurled me backwards to the ground. My right hand was for a moment powerless, as I could not withdraw it from my two coats. I opened my mouth to shout, and something soft and tasting of india-rubber was slipped between my teeth. I tore at it with my left hand as I lay on the road with two knees on my chest; but to no purpose. I felt it tied tightly behind my head. I fought with my left hand, but it only beat the air; I writhed and struggled to free myself. Suddenly the pressure of the knees relaxed, and I half-rose to my feet; some one threw all his weight against my back, and I was once more upon the ground face downwards, more helpless than ever, and unable to see my assailants.

I dare say the struggle had not lasted twenty seconds, long as it takes to tell. As I lay with my face crushed against the earth, I felt something cold and hard pressed against the back of my neck.

'Lie still,' said a voice—not that of the little scoundrel who had first accosted me—'lie still and listen to me. There is no one about, and the report of this pistol will not carry fifty yards in the fog; but it will carry a quietus to your brain unless you are quiet. Lie still, and we shall not hurt you.'

The speaker's voice, though evidently muffled or assumed, did not seem that of a common watch-snatcher or thief, as I had at first taken my assailants to be. The fog made everything so strangely quiet that I could not tell how many were around me or what odds I was fighting—or rather not fighting. There was nothing to be gained by immediate resistance, so I moved my head to show that I agreed.

'We don't want your watch, or your money, or your life, or anything that is yours,' the muffled voice went on; 'only your company for a few hours. The wish perhaps may not be mutual; but I 'm afraid we can't offer you any choice except this,' and he pressed the pistol a trifle tighter to my head. 'But time is precious; this fog, though not without its uses, has delayed matters. Choose; come with us quietly, offering no sort of resistance and making no attempt to escape, or else I blow your brains out. Either course will suit my purpose; it 's a matter of indifference. But possibly you prefer life to death. Only choose quickly.'

What could I do? I was apparently alone on the Heath with these men. The cool tones of the speaker left me little doubt that murder was the alternative; so once more I moved my head to signify agreement.

'Good,' said the voice again. 'Still, for safety's sake'—— I felt something slipped round my left wrist, heard a click, then another click, and felt my arm linked to another. We slowly rose. 'Look straight in front of you,' said the voice, still from over my left shoulder. 'Brush him down and put his muffler over his mouth.' This the little man did, entirely hiding from any passer-by the fact that I was gagged.

'Keep your right arm across your breast. No; inside your coats, please—inside both, is it?—Take his arm.' I felt the small man's arm slip into mine. 'And remember that in my left hand I still carry the revolver, decently out of sight in my pocket; but that fact won't make two seconds difference to the number of your years, my friend, if you turn restive. Now, come along.'

We came along. The fog was denser if anything, the evening was already drawing in, and we met nobody. Had we done so, I doubt if what happened could have been averted. I could not cry out, and if I struggled there was my captor's pistol. To be sure, the one man was as much tied to me as I to him; but there was doubtless some spring by which he could quickly release himself and get away in the fog. It seemed best to go quietly. Robbery was evidently not their object—not from me at any rate. They had not attempted to search me, though my watch was a gold one and I had several pounds in my pocket. Had I ever dreamed of their plan, I think I should have risked my life to frustrate it. But my master is generous enough to say that in that case he would have lost a valuable servant as well as—but I 'm wandering from the tale.

We seemed to be striking across the Heath at hap-hazard; but the men went forward confidently,

leading me between them. Then we turned down a steep, quiet road, and passed, apparently without any particular precaution, through the garden-gate of a moderate-sized villa. We went round to the servants' entrance and straight into a large, comfortable kitchen, where a cheerful fire was burning. But there was no sign of maids or servants of any sort about. The shutters were closed, and as soon as we had entered the little man loosed my arm and locked the door, putting the key in his pocket.

I looked about me. It was as snug and cosy a kitchen as one could wish to be in. Evidently, too, it belonged to well-to-do people, for all the saucepans were of copper, and there was nothing wanting that a respectable middle-class kitchen should have. There was a cloth laid, and bread, cold meat, and other things ready for tea, while the kettle was singing on the range. It was an uncommonly funny sensation to be dragged in such a violent, well-nigh murderous fashion to a quiet, homely scene like this. The man who had done most of the talking, and to whose arm mine was still linked, now released my wrist and his own, and threw the handcuffs aside; then he took off his ulster and hat. He was a man of my own height and build; clean-shaved, too, like myself; and as he moved about I noticed that he had the quiet, easy step which an indoor servant has to get if he has not got it to start with.

'Sit down, my friend,' he said, placing a chair at the table for me.—'And make the tea,' he added to his companion.

'Sit down, please,' he repeated; and, taking the revolver from the pocket of his coat, which lay across a chair, he handled it significantly. 'And now I think we can dispense with the gag also; this,' and he glanced at his weapon, 'will serve for that if necessary.'

My jaws were stiff and cramped with the gag in my mouth all this time, but after a minute or so I got their use and began to talk, I can tell you. Why was I dragged here? How long was I to be kept a prisoner? And a good many more questions. The spokesman of the two sat in his chair, revolver in hand, looking attentively at me, but not seeming at all put out by my indignation. I could have almost imagined that he *wanted* me to talk. If I had only held my tongue now! But how should I guess?

He helped me to bread and meat, and the little man poured out three cups of tea. I refused to touch anything at first, naturally enough.

'Just as you like,' said my friend with the pistol, 'but you may as well take what you can get; and you see we're sharing alike, so you needn't fear poison if that is your idea.'

It had been my idea, certainly; but true enough they were eating and drinking what they offered me. I had had a hurried dinner, and was hungry and tired with the struggle and excitement. It sounds a funny thing to have done; but I made a good meal.

'And now to business,' said the bigger man, rising from the table; and I wondered what was to come next. The little man, too, stood up. His companion handed him the pistol, which throughout the meal had been lying on the table at his right hand.

'Push your chair back close against the wall.' I did so. 'Hands together, please,' and my wrists were once more linked.—'If he stirs, shoot him through the head:' this to the small villain. He turned again to me. 'You hear? Sit still, and you are as safe as ever you were in your cradle.'

The little man stood quietly covering me with the revolver. The other crossed the kitchen and took from the corner by the door a large folding-screen, which he adjusted across the room. The one end was drawn close up to the wall beside me. The little man stood at the other end, commanding a view of me and of his friend at the same time. He shifted the pistol to his left hand, and still covered my head with it. I began to hope that his muscles were steady.

The other man moved to and fro behind the screen out of my sight. But I heard a table being placed in position, and what seemed to be the rattling of cups and saucers upon it. Then, after still more moving about, I could tell that the invisible man was standing close to the little fellow, but still out of my sight round the corner of the screen.

I had given up the notion of murder or foul-play of any sort to myself, curious as it may seem that I should have done so. There was something about both the men that almost inspired confidence on that score. But this unseen business was uncanny in the extreme. More than once I almost rose to make a rush for the corner of the screen and see what was going on. I grew still more puzzled. I could tell now that, although the small man continued to cover me steadily with his left hand, his right was busy behind the screen, though how engaged I could not guess. His eyes, too, which up till now had never left me, began to flash backwards and forwards in an extraordinary manner. They hardly seemed to leave me for half-a-second at a time, yet it was plain that he was paying great attention to something out of my sight. It suddenly struck me that he was drawing or painting a concealed likeness of me. But if so, why?

I suppose I was very dull. My wife says of course I was; but she often says that, and many other things which I don't quite see myself. But I will confess I have often wondered since that I did not guess what was going on behind the screen or the daring plot that was being carried out in that quiet kitchen. But I didn't; and there's the truth.

At last the man's hand stopped, and he seemed to gaze admiringly and yet critically at the result of his work. I heard his companion moving swiftly about. In a few minutes the door of the kitchen opened, and the latter went out. The outer door was unlocked, opened, and shut, and the man's

steps crunched on the gravel as he passed the window.

'In an hour or two I shall be able to wish you good-night,' said the little man cheerfully. 'Meanwhile we may as well be comfortable.' He fetched a bottle of whisky from a cupboard, and a couple of glasses. 'Have a cigar?' he added, offering me a well-filled case.

But I didn't feel like trying a cigar, which, for all I knew, might send me into a sleep too long to be healthy. The glasses, however, were clean enough, I could see; and as he was going to share the spirit and hot water there could not be much amiss. By the way, it doesn't do for me to comment on clean or dirty glasses nowadays, for my wife says it's well known I don't know clean from dirty when it comes to glasses, for all I was twenty years a butler. My companion mixed two stiff tumblers of grog and handed me one.

'Sorry I can't uncouple just yet,' he said pleasantly as I raised the glass clumsily with both hands; 'you see it and I,' nodding towards the pistol which lay beside him on the table, 'are but little chaps to you.' Then he sat silent, looking into the fire, as peaceable a man as you could wish to see.

The whisky was excellent—and strong. I supposed it was the heat of the fire after the cold outside which caused me to feel so drowsy. But I was not going to sleep *there*—not if I knew it. No, not likely. I was only closing my eyes for a moment—just two seconds.

ATLANTIC CATTLE-CARRYING.

'STIFF-CATCHERS' AND THEIR VICTIMS.

By Walter Wood.

THE strong and abiding prejudice of the Englishman against either frozen or chilled meat, or imported meat of any sort if he knows it to be imported, can be overcome only in one way. Instead of carcasses chilled or frozen being brought, the live cattle are conveyed to an English port and at once taken ashore and slaughtered within a period not exceeding ten days. Often enough, if the market is short of meat, the killing is done within twenty-four hours or less. The beef is in excellent condition, and even an expert would find it hard to tell the difference between this and the home-grown product.

Live-cattle-carrying across the Atlantic has been a recognised trade for many years. In the past the business has been the cause of much misery and loss, due to inadequate provision for carrying and inefficient attention, apart from the ravages of bad weather. Mr Plimsoll's soul was so much disturbed by the deplorable state of things existing in his time that he put forth all his great energy to effect reforms; and the large and thoroughly equipped steamships which now bring cattle from America to England are due in great measure to his influence. There is quite a fleet of these steamers, the principal owners of cattle-ships being the Atlantic Transport Company and other sections of the Morgan Combine, and Messrs Thomas Wilson & Sons, Limited, of Hull. Contrary to general belief, the Cunard Steamship Company, Limited, carry cattle by two or three of their American boats, prominent amongst them being the *Ultonia*, which runs between Liverpool and Boston, and is chiefly remarkable as being the first passenger-ship crossing the Atlantic to carry third-class passengers exclusively.

A typical Atlantic cattle-boat is the *Toronto*, of the Wilson line. She, like her sister-ship the *Consuelo*, is a new twin-screw vessel of, in round figures, six thousand tons and six thousand horse-power. The six thousand horse-power is, however, really a paper strength only, for the engines will not develop anything like that energy, and even in the fairest and most favourable weather the ships do not go beyond about a dozen knots. They can be run up to fourteen if coal enough is burnt; but fuel is costly, and adequate profits are obtainable only from low speed. They carry a few first-class passengers, and are slow but sure boats. Twelve days make an average run between New York and Hull, a day less being taken for carrying cattle to the Thames. In heavy weather the run may extend to sixteen days.

The *Toronto* will carry comfortably a thousand head of cattle. They are mostly accommodated on the main-deck, which is remarkably well ventilated and equipped for its peculiar purposes. In fine weather the hatches are left off, and the cattle-doors in the ship's side are opened; and trips have been made repeatedly at the end of which the main-deck, or cattle-deck, as it is called, has smelled as fresh as at the beginning of the voyage. In bad weather, of course, the state of things is much worse, and the cattle, like human beings, are put to great discomfort. No pen, indeed, could exaggerate the horrors of the North Atlantic passage in winter, so far as cattle and sheep are concerned. Cattle on deck often have the sea-water which comes on board frozen on their backs, and heavy rolls and pitches cause many broken legs and other serious or fatal injuries. Out of a cargo of five hundred sheep which one Atlantic steamer conveyed to Hull not long ago, only two hundred were landed at that port. The rest had perished. In one morning alone fifty carcasses were thrown overboard, that number of sheep having been suffocated by being battened down—a proceeding made imperative by the severity of the weather.

The whole of the main-deck of a ship like the *Toronto*, from stem to stern, is open, to allow of the freest possible circulation of air, and a walk round is a striking spectacle as well as a revelation into Atlantic cattle-carrying. The beasts, which are all steers, are in pens or stalls, three or four to each stall. The stalls are formed by placing boards into iron stanchions, a simple, elastic, and convenient arrangement. These divisions, of course, prevent the cattle from getting too close together, and keep them from being unduly distressed or injured by the motion of the ship. Every ingenious contrivance for clearing the deck of refuse is present, and the genuine cattlemen and their strange assistants the 'stiffs' see to it that the animals do not lack attention. Too much water must not be given in hot weather, as this induces illness, and illness very soon means loss, seeing that each beast has a value of about fifteen or twenty pounds. Coming through the Gulf Stream in the heat of summer, for example, when everybody on board is gasping for air and even a sheet in one's bunk is a burden, the cattle have an unhappy time, and it is distressing to hear their low moans of complaint. They are marvellously patient with it all, and stand quietly or lie day after day in apparent perfect content, less the disadvantages which have been indicated. In spite of their good eating at sea, they lose bulk and shrink in a very noticeable manner. This shrinkage, however, speedily disappears under the reviving influence of green pastures ashore. In some cases the animals fatten while at sea. Much depends on the quality of the fodder. If the compressed hay is good, the cattle will eat it; if not, they will reject it, just as a human being will refuse to eat bad food. The cattle are watered in the morning, between four and six o'clock, and that usually lasts for the day.

The cattle are collected from various parts of the West, so that when they are put on board in New York or other eastern ports they may have had a week's railway journey. They are brought alongside the ship, as she lies at her pier, in cattle-lighters, which are huge structures with two stories for their accommodation. On the lower deck is an opening for the removal of the cattle, which pass from the lighter to the main-deck of the steamer through the cattle-doors; and on the upper-deck is a similar mode of egress on to the deck proper, or shelter-deck, of the vessel, where movable pens are placed. The lighter is towed by a tug which is made fast alongside, and is handled with astonishing dexterity and expedition—far more quickly, it must be confessed, than similar work is done in England.

As soon as the gangways are in position the cattlemen drive their charges from the lighter to the ship. With luck, this will be a simple and easy matter, for the cattle will come quietly from one craft to another. From one lighter in New York, for example, I saw more than four hundred head come on board the *Toronto* in rather more than an hour. But sometimes a strange panic seizes the brutes, and they refuse to be driven or pushed or cajoled on board. In that case—there is no help for it—they must be slung into the ship; and accordingly they are hoisted on board by the derricks, of which the *Toronto* is provided with no fewer than twenty-six, giving her when they are in use the appearance of a little forest. Strange shouts by the cattlemen (as far as I could interpret it, the chief one was 'Out, boy!') and more or less gentle whacks with sticks are enough to induce the most reflective steer to go on board the ship. He runs clumsily to his stall, and is secured at once with a short, stout rope which is round his neck when he comes from the lighter. Occasionally a fine young fellow will have a ring through his nose and a malicious gleam in his eye; and sometimes there will be an animal which is either blind or going blind, and very pathetic, too, such creatures look as they stand so patiently from day to day.

The cattle are, of course, attended to by a staff of men who are entirely separate from the crew. This staff consists of the cattlemen proper and another band known as 'stiffs.' The genuine cattleman is a remarkable and picturesque person. I saw one on board the *Toronto* who would have gladdened the heart of a sculptor. He was a tall man, of magnificent physique, with a soft, brigand-sort of hat, flashing blue eyes, brown face, long brown moustache, and crisp, curly brown hair. He had a splendid pose and a strange dignity, despite his tattered boots and trousers, and braces over shirt. He wore a belt, and stuck in the back of it was the hatchet which every genuine cattleman carries—a weapon which is a combination of axe and hammer, and is of use on a hundred and one occasions when he is hammering boards up to imprison the cattle and cutting the wire bands which secure the compressed hay.

The stiffs are a body apart. They live separately from the cattlemen, who despise them because they are what they are and not the genuine article. A stiff is a man who is working his passage, and he is furnished by the human sharks and harpies who infest New York, and are known as 'stiff-catchers;' they are mostly foreigners, and literally traffickers in human flesh and blood. Generally speaking, the stiffs also are foreigners who have been some time in America and have made a little money, say twenty, fifty, or one hundred pounds. They are going home to Russia, Germany, Sweden, or elsewhere, and are travelling on the cheap. For seven or eight dollars they can be put on board a cattle-boat, and this is done regularly. The Jew harpy gets the dollars and the ship gets the man, who sometimes is about as intelligent as the cattle which it is his duty to tend. He gets no pay, of course, except the nominal shilling, and in fine weather has not overmuch work to do. He will either snore in the stiffs' quarters forward, where a dozen or more such men are accommodated, or sleep in an empty cattle-pen or on the trusses of hay, or squat about and play cards. On my *Toronto* trip we brought ten stiffs from New York to

London, and there were as many genuine cattlemen. Some stiffs, however, are able and willing workers, and are made use of in the ship's vitals as trimmers or firemen. On the *Toronto* three were employed in the bunkers, and one who was an English sailor was at work generally in the ship. All did their duty admirably. The sailor, of course, could have easily enough arranged to work his passage without paying the stiff-catcher his outrageous fee.

The first-officer had in his care no less a sum than three hundred pounds, which had been deposited with him by the ten stiffs—an average of thirty pounds per stiff. Amongst these stiffs are some strange characters, victims of life's little ironies and fortune's strange freaks. Broken gentlemen occasionally embark as stiffs and land penniless in England; or some dangerously ill man will get on board in the hope of reaching home before he dies. 'Only those who brave its dangers comprehend its mysteries,' sang the poet of the ocean; and only those who travel as stiffs or mingle with them know how many wrecks and tragedies of life they represent.

On a British cattle-boat not long ago a man was discovered among the hay when the ship was three days out of Boston. The stowaway was terribly ill; he was starving, and was obviously in the last stage of sickness. The captain and the doctor did all that was possible, and the passengers helped with clothing and money; but the man died and was buried at sea. By the same steamer, but on another voyage, a young American millionaire, who meant to start ranching and wished to learn all he could about his work, travelled as a cattleman and stuck pluckily to his work from first to last. By her also voyaged two or three young Harvard students who wished to visit England as economically as possible. These university men also kept to their bargain, and worked as well as the best cattleman on board.

There are many things which are peculiar to North Atlantic cattle-boats. One is that the white paint becomes curiously discoloured because of the presence of the animals, the sailors' theory being that they have some chemical action on the paint. Again, cattle have the power of making a ship roll or adding to the length of her roll. In harbour, when coming on board, occasionally they make the vessel roll quite heavily; while at sea in bad weather, when they are thrown helplessly about, their heavy weight, being near the top of the ship, adds greatly to the motion. Such, at any rate, is an officer's statement. Another strange thing about cattle is their power of scenting land. Sometimes they will set up a united bellow when thirty or forty hours from shore, or they may not show signs of recognising land until it has been sighted. Occasionally, again, they will exhibit no excitement of any sort; but that is when the voyage across the Atlantic has been exceptionally smooth and comfortable, and the animals are in no great hurry to leave the ship.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXX.—HUMOURS OF A HOUSE-PARTY.

IN the calm, mystic sundown of the August evening, after nine hours in the express from Euston, I was driving with Wyman in Fred Fenwicke's Perth-cart up the side of Loch Ken, that long romantic stretch of water hemmed in by the heather-clad hills of Galloway. We were covering that seven miles of winding road that lies between New Galloway station and New Galloway burgh.

Southern Scotland surely possesses no wilder or more charming and picturesque district than the Glenkens, and here, in the heart of them, the drive was refreshing, for the air was keen after stifling London; and the many burns and cascades we passed fell with soft rippling music over the mossy, bracken-covered roadsides.

The magnificent scenery, the sunset glow upon the unruffled surface of the loch, the dark-purple of the distant hills, and the marvellous shades of the heather did not, however, attract us, for we were both too full of the warm welcome which we knew was awaiting us at Crailloch, beyond Balmaclellan village. Through the long, white High Street of New Galloway we rattled in the dusk, up the steep hill, over the Ken Bridge, and then, following the broad river-bed, turned in at last through the lodge-gates, and pulled up before the great square Elizabethan mansion, with its ornate exterior and high twisted chimneys.

Fred Fenwicke, still in shooting-kit, came forth ere we could bring the cart to a standstill, and from the lighted hall came a chorus of hurrahs, expressing pleasure at our arrival.

'Well, Allan, old fellow!' cried Fred, grasping my hand warmly. 'This is a real pleasure, to see you in Scotland again! Connie's in there somewhere, and there's a whole crowd of boys you know.' Then he turned to give a cordial greeting to Walter, and left me to enter the fine hall, where the majority of the house-party had, in the idle hour before dinner, assembled to greet us.

The instant I entered a merry voice shouted, 'What, ho, there! Allan the Author!' It was Sammy Waldron, or, to give him his correct name, Captain Samuel Waldron, of the Bengal Police, home on two years' leave, and one of the best of good fellows.

Then Mrs Fenwicke, one of the smartest of women and the best of hostesses, whom every one

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called Connie, shook me warmly by the hand, expressed her pleasure at our coming, and next moment we found ourselves in the centre of perhaps one of the merriest house-parties in the whole of Scotland. Most of the people I had met before in that same big, well-furnished hall, with its splendid trophies of the chase and of Indian frontier wars. Fred Fenwicke and his wife, the merriest and most easy-going pair of any I knew, usually had the same party for the shooting, many of them being Anglo-Indians. In addition to Sammy Waldron, a well-set-up, fair-haired officer, tough as nails, who for over twenty years had been engaged on and off fighting the Indian frontier tribes, and who was usually the life and soul of the party, there was Jack Handsworth, or Major John Handsworth, C.I.E., owner of wide estates within sight of the Himalayas, who was never seen without a cigar except at meals; his son Godfrey, a smartly groomed youth of whom every one held golden opinions; Miss Handsworth, Jack's sister; Mrs Payling, an exceedingly pleasant and very good-looking widow of middle age, who lived in summer in England and in winter in India, whose manner of speech was very deliberate, who was possessed of a keen sense of humour, and who always wore exquisite gowns, and wore them well. She was, indeed, one of those few women whose clothes seem part of them. In addition, there were two brothers named Sale, well-known solicitors in London, a merry pair, full of humour; and several others whom I knew more or less intimately.

Certainly Fred Fenwicke never made a mistake in the arrangement of his house-parties. His guests were never ill-assorted. Sometimes he had a quiet set of visitors, but this was seldom. Indeed, the fun and merriment at Crailloch was always a continuous round, for every one did just as he liked: shot, cycled, fished for salmon or trout, went excursions, or wandered over the heather-clad hills. There was no restraint, and every one came there for thorough enjoyment.

'Well,' exclaimed Fred as we stood with him in the dining-room having a 'peg' before dressing, 'nice lot of boys I've got this time, aren't they?'

'Too keen a crowd for me, I fear,' I laughed, for I knew from experience that when the shooters who were my fellow-guests forgathered, the fun was fast and furious.

For answer, my old friend only raised his glass in welcome and laughed across it merrily.

About thirty-eight, tall and dark, with a distinctly military bearing, and dressed in a smart tweed suit and gaiters, he looked the very pink of condition. Living that healthy, open-air life on a Scotch estate had tanned his face and neck, and had brought him to a perfection of 'fitness' which few men can boast of. His vitality was marvellous. From the moment he came down in the morning to open the letter-bag until the small hours when the last billiard-players drained their final 'pegs,' he was constantly active. He loved the country; he loved Scotland; he loved shooting, of which he had plenty; and, above all, loved the companionship of the few men who were his intimate friends—the men who now formed the house-party.

Connie Fenwicke was just as happy, just as fond of country life, and just as generous in her hospitality as her husband. Wife and husband thoroughly understood each other, and such was their independent position that, when tired of life at Crailloch, they took a voyage to Australia, where Fred Fenwicke was interested in certain companies. Though fond of Scotland, and living there even through the town season, they were nevertheless essentially cosmopolitan, well known in Monte Carlo, in Florence, and in Rome. Indeed, I doubt not that more than one reader of this narrative has met them on board a P. & O. liner, in a Riviera hotel, or in India, Australia, or New Zealand. More, indeed, need not be said save that they were a pair such as one seldom met, and whose house was hospitality itself.

Walter was not so intimate a friend as myself; but before that night was out Fred Fenwicke had admitted him to that charmed circle of close acquaintances, and he declared himself absolutely at home.

Dinner was always the solemn function at Crailloch, as it is in most country houses, for the shooters were then clean, the ladies in pretty frocks and amusing, and Fred's *chef* was acknowledged to be one of the best in Scotland. After the ladies had left the table, and coffee had been served in the big, old dining-room with its splendid family portraits, I took Fred aside, for I had detected in him a curiosity to know the reason of my sudden and unexpected visit. He knew that it was not on account of sport, for near-sightedness prevented me from shooting, and I had heard him pass a remark *sotto voce* at table with Sammy Waldron that it must be on account of some love-affair.

In order to set my old friend's mind at rest I took him along to his study, the only sanctum private from guests, and told him that the reason of the suddenness of my visit was because I wanted to learn on the spot the history of Threave Castle.

'Oh, that's it!' he cried, removing his cigar from his lips. 'Well, I suppose you've got some book or other in view, eh?'

'H'm, yes,' I answered after a moment's hesitation. 'I'm studying the history of the place. Perhaps I may write a book about it. I want you to help me. Have you any books dealing with the subject?'

'I fear I haven't,' was his response. 'Threave is about fourteen miles from here, on a solitary and un-get-at-able island in the Dee. I've never been there myself; but I know a man, Mr Batten the archæologist, who lives in Castle-Douglas and has a fine collection of works dealing with Galloway and the neighbourhood, and who has written a book regarding these parts. I'll write to him. He'll lend you any books you want, and perhaps

he'll go over to Threave with you. He's an excellent fellow, and a great friend of mine. But,' he added, 'Wyman is helping you, I suppose?'

'Yes. We are making certain investigations,' was my cautious reply. 'At present we can't say anything definite, except that I may possibly lay the scene of my new book there.'

'Well, I'll assist you, Allan, old chap, if you'll promise to be silent upon Crailloch and all the boys here;' and he laughed merrily. 'When I told them you were coming they all wanted to know if you were going to write a book. They haven't forgotten those articles last season about Nice and Monte.'

'I'll let them down lightly, I promise you,' was my reply. 'Only I tell you my object in confidence. I don't wish the whole crowd to know.'

'Of course not, my dear fellow,' he said. 'I'll help you. I'll write to Batten, and we'll arrange a little picnic over to Threave. You needn't tell any one your real reason for going there.'

And so I left the arrangements in his hands.

After three days of merriment and nights of music, billiard-playing, and practical joking, Fred received a note from Mr Batten saying that he had obtained permission from the laird for us to visit Threave, and that he would be pleased not only to accompany us, but also to lend me the several rare and out-of-print works in his collection that dealt with the history of the famous stronghold.

To us this was good news indeed, and two mornings later, in a party of ten, including several others on cycles, we drove in a pair-horse brake away along the banks of Loch Ken, through the long, whitewashed villages of Parton and Crossmichael, down to a spot beside the winding Dee, where at a lonely farmhouse we were met by Mr Batten, who proved a most affable and valuable guide.

The party was an extremely merry one, and being compelled to leave the brake some half-mile from the river, each of us carried part of the provisions off which we were to lunch on arrival at the island.

The day was superb for August, one of those brilliant mornings seldom experienced in Scotland so late in the season, and much good-humoured banter was exchanged as the party trudged through the wide fields of corn just falling to the sickle.

Presently, on coming up the brae-face, we suddenly obtained a view of the broad, winding river sparkling in the sunshine below; and beyond, upon its solitary island, rose the stern, grim keep of what was once the home of the Black Douglas, and which even to-day stands out gray and forbidding in the autumn sunlight.

Wyman was walking beside me, carrying a basketful of bottles of soda-water, and as the view burst upon us I turned to him and said:

'Can it be possible that the casket of which old Godfrey speaks is hidden upon that island?'

'Maybe,' was his reply. 'It certainly looks just the sort of outlandish place to hold a mystery. But we must say nothing to any one. Let's take our observations in silence. They'll enjoy their picnic, while we will refer to that memoranda you made of the parchment record.'

Sammy Waldron, ruddy and sun-tanned, in a rough cycling suit, came up and began to chaff Walter regarding the soda—he himself being the bearer of a quantity of that stronger beverage very precious to men on such occasions, being assisted in its transport by the ever-humorous Mrs Payling, well turned-out as usual, and brimming over with good spirits. Being a widow, with a son in the Indian service, she was essentially a man's companion. She had been chatting with Mr Batten, while Fred Fenwicke was walking with Connie and two ladies of the party a little in advance.

At last we all gained the water's edge, and, depositing our loads, proceeded to examine the laird's boat, a key of which Mr Batten had obtained. It was half-full of water, and there were no oars.

After some search, a labourer was discovered who knew the spot where the oars were concealed, and he having pointed them out under a hedge, we discovered that they were so badly rotted by the weather that there was scarcely any blade left, and, further, that there were no rowlocks.

Sammy, Godfrey Handsworth, and the two Sales commenced to bale out the water with drinking-glasses, while the rest of the party, being now very hungry and thirsty, sat impatiently on the bank watching and passing sarcastic remarks upon the slow progress of the work. At length, however, it was concluded, and some of the provisions were taken aboard; Sammy being elected coxswain, with the two Sales as rowers. Then they took in a male volunteer on the trial-trip.

'The husbands' boat for Margate!' 'Nice day for a sail!' and 'Man the lifeboat!' were among the derisive shouts and jeers amid which the venturesome party put off into the stormy and rather dangerous waters of the Dee. The course of the boat with such oars and without rowlocks was necessarily erratic, and the absurd antics of the rowers and of Sammy as coxswain convulsed us on shore. Amid-stream the rowers, affecting fatigue, commenced to refresh themselves upon the provisions which we had sent across, and calmly lunched, leaving us hungry and empty.

After a long and tempestuous voyage they landed their first freight, then returned and took a second and a third. In the fourth Wyman and myself were included, and after running on a mud-bank and having a very exciting time of it, we at last, laughing heartily, sprang ashore on that wild, unvisited island, where, according to The Closed Book, the wonderful emeralds of Lucrezia Borgia had, through centuries, lain hidden.

Mr Batten assured us that no one had landed there for at least a year or more; but the instant we gained the shore we turned our first attention to discovering any traces of those who, we knew, were aware of the old monk's secret in common with ourselves.

THE DOWIE DENS OF YARROW.

By ROBERT BORLAND, Editor of *Yarrow, its Poets and Poetry*, &c.

Late at e'en drinking the wine,
And ere they paid the lawing,
They set a combat them between,
To fight it in the dawing.

THESE lines are as well known to the great majority of the Scottish people as almost any verse of the Psalms or Paraphrases; and it is interesting to remember that it is just a hundred years ago since the great book in which they are to be found was issued from the press of James Ballantyne of Kelso. Scott's *Border Minstrelsy* has long occupied a unique place in our literature. If we may appraise a book on the ground of the influence it has exercised over the feelings and thoughts of men, then this book must be ranked among the greatest. Its influence has been both wide and deep. It furnished the great Wizard himself with ideals and suggestions which he turned to good account in the many poems and songs which afterwards came from his prolific pen. Indeed, it has been more than hinted that the Border ballads which he here brought together, and edited with such skill and loving care, formed the nucleus of almost his entire literary output. The first two volumes appeared in 1802, and the third and last a year afterwards. The publication of this volume was therefore an event of more than ordinary interest and significance, as it marked the beginning of a new era in Scottish literature.

But another event happened in 1803, in which Scott was deeply interested, and which is well deserving of at least a passing notice. This was the finding of what has come to be known as the 'Liberalis Stone,' which was turned up by the plough on the hillside at Whitefield, about half a mile above Yarrow Kirk, and within a few hundred yards of the ballad-haunted stream. It was lying over a grave in which, when it was removed, some human remains were discovered. On the stone being examined it was found that it bore an inscription of some kind or other, cut in rude characters on its somewhat rough and unequal surface; but many years were destined to pass before this inscription yielded up its ancient secret. Sir Walter, Mungo Park, and Dr John Leyden (a great scholar as well as a true poet) all tried their hand at it; but the combined result was decidedly disappointing. They made practically nothing of it. The Duke of Buccleuch, the principal proprietor in the parish, had the stone removed to Bowhill; but some time after, it was brought back and planted down in an upright position on the spot where it had been found, and there happily it still remains.

But Sir Walter, though he failed to read the inscription, was at no loss in furnishing an interesting story to account for it. Here is what he says about it: 'In ploughing Annan's Treat, a huge monumental stone with an inscription was discovered; but, being rather scratched than engraved, and the lines being run through each other, it is only possible to read one or two Latin words. The name of the murderer is said to have been Annan, and the place of combat is still called Annan's Treat. It is a low moor, on the banks of the Yarrow, lying to the west of Yarrow Kirk. Two tall unhewn masses of stone are erected about eighty yards distance from each other; and the least child that can herd a cow will tell the passenger that there lie the two lords that were slain in single combat.' It may be said that every 'passenger' for the next thirty years who passed along the vale turned aside to look upon this stone with feelings of veneration as the memorial of the tragedy of the Dowie Dens. But Sir Walter's story will not bear serious examination. The place was not called 'Annan's Treat' as Scott supposed, but 'Annan Street'—the old Roman road or street to Annan. The duel was said to have been fought between a Scott of Tushielaw and his brother-in-law, a Scott of Thirlstane. But this famous combat did not take place at Whitefield, but on Deuchar Swyre, a considerable distance away, on the old road which leads from Yarrow to Innerleithen. In 1833, the year after Scott's death, the late Dr James Russell, the genial and gifted author of the *Reminiscences of Yarrow*, made an attempt at the decipherment of the stone, and was almost successful in discovering the meaning of the inscription. He says: 'I rubbed up the stone the best way I could; and though somewhat more successful than the party at Bowhill, owing to the rudeness and indistinctness of the hard block I was able to trace the following characters: "*Hic memoriæ et . . . Hic Nudi . . . Hic jacent in tumulo duo filii Liberali.*"' Until a few years ago this was practically all that was known about it. By-and-by the learned Principal of Jesus College, Oxford, Dr Rhys, took the matter in hand, and after repeated visits he has succeeded, or all but succeeded, in making out the inscription. There is one phrase awanting, owing to a small portion on the right-hand corner of the stone being broken off and now hopelessly lost. It reads thus: '*Hic memoriæ . . . insignissimi principes Nudi Dumnogeni. Hic jacent in tumulo duo filii Liberali*' ('Here to the memory of the most illustrious Prince Nudus of the Dumnogeni. Here lie in the barrow the two sons of Liberalis').

But who was Prince Nudus? And who were the two sons of Liberalis? The question is an important one on various grounds, but chiefly on this account: that if we can find out who are referred to we shall be able to fix approximately the age of the stone itself.

Now, in this connection, it is not without significance that the stone is situated close to the Catrail, an earthwork in the form of a ditch running from Peel Fell to Galashiels, a distance of forty-five miles. There have been many theories regarding the origin and purpose of this ditch; but the consensus of opinion among antiquaries is that it constituted the boundary-line between the Angles of Bernicia and the Britons of Strathclyde. Tradition affirms that towards the close of the sixth century a great battle took place in this neighbourhood, and in this case the tradition is supported by evidence of a strongly confirmatory character. The place still bears the name of the 'Warriors' Rest.' We also know that at the beginning of last century there were 'more than twenty cairns,' nearly all of which were removed to build the dikes round the present glebe, an unpardonable piece of vandalism; and when these were taken away considerable quantities of bone-dust were disclosed, and under one of the cairns a spear-head was found. Between the field and the river is the 'Dead Lake,' where tradition says many of the bodies were thrown after the battle. This conflict was not without its effect on the subsequent history of the country, as the Angles received a check in their northward progress, which helped to pave the way for the future political independence of Scotland. The King of the Britons of Strathclyde at this particular period was Roderick Hael 'the Liberal,' the same who befriended St Kentigern and recalled him from Wales, whence he had been driven by the menacing treatment of his predecessor on the throne. In the *Four Books of Wales* we read of one Dungual Hen, who had a grandson called Nud, also called Hael or Liberal, whose son Dryan fought at Arrderyd in the year 573. It would therefore appear that the two sons of Liberalis whom this stone commemorates were the sons of Hael, the King of the Strathclyde Britons. This stone is the oldest British inscribed stone in existence. It is unfortunate, to say the least of it, that this precious relic of antiquity should be left exposed to the denuding influence of the weather and the defacing hand of the vandal.

An interesting question here emerges: Was it this battle or the renowned duel of more modern times that led to the district being designated the Dowie Dens? Needless to say there has been much speculation on the subject. There are some—like the late Professor Veitch—who are of opinion that the melancholy associations are due to the nature of the scenery. But as a matter of fact the aspect of the valley is by no means of a melancholy cast. Far from it. There is nothing distinctively or peculiarly 'dowie' about the Yarrow hills and valleys. The eye sees what it brings to the seeing; and but for the undertone of sorrow which runs through the balladic literature of the district, the feeling of melancholy would never have been transferred to the scenery. The valley did not give this character to the literature; it is the literature that has reflected its image on the hills and the stream. The phrase 'Dowie Dens' carries us back to a remote period in the history of the country, to a period long anterior to Angles and Britons. In ancient times Yarrow was evidently an important centre of the Druidical worship, judging from the many memorials of this occult religion which are still to be found in the district. Many of the place-names, such as Tinnis and Deuchar, speak to us of 'a day that is dead,' when our forefathers worshipped their heathen deities amid the groves of the ancient forest. The Pan-stones on Tinnis Hill, the three 'standing stones' near Yarrow Kirk, and the Druidical remains on Blackhouse Heights witness to the fact that the valley in ancient times was a popular resort of the Druids. Now, the significant fact is this, that the 'circle' or 'standing stone' at which the Druids worshipped was known as 'the place of melancholy,' due doubtless to the fact that human sacrifices were so frequently offered. Hence the Celtic word *dubh* (black) became synonymous with Druid. *Duibhe* is the genitive singular, and is pronounced 'dooie,' and the standing stones or Druid circles were called *Duibhe-Fàins*, or temples of the Druids. It is dangerous to dogmatise in regard to derivations; but it seems highly probable that 'Dowie Dens' is but another form of *Duibhe-Fàins*, and if so, the phrase will convey to many minds a new and deeper meaning, forming an interesting link with the ancient faith of the Celt.

A REMINISCENCE OF THE FIRST FIGHT BETWEEN IRONCLADS.

THE fight between the *Monitor* and the *Virginia* (or the *Merrimac*, as she was called in the Northern States) is notable not merely from the fact that it was the first encounter that ever took place between ironclads, but because it was in itself one of the most remarkable battles of a most remarkable war. The following account is given from data supplied by Captain Hunter Davidson, formerly of the Confederate Navy, who was second in command of the *Virginia*, and took part in this historical fight. This officer, who distinguished himself on many occasions during the war, was also the first man to destroy a vessel by the agency of an electric torpedo.

On the outbreak of hostilities between North and South, the State of Virginia ranged herself on the side of the latter. At Norfolk, within the limits of Virginia, the United States Government possessed an important naval yard and depôt of supplies. When hostilities commenced Norfolk was full of vessels of war and naval and military stores, includ-

ing many hundred cannon. In order to prevent this valuable property from falling into the hands of the Southerners, who were then threatening Norfolk, the order was given to destroy everything. In a few hours the sky was lurid with the glare of burning ships, buildings, and stores. It was a weird, awe-inspiring sight as the waves leapt up the masts of the burning ships and lit up the country for miles around, a fitting omen of the terrible waste of blood and treasure which was to take place in the stupendous conflict about to commence. The Northerners had to leave Norfolk so hurriedly that there was no time even to save the ships in the harbour, and they were unable to make their destruction effective; a vast amount of property fell into the hands of the Confederates uninjured or with but little damage done to it.

Among the vessels which had been partially destroyed to prevent their capture by the Confederates was the *Merrimac*, a large frigate. She was first burnt to the water's edge and then sunk, being then, so to speak, left for dead by the Federals (Northerners). She was by no means dead, however, for the Southerners resuscitated her; in other words, they raised her without much difficulty. Although her upper part had been destroyed, they found that she was admirably adapted for the purpose of transformation into an ironclad.

At that time ironclads were new in naval warfare; in fact, they were as yet merely in the experimental stage. The so-called ironclads employed by the French in the Crimea were mere floating batteries, and the first British sea-going ironclad was the *Warrior*, built in 1860, two years before the battle about to be described. The fight between the two American vessels *Monitor* and *Virginia* was the first in which rival ironclads measured their strength in combat.

The Southerners were painfully aware of their inferiority at sea to their enemies of the North, who remained in possession of almost the entire fleet when the Union was split in two. They were further galled by a blockade which threatened to shut them out from the markets of Europe. Hence their desire to possess at least one ship of sufficient strength to destroy the entire Northern fleet and break the blockade. Nor were these hopes exaggerated; for had it not been for the timely arrival of the *Monitor* there is little doubt that they would have been able to accomplish this with the *Virginia*, which vessel on her completion might have claimed to be the most formidable man-of-war in the world.

Great credit is due to the South for the admirable manner in which they constructed an ironclad of the first rank with the most defective resources and out of the most unpromising materials. The whole part of the vessel above water was sheathed with railroad iron, ingeniously interlaced so as to form an armour of great strength, impenetrable to any of the guns of the enemy which could be brought to bear on her. This armour was arranged at an angle of forty-five degrees, completely covering her deck, so that the portion of the vessel above the water resembled a mansard-roof. She was armed with ten guns of the largest size, and fitted with a ram under the water-line, which could be driven into the side of an adversary. Owing to the defective resources of the Confederacy, it was some nine months before this novel engine of destruction could be got ready.

From time to time reports of the construction of this wonderful ship reached the Northerners, who on their part were not idle, for they were also engaged in building an ironclad of an entirely different type from the *Virginia*, and there was a race as to which side should get their vessel ready first. The Federals were well aware of the formidable nature of the ship which the South was preparing, and they also knew that if she could be got ready even a few days before the *Monitor* (as they had named their own ironclad) she would do a terrible amount of destruction among the wooden vessels which composed their fleet. The South was determined to be first in the field (or rather on the water), and with this object the number of workmen was doubled and the work was carried on night and day. Owing to this haste they were able to take the water a day before the *Monitor* arrived on the scene of action, and even on this single day the amount of destruction they wrought was so appalling that it may enable one to form some idea of the terrible castigation they would have inflicted on the enemy had it not been for the timely arrival of the Northern ironclad.

So great was the hurry that the *Virginia* was launched literally from the shipyard right into the battlefield. The *Virginia*, it may be here stated, was the name which the Southerners gave to the old frigate *Merrimac* after they had raised her and converted her into an ironclad, although the Northerners always continued to call her by her old name of *Merrimac*.

On the completion of the *Virginia* it was found that she had serious defects. She could not be driven at more than five knots an hour, and she was very slow in answering her helm. She drew twenty-three feet of water, which, owing to the narrowness of the channel and the proximity of the coast, put her in constant danger of grounding, while it enabled gunboats of lighter draught to escape by taking refuge in shallow water where the *Virginia* could not follow them.

As the *Virginia* left the dockyard on the day she was launched the shores were lined with excited crowds, proud to consider themselves the owners of the most formidable ship of war afloat. They thought she was only on her trial trip; but it was a trial trip which was fraught with death to hundreds of brave men and the destruction of an entire squadron, for, all unknown to the crowd, the *Virginia*, which had just left the dockyard, was already on her way to meet the enemy's fleet.

At Hampton Roads, on the 6th of March 1862, the Federal fleet lay at anchor, little dreaming of

the vicinity of their formidable opponent. It was a beautiful day, after a storm, and the vessels swung lazily at their moorings. About midday the officer in command of the fleet received a report that three steamers were in sight, and that it was evidently their intention to attack the Federal squadron. It was the redoubtable *Virginia*, attended by two smaller vessels. The first ships to be encountered by the Southerners were the *Congress* and *Cumberland*, which were anchored close together at Newport News. The *Virginia* came straight towards the hostile ships. She fired no shot; no man showed himself on her decks. The Federals assailed her with well-aimed discharges from their heaviest guns, but they bounded harmless from her sides. Nearer and nearer she drew, steering straight for the *Cumberland*. A moment of breathless expectation ensued, as it became evident that it was the intention of the *Virginia* to ram her opponent, an operation at that time quite unprecedented in naval warfare. Watching her opportunity, the Southern ironclad, with full steam ahead, crashed into the side of the *Cumberland*, making (to use the language of a spectator) a hole through which a horse and cart could be driven. The water rushed with a roar into her gaping side, and she commenced to fill rapidly. Nevertheless, the officer in command of the *Cumberland* continued the unequal fight. As deck after deck was submerged those guns which still continued above water were fired, until the ship went down with her colours flying. Her commander was not on board at the time, being engaged in a court of inquiry on shore. As soon as he heard that the *Virginia* was in sight he procured a horse and galloped off to Newport News, but arrived there just in time to see his fine vessel disappearing under the water. Of the *Cumberland's* crew one hundred and twenty-eight were killed in action or drowned, while of those saved a large number were wounded.

The *Congress*, which had been an eye-witness of the fate of her sister-ship, now sought protection under cover of the land batteries; but in so doing she ran ashore, where she lay a helpless target for the *Virginia*, which bored her through and through with shells, and finally set her on fire. She then surrendered; but the officers of the *Virginia* were unable to approach her in order to take possession owing to the murderous fire from the shore batteries within whose range she was.

During the fight Commodore Buchanan, the commander of the *Virginia*, was wounded and disabled, and the command devolved on Lieutenant Jones. Notwithstanding the heavy armour of the ironclad, her loss in killed and wounded so far was twenty-one. Another of the enemy's ships, the *Minnesota*, had also grounded, and the *Virginia* now turned her attention to that vessel. It was evident that she was completely at the mercy of the ironclad, and her commander had already prepared to set her on fire and then abandon her, when the *Virginia*, on the approach of night, drew off, intending to renew her work of destruction on the morrow.

The news of this eventful day was telegraphed all over the South, and caused immense rejoicing, for already in anticipation they saw the entire Northern fleet destroyed, the blockade raised, and the seaport towns of the enemy laid under contribution. But their rejoicing was premature, for the *Virginia* had only received half of her baptism of fire, and the following day was destined to be a still more notable one in the naval annals of the country.

As a matter of fact, while the unequal battle was raging in Hampton Roads, the rival ironclad was already on her way to avenge the disaster suffered by the North; about nine o'clock the same evening she arrived on the scene, several hours after the withdrawal of the *Virginia*. She was designed by a Swede named Ericsson, and had, on account of her peculiar shape, been humorously described as a cheese-box on a plank, for she presented a flat surface almost flush with the water, surmounted by a gun-turret and a small conning-tower. The construction of the *Monitor* had been ridiculed in the North, so that it had been necessary to build her under private enterprise, her inventor and builders stipulating that they were to receive no pay unless it was proved that the craft could withstand the fire of the heaviest batteries.

Next morning the *Virginia* reappeared on the scene, intending to give the *coup de grâce* to the *Minnesota*. This latter vessel was in her old position; but alongside of her was a curious-looking craft which the Southerners at once knew to be the *Monitor*. The Northern ironclad steered directly for the *Virginia*, whereupon the latter slowed down her engines as if to better survey her new adversary. As the two vessels approached, the *Virginia* opened fire on her opponent, which was promptly returned. It soon became apparent to the commander of the *Virginia* that the turret of the *Monitor* was invulnerable, and as she was level with the water and had no broadside at which to aim, the shot passed harmlessly over her. He now directed his attention to the conning-tower with better result, for a shell struck directly in front of the sight-hole, and Lieutenant Worden, in command, received a wound in the face which temporarily blinded him, the command devolving on Lieutenant Greene.

After two hours of hard fighting the ironclads had been able to make no impression on one another, the armour on either side having proved to be invulnerable. Lieutenant Jones, in command of the *Virginia*, thereupon determined to ram his opponent, or, failing in that manœuvre, to grapple with her and board her. Owing to the defective steering-gear of the *Virginia* nearly an hour was spent in trying to bring her into the proper position to effect this operation, and the movement was taken by onlookers as an attempt to retreat, or at least as evidence that the Southern ironclad had been seriously damaged. When at last the *Virginia* had got into the required position it was found that she

could not get enough headway to effect a decisive blow, for her chimney had been so riddled with shot that she could scarcely get enough draught to keep her engines in motion. For the same reason the idea of boarding had to be given up, the *Monitor* proving too nimble for her opponent. While at close quarters, if not actually touching her adversary, the *Monitor* fired two shots at the *Virginia*. So great was the concussion caused by this discharge that the crew of the after-guns were knocked over, bleeding profusely from the nose and ears.

All this while the vessels were so enveloped in smoke that they were to a great extent invisible to each other and to the spectators on shore, who were following with breathless excitement the progress of a contest which was destined to have such an important bearing on the war. Now and then, when one of the hostile ships, in the course of her evolutions, emerged so far from the cloud of smoke as to be distinctly visible, her appearance was greeted with ringing cheers by friends on either shore or on board the vessels of the contending fleets.

The fight had now continued for about four hours, and the *Monitor* evidently thought it useless to proceed further, as it had been proved that either ironclad was quite invulnerable to the other; she accordingly withdrew, while the *Virginia* returned to the dockyard at Norfolk to repair her injuries, and to give an opportunity to her crew to take a rest after two days of hard and exciting fighting.

This remarkable contest was decisive in more ways than one. It wrested from the South their brief hopes of naval supremacy, while it gave a lesson to the Powers of the Old World by proving decisively that the days of old wooden ships of war were numbered. Acting on the hint, they commenced with renewed impetus the construction of armour-clad vessels, the practical history of which may be said to date from the famous combat between the *Monitor* and the *Virginia*.

Both of the vessels which took part in this strange encounter met with a tragic end. A few months later, when Norfolk navy-yard was again evacuated (this time by the Confederates), the *Virginia* was destroyed to prevent her from falling into the enemy's hands, while in the same year the *Monitor* was lost at sea.

CHINESE HUMOUR.

By HELENA VON POSECK, Author of *Thekla's Decision*, *Adrift in Naples*, &c.

THE following stories, a few among the many told me in China by a Chinaman, are jotted down to give a glimpse of a little-recognised trait of Chinese character: love of fun and keen appreciation of humour.

To many a Westerner it would come as a surprise to hear the hearty laughter of the Chinese at an amusing story, and to see the merry twinkle of their almond eyes at some humorous remark. When a dispute has arisen between a foreigner and a group of Chinese, and voices are beginning to rise rather high and trouble is evidently brewing, if the foreigner can adroitly seize the comic side of the question, make a witty remark about it, and laugh good-humouredly, his opponents, if their passions are not aroused, will burst into a hearty guffaw. Then, good temper being restored, the discussion can be resumed in an amicable spirit.

Such stories naturally lose in translation, especially those which depend, for their complete understanding, upon a knowledge of Chinese customs; but many of them will forcibly remind the reader of anecdotes current in our own and other European lands.

Here is one which exemplifies the national fondness for outwitting another for personal advantage:

THE CUNNING ELDER BROTHER.

Once upon a time there were two brothers who cultivated their farm in partnership. When the season had come to harvest their rice-crops the younger asked, 'How shall we divide the crop between us?' Sao Da, the elder, answered, 'I will take the upper half, and you shall have the lower.' 'That wouldn't be fair,' said the younger man. 'If I take the top half this time, and you take it next time, will that do?' the elder asked. His brother thought there could be no objection to this plan, and contented himself with the roots and stalks, looking forward meanwhile to next year's harvest, when all the grain should be his, as it was Sao Da's this year. When seed-time came round again the younger asked, 'Shall we sow the rice now?' 'Oh,' said his brother, 'my idea is that we should plant potatoes this year.'

History does not narrate the sequel.

If our first anecdote is thoroughly Chinese, our second might very well pass muster among our French neighbours as a gasconade, reminding one strongly of the Gascon who capped the boasting stories of a friend by asserting that in his own home nothing was ever used for firewood save the batons of the numerous marshals who had from time immemorial belonged to his family. Still greater is its similarity to the tale of the two American travellers, one of whom, if I remember rightly, boasted that during his travels he had seen a cabbage as large as a house, when the other immediately rejoined that he had seen a saucepan as large as a church. The first speaker demurred

to this statement; but the other effectually silenced him by saying, 'My saucepan was made to boil your cabbage in.'

Behold, in the following story, 'Gascons' and 'tall-talkers' in China:

THE TWO BOASTERS.

Two friends were talking together. One said, 'In my house there is a bath which is so large that if three thousand men were to bathe in it they would only take up a tiny bit of space.' 'At my home,' rejoined the other, 'there is a bamboo-tree which has grown so high as to reach the sky; and, because it couldn't get any higher, the top has bent round, and grown down again till it touches the ground.' 'There never were such bamboos,' said his friend indignantly. 'If there were no such bamboos,' retorted the second speaker, 'how could your bath be bound round?' The baths of the Chinese are generally made of wood, bound together with bamboos.

The story of the would-be pawnbroker reminds us neither of Gascony nor of America, but of the Emerald Isle; for the mixture of shrewdness and simplicity which it depicts very much resembles the characteristics of the typical Irishman as represented—perhaps sometimes misrepresented—in numerous well-known anecdotes. It may be as well to premise that a pawnbroker's is one of the most respectable and lucrative businesses in China, and no one can embark in it without a considerable outlay of capital:

THE WOULD-BE PAWNBROKER.

There was once a man who took it into his head that he would like to open a pawnshop, so he questioned an acquaintance with regard to the cost of such an undertaking. 'To open a large pawnshop,' replied the other, 'would require perhaps hundreds of thousands of taels; but you might open a small one with some tens of thousands.' 'Would I need as much as all that?' exclaimed the aspirant, considerably taken aback. 'Why, I only need a counter and a few pawn-tickets.' His own view of the case evidently satisfying him, he opened a shop, with a counter and some pawn-tickets as his stock-in-trade. By-and-by a man brought a garment to pawn. The pawnbroker carefully wrote on a ticket a description of the article in question, together with the amount for which it was pledged, then gave the ticket to his customer and took the garment—*voilà tout*. The customer, however, was not satisfied, and was inconsiderate enough to ask for his money; but the pawnbroker had his answer ready. 'If I give you money,' he said, 'you will only have to give it back to me when you come to redeem your pledge. In order to save the trouble of giving and taking back, the best way will be for us to do nothing except that you shall pay the interest when you redeem the pledge.' Unfortunately I cannot enlighten my readers as to the results of this highly original way of carrying on business.

Here is a story on the very essential Chinese topic of filial duty:

THE UNFILIAL SON.

There was once upon a time a very unfilial son. So disobedient was he that if his father told him to go to the east he would go to the west; if his father told him to go to the west he invariably went towards the east. (This is a Chinese idiom for expressing contrariety of disposition.) All his life long he had been disobedient. At last the old man, as he lay on his deathbed, greatly feared that his undutiful son would not take the trouble to bury him in a favourable spot. After much cogitation he thought of a plan for ensuring what is of such vital importance in Chinese eyes. 'If I die,' he said, 'you must bury me in the water.' The father concluded that, in accordance with his usual line of conduct, the son would do the exact opposite of what he was told. So, after congratulating himself, no doubt, on his astuteness in arranging to get buried in a good place on dry land, the old man died. But, alas! his admirable scheme failed. After the father's death the young man said to himself, 'All my lifetime I have disobeyed my father; now that he is dead I will obey him this once.' So, in scrupulous obedience to the dying injunction, he buried his father in the water.

Here is a hit at the mean man, who is by no means an unusual phenomenon in the Middle Kingdom, but who there, as elsewhere, is regarded as a good subject for a jest:

THE STINGY HOST.

A very mean man once invited some acquaintances to a feast, but made such scanty provision for them that no sooner was the food placed on the table than it disappeared as if by magic. Figuratively speaking, there was scarcely a mouthful for each guest. One of the latter asked the host to have a lamp put on the table. 'Why?' asked the host in amazement. 'It is still early; it is quite light.' 'One can see nothing on the table,' was the crushing rejoinder.

Our next tale turns the tables on the guest, and shows that the genus 'bore' is known in China:

THE TEDIOUS GUEST.

A certain man was very fond of calling upon his friends; and, unfortunately, when he once got into their houses it was very difficult to get him out of them again. One day an individual whom he was honouring with a long visit got very tired of his company, but did not know how to get rid of him, as he could not very well tell him point-blank to go. So he got up and looked at the sky. 'Clouds are gathering,' he said suggestively; 'it will soon

rain.' His visitor replied with alacrity, 'If it is going to rain I mustn't go; it might rain before I reach home.' So he did not go. The unhappy host, finding this plan unavailing, racked his brains for another; and by-and-by he rose and looked out again. 'The clouds are scattering,' he said; 'perhaps it won't rain after all.' 'If it is not going to rain,' remarked the imperturbable guest, 'there is no need to hurry: I can stay on.'

The foible depicted in the following story might possibly, with some slight modifications, find its parallel among fashionable circles in England:

THE PEOPLE WHO WANTED TO SHOW OFF.

A family had just bought a new bedstead. It was very grand and ornamental, and they were anxious that a family with whom they were connected by marriage should see and admire it. But how could they manage it? It would seem rather silly to say, 'Come and look at our fine new bedstead.' A more roundabout and delicate way of proceeding must be devised. After a little cogitation a capital plan suggested itself. The materfamilias feigned illness, and lay upon the new bedstead. As had been anticipated, the other materfamilias called to inquire after her health, was ushered into the sick-room, and took her seat by the side of her friend. Now, the visitor, on her part, had really come in order to show off a new pair of shoes. Accordingly, as she sat by the bedside she raised her foot rather high so that the prettily embroidered shoes might not escape notice. Then she thus addressed the invalid: 'Housemother, what illness are you suffering from?' The lady in bed was not too ill to observe the elevated foot, and to know what was meant by it, so she replied, 'I am suffering from the same disease of the heart as yourself.'

Many another example of Chinese wit might be given; but as I do not wish to imitate the tedious guest above referred to, I will wind up with an anecdote bearing less resemblance than the others to those told among Western nations, and thereupon take my leave:

THE TANTALISING STORY-TELLER.

A passenger-boat full of people was on the point of pushing off from the shore, when a man came running up in hot haste, and asked to be taken on board. 'There's no room. We can't take you,' answered the boatmen. But he was not to be put off so easily. 'If you will let me come,' he cried, 'I will tell you a tale.' The passengers began to discuss the situation. 'We have nothing to do,' they said to each other, 'and it's very tedious. If he were to tell us a story it would while away the time.' Accordingly (regulations as to the number of passengers being by no means strict in the Flowery Land) the applicant was allowed to come on board. The passengers squeezed closer together, and so managed to make room for him, proving the truth of the German adage, 'Many patient sheep go into a small fold.' After giving the new-comer a little breathing-time, they asked for the promised story. Without hesitation he began: 'Ch'ao Ch'ao once led eight hundred and thirty thousand men (infantry and cavalry) to the south of the Yang-tze.' Ch'ao Ch'ao, we must premise, was a famous Chinese General who lived in the time of the Han dynasty, about the beginning of the Christian era, and whose deeds of prowess are still related with great gusto among his fellow-countrymen. 'On their way,' went on our story-teller, 'they had to cross a river by a bridge which consisted of a single plank. They crossed over one by one.' Here the narrator began to make noises which were supposed to represent the trampling of the steeds: *teh-teh-teh*. This went on till his audience grew rather tired of it, and at last some one said, 'Please go on with the story.' 'You must wait for them to cross the bridge,' was the answer. 'When eight hundred and thirty thousand men and horses have to cross a one-plank bridge, it won't do to hurry them; they must be careful, or they might fall into the water,' and he calmly resumed his *teh-teh-teh*. Again his audience pleaded for a continuation of the story, but again he declined to be hurried. 'They can't cross the bridge in a short time,' he said; 'they must go slowly and carefully.' So he went on with his *teh-teh-teh*, and, however much he was urged, he would say nothing else. At last the boat reached its destination, and the story was never finished, because Ch'ao Ch'ao's army had not yet had time to cross the one-plank bridge.

I DREAM.

I DREAM of a night in golden June,
I dream of a song gone by,
When Queen of a sea of stars, the moon,
Arose in the tender sky.
I dream of a boat on the silver tide
And an hour that could not last;
I dream of them still, though worlds divide
The present from the past!

I dream of the song you sang to me,
I dream of the love that woke,
Where the shining tide that flowed to the sea
To the lilies softly spoke!
I dream of the flower you wore at your heart,
The tender words you said—
I dream of them still, though wide seas part
The living from the dead.

I dream of a heart that once was mine,
And a love both deep and great,
And so through shadow and through shine
I listen and watch and wait!
Though far as earth from Heav'n above,
Sometimes to-day are you,
I know you will come at last, my love,
And make my dream come true!

CLIFTON BINGHAM.

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TALKS WITH GIRLS.

JENNY WREN AND FINE FEATHERS.

By KATHARINE BURRILL.

IF any one ever had a thoroughly suitable, sensible workaday dress it is Jenny Wren. Her plain brown coat and skirt is so useful and comfortable, and so well adapted to all weathers, that she never needs to trouble about her clothes. Really, she has no time; for a more busy, active, bustling little creature never lived. On cold winter mornings, when depressed Robins sit with drooping heads, sadly watching the bright colour fade in their smart waistcoats, Mistress Jenny gaily hops about from twig to twig and scolds the Robins roundly for their melancholy aspect. She is so merry and bright that she even infuses a little energy into the dejected-looking sparrows, and cheers the whole garden with her happy song. Brave little brown bird! you are no mere fair-weather friend, only staying here when the air is soft and the skies are clear; you make your home with us the whole year round, and help to brighten the sunless, dreary days. When the swallows are fussily packing up for their annual trip to the Nile, Jenny is planning out how she will amuse us during the winter months. She watches the last bachelor swallow, who has been giving a farewell-party to some Northern friends, sail away to the south, and then she sings us a pert little song, 'Never mind, never mind; let him go to the sunshine and the flowers. What does it matter? I am here, I am here, and will never desert you.'

Nature coloured the Macaw's feathers and gave him a shriek that is fearsome; she makes a dowdy little brown bird a pleasant companion. All human Macaws do not shriek at you, though their garments have that tendency, and all dowdy Jenny Wrens are not agreeable to meet. The art in dressing is neither to be Macawish and conspicuous, nor to stick to the brown feathers on occasions when their very plainness makes you as conspicuous as if you were coloured like the Dyer's Poodle. The Mikado was very anxious 'to make the punishment fit the crime;' women should be equally anxious to make their costume fit their environment. At present there is a wave (literally waving) of absolute unsuitability going over the country: the loose, floating lace veil. It may have looked charming thrown over our great-grandmothers' white beaver bonnets (by the way, Fanny Squeers had the same kind of veil, only green, on *her* brown beaver, when we rather gather it was unattractive); but, copied in cheap materials streaming in the wind, it is not only ridiculous but hideously unbecoming. I don't say anything about the discomfort of trailing lace or net flapping about your ears, because we all know the old saying about suffering to be beautiful. Unnecessary physical suffering never produced beauty yet, and never will. You have only to look at a tightly laced, girt-in figure to see that; a pincushion chest is the result, and a painted smile of misery painful to witness. Do not go to the other extreme and robe yourself in a floppy sack; it is just as ugly to have your clothes too loose as too tight. Every girl and woman ought to want to make herself as nice to look at as possible. It is by no means a question of money; many of the richest women are mere blots on the landscape, their wealth only serving to let them pile more uglinesses on to them. A girl with a small dress-allowance must plan it out carefully—the best results from the smallest outlay; she must never be led astray into buying anything 'kenspeckled.' Which reminds me of an American story about a girl who, with little to spend, invested quite a large number of dollars in bronze boots. At first she thought them bronzily 'a thing of beauty;' far from their remaining 'a joy for ever,' she grew to loathe them, and fervently wished they could 'fade into nothingness' and let her have her money back. Avoid bronze boots, very elaborate hats, scarlet coats, and large checks. A red coat looks, and is, charming if you have half-a-dozen; but if one coat is your portion,

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both you and your friends will be deadly sick of your Mephistophelian garment by the end of the winter. I say winter advisedly; surely no one would be so far left to herself as to wear red in summer.

I know it sounds very dull, and witty journalists say caustic things about an Englishwoman's Livery; but for a badly-off girl there is nothing like dark-blue serge. It wears for ever, it does not cockle or shrink with the damp, and you can brighten it or depress it just as you want to with blouses, collars, belts, ties, and hats. It is a good foundation-stone on which to build. One other thing: poor people cannot afford to go to sales. Shopkeepers are not philanthropists. Why should they be? Their sacrificial reductions and attractive bargains are very often great failures when you see them in the cold light of the next day, away from the crowd and electric light. You can, of course, buy materials cheaper during sale-time; but probably you buy yards of stuff you do not really want at the time and will never use. To buy material to keep is simply idiotic. As for the French Model gowns that go for half-price, they are never fresh—how could they be? They have stood gracefully in the showroom from the first day when you were invited 'to inspect our choice goods from the Paris markets' till the day when they are no longer worthy of a stand, but are ignominiously piled on a sofa. People with plenty of money (and time) to waste can buy rubbish at sales to throw away afterwards if they like; but the small-allowanced girl is wiser to leave the remnant-counter alone. Nothing looks worse than crushed and tawdry finery; yet some women seem to imagine the faded four-guinea hat, bought ('such a bargain, dear!') at twenty-seven-and-six, must look as well as when it was first tried on. Think how often it *has* been tried on; that ought to cool the bargain-hunter's ardour.

As far as possible every one should try to look fresh and clean, especially young girls. Washing materials are marvellously cheap. A white flannel blouse *clean* looks infinitely better than a satin confection that is manifestly *soiled*. There is no need to run up enormous laundry bills while you have two hands, a tin of 'Sapon,' and a bath with a hot-water tap. Any girl can buy for three shillings enough really charmingly sprigged or flowered delaine to make a fresh and dainty blouse which she can wash herself when it is dirty. The other day a friend said to me what I thought was sadly true: 'In England we are all desperately afraid of being able to use our hands, and terribly ashamed of being caught working.' Why do women want to be 'discovered' (as they say in stage directions) sitting on a chair doing nothing, and 'looking frae them like Jock the Laird's brither'? To call on people and find them all sitting about in 'elegant idleness' is anything but inspiriting. I would much rather find my hostess making curtains or nailing down the carpet than podgily clasping her hands in front of her. Are we ashamed of work? We must be, or why do people apologise for opening their front-door? It's their own door, and they are quite at liberty to open it or bang it in my face as they feel inclined. Who cares one straw if the cook has gone to see a sick aunt and the parlour-maid is away for a holiday? I do not see the use of keeping a dog and barking myself, so I do not persistently open the front-door; but I should not apologise even if I found a bishop or a publisher on the doorstep! Girls! do not be ashamed of using your fingers. 'Can do is easily carried about,' and a much better companion than what the Chinaman calls 'No can do no savvy.'

If a girl goes out a good deal, has no maid, and a small allowance, she must learn to make her own frocks. By the way, what *is* a small allowance? I should say fifteen pounds a year; but a smart society maiden would probably say five hundred pounds, so it really is a question of degree. Also, it is a question of tips and presents. Seraphina with thirty pounds, a rich aunt, and a clever maid, will make a better show than Iolanthe with one hundred and fifty pounds, no maid, and never a tip. If you live in the country you do not require half the money you would have to spend in London. Parents who can afford it should give their girls a good allowance, and let them have plenty of pretty things. We are only really young once. 'Autumn's best light' may bring us a second youth, a sort of Indian summer; but there is none of 'the wild freshness of morning,' nothing of that delightful irresponsibility that belongs to youth alone. We may 'pass for thirty-five in the dusk, with the light behind us,' but we cannot face the full flood of the noontide sun. We may have young hearts, but the elasticity has left our steps, we are laggards in the race; rose-crowned youth flashes past us on the white road, Youth the Conqueror! whose radiant eyes do not see the milestones by the way. Let him deck himself with green-and-gold, and wreath his chariot with flowers; soon enough comes the day when his face is veiled, and he creeps along in the shadows. The young love what is bright and pretty; let them have it. For a mother to dress herself in the height of the fashion and give her daughter poor, shabby clothes is a depth of meanness I do not like to think about. It is too contemptible for a mother to be jealous of the pretty young face, and begrudge it its little triumphs. Women want to eat their cake and have it too. Kept cake gives you indigestion. They want to have the best in youth and the best in age, totally forgetting in their inane stupidity that clinging to the rags of youth only spoils their old age and makes it ridiculous. It is much better to grow old gracefully and charmingly than to pant heavily after youth who has spread his golden pinions and is sailing airily away. Wigs will not catch him, nor bottles of hair-dye; and he is not to be entrapped by the most skittish white muslin

and babyish toque. A woman who knows *how* to grow old lures youth back by the very reasonableness of her beauty; he will touch the white hair with his wings and bring a soft flush to the cheek and a light in the tired eyes. Old age can and ought to be beautiful, full of sympathy for the young things whose stumbling feet are just beginning to feel their way, full of wise counsels and tenderness for mistakes, never forgetting that though experience teaches, yet the road of experience is a hard one to travel. Old age should want to pick up the flints and clear the road, not put obstacles in the way. Do you remember that most beautiful of old gentlewomen, Madame de Florac? Certainly she was French; but we all know other English Madame de Floracs who are just as charming.

There is one other thing I would like to say about Girls' dress-allowances: what are they expected to cover? Is it to be everything, including stamps, railway journeys, tips to servants, and presents, or does it only mean actual hats, clothes, and boots? Parents should make it quite clear to a girl what exactly they mean her to do with her money before they give it her. Stampage and journey-money make tremendous holes; an allowance to cover them would need to be a fairly substantial one if a girl is to be well-dressed also. Lucky young women who have a really good allowance—say one hundred pounds a year—have no right to go about scrubby and shabby, and then for excuse say they give all their money away in charity. It's extremely unfair to their parents. A father gives his daughter sufficient money to make her a presentable member of society; he is quite justified in being annoyed when she appears like a last year's 'Tattiebogle' or a perambulating rag-bag. I do not care how much she gives away; it's not her money to give. A tired man likes to see his womenkind look bright and pretty in the evening; he pays for the clothes, and he certainly has every right to expect to see them. I am not a believer in the 'any old black rag for home' theory. Why not dress up for your own people as much as you do for strangers?

> And gi'e to me my bigonet,
> My bishops' satin gown,
> For I maun tell the bailie's wife
> That Colin's come to town.
> My Turkey slippers maun gae on,
> My hose o' pearl-blue;
> 'Tis a' to please my ain gudeman,
> For he's baith leal and true.

All this magnificence, the bishops' satin, the bigonet, and the pearl-blue hose, were not for a distinguished visitor, nor for a tea-party at the Provost's; they were 'a' to please my ain gudeman.' Bravo, Mistress Colin! you know how to appreciate your 'leal and true' gudeman, and you do not stop at dressing yourself in your finest clothes. The house is tidied, ilka thing must look braw, and 'twa fat hens' must at once be killed and cooked in case Colin is hungry. The children, too, are not forgotten; they must don their best. 'Give little Kate her button-gown and Jock his Sunday coat. Now, do you not think the wife of gudeman Colin was a very wise, sensible, and happy woman? And is it not a great pity that wives do not all agree with her that 'There's nae luck aboot the hoose when oor gudeman's awa'?

Many women love clothes; they are born so, and cannot help it. Our own good Queen Bess was one, and poor unhappy Josephine another. They will have frocks and frills and furbelows whether they can pay for them or not. Intense love of dress becomes a Mania; if any one feels it coming on, it is as well to nip it in the bud before it becomes violent. You can hardly blame a pretty woman for wanting quantities of beautiful things; to-day the gowns are beautiful, and as flimsy and expensive as they are lovely; but even the prettiest woman would do well to pause before she runs up enormous bills that she can never possibly pay. The bill must be paid some day; however far off it looks, the Day of Reckoning is bound to come, and very often the Day of Reckoning means the Day of Financial Smash. A woman is no better than an irresponsible idiot who ruins her husband and breaks up the home for the sake of clothes. You see in the papers descriptions and prices of gowns that fairly make you gasp. Is it possible for one woman (with an empty head) to represent so much money, exclusive of jewels, at one time? I hope it is an exaggeration that women pay twenty pounds for a white muslin blouse and fifteen pounds for a petticoat; but if they do, then all I can say is, they have very little to do with their money. When the upper classes are overdressed and loaded with chains and bangles, the lower grades of society naturally follow suit, and the results are not pleasing. Pearls are beautiful, even imitation pearls; we think of the wonderful ropes of pearls that Lothair bought for Theodora, of Cleopatra melting pearls in a goblet of wine, and we look out of the window to see the milk-girl and greengrocer's girl in pleasant converse at the area-gate, each sporting a pearl dog-collar of blatant and awful hideousness. You meet long pearl chains in tram-cars in conjunction with tweed skirts and coffee coats. It's not the pearls being imitation I object to; it is the incongruity of their surroundings. What induces women, many of them who ought to know better, to wear ear-rings when their ears are unpierced? The screwed or clamped-on ear-ring looks hideous, especially when it is an enormous paste-bead or a slab of turquoise that never saw a turquoise-mine. When the ears have been pierced, and the ear-rings are *real* and really beautiful, they are a very effective and charming decoration. I am not so narrow-minded as to talk of nose-rings and other East Indian adornments as some people do; but the ear-ring should hang from the ear. Beautiful jewels enhance the beauty of a beautiful woman; a short, fat, dumpy woman plastered over with pearls and diamonds, with a tiara like a five-barred gate above her round face

and knobbly forehead, only draws attention to her plainness by the glitter and sparkle. People must dress to suit their own particular form of beauty (or ugliness), and wear what is becoming to them, not merely what happens to be the fashion of the moment. The best dressers have a certain individuality about their clothes. If you can only afford the plainest, simplest, and cheapest garments, you can always put them on carefully; have a clean face and well-brushed hair. Really well-dressed hair, smooth and glossy, makes a shabby gown look well. A head like a furze-bush would spoil the smartest frock ever made. Girls can look very nice and very charming without spending a fortune, especially if they choose what is becoming.

I wish it were possible for young girls to wear more white; they never look so nice as in simple white frocks. Alas! white frocks are an extravagant item, though there is a delicious butter-muslin at twopence-halfpenny a yard that washes beautifully. We love white; is it to be wondered at? We are wrapped in white when we first make our entry into the world, and we are wrapped in white when we leave it. May the All-Merciful forgive the dust and the grime that our skirts have gathered, and see only the white soul that we brought with us in the beginning. White is emblematic; you remember the 'clad in white samite mystic wonderful.' A little child wears white, so does a girl at her confirmation; and, if it's only made of nun's veiling, a girl should wear white on her wedding-day. If we go from the sublime to the ridiculous, we remember that Tilburina went stark mad in white satin and the confidante in white linen; poor confidante, she had a hard life of it! She had to 'weep when she weeps, smile when she smiles, go mad when she goes mad'—and no one ever was madder than Tilburina. 'You observed how she mangled the metre.'

However much money a girl has to spend, she would be well advised not to ruin herself in scent. I say scent, not scents, for no sane person ever buys different scents; she makes up her mind which is her own particular scent and sticks to it. To meet a person drenched in 'Eau d'Espagne' or reeking of violets is anything but pleasant. If you do use scent it must be very faint, elusive, and lingering—just a faint, unconscious perfume about everything you possess. This is not arrived at by shaking a bottle of 'White Rose' on to a pocket-handkerchief. Sometimes a scent brings back old, forgotten, far-off things; the very perfume tinged 'with the tender grace of a day that is dead.' Certain scents we associate with people, others with places. Mint-sauce is not romantic, but it always reminds me of a quaint little garden by the banks of the Tweed, where the height of bliss was to pick and eat mint. There was southernwood in that garden too; in imagination I can smell it now. I once knew a girl boxed up in Switzerland miles from the sea who used to walk ever so far to sniff a paling painted with tar. I know nothing more delightfully British than tar; and what greater joy can the exiled Scot have than to bury his face in a bush of heather?—and the misguided English call it Heath!

Smells are surer than sounds or sight
To make your heart-strings crack;
They start those awful voices o' nights
That whisper 'Old man, come back.'
That must be why the big things pass,
And the little things remain;
Like the smell of the wattle by Lichtenberg,
Riding in, in the rain.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXXI.—UNDER THE GALLOWS KNOB.

THE low-lying island upon which we found ourselves was certainly a dismal, out-of-the-world place, covered by rank grass and nettles, and yellow with St John's wort. Ruined walls were scattered around the Castle of Threave itself, a square, roofless tower, which, in the bleakness of its gaunt and terrible majesty, suggested the idea of an armed skeleton in the facial apertures of which lay the darkness of death and decay.

This was the monument of the Douglases' pride and the engine of their oppression during their galling ascendency, when Archibald rode with his retinue of two thousand armed retainers, many of them the most noted desperadoes, and ravaged the Border. The huge fourteenth-century fortress, once the pride of kings, was still a massive pile, with walls nearly seventy feet high, built of common gray moorstone.

Around the castle were the remains of a strong barbican, flanked at each angle by a circular tower, which had been secured in front by a deep fosse and vallum, both water and walls of the latter having long since disappeared.

Then, standing outside—while the rest of the party, seated on the grass, were eating their luncheon, laughing merrily, and thoroughly enjoying the novelty of reaching such a place—Mr Batten pointed to a large granite bracket projecting from the front of the castle, high up near the roof: the far-famed 'Gallows Knob' or 'Hanging Stone,' which the Black Douglas was wont to boast was never without a 'tassel,' either in the shape of a malefactor, or, if none such were in custody, some unoffending vassal!

* Copyright, 1904, by William Le Queux.

When the Douglases maintained their power in Galloway, the deeds committed within that grim, gray fortress were such as to invest it with fearful interest. Indeed, as I stood there with Walter Wyman, apart from the gay Crailloch house-party, gazing up at the high gray walls that had once sheltered the old soldier-monk and chronicler Godfrey Lovel, I recollected how well the weird-like halo that, to the present day, surrounds the place is expressed in those plaintive lines of the unfortunate Inglis of Torsonce:

> Threave's Castle looms as dark by day,
> With its walls of moorland gray,
> And the sad and sullen stream
> Which, like some dank, unwholesome dream,
> Creeps on its stagnant way,
> In mossy pool and quagmire pent
> Around the island battlement.
> Dismal is the granite pile
> With barbican and flanking tower,
> That frown beneath the merry smile
> Of laughing noontide hour.
> Dismal is the island when,
> With herbage rank and stunted thorn
> That clothe the blood-besprinkled fen
> In leaf and bough forlorn,
> Some evil spirit haunts it yet.

Mr Batten was called over to the luncheon-party by Connie Fenwicke, who cried, 'I say, Mr Batten, leave the author to meditate, and come and have something to eat.—And you also, Captain Wyman. Allan will come when he 's hungry; he 's feasting on ruins at present.'

Wyman excused himself for a moment, but Mr Batten succumbed to the temptation of cold partridge and claret.

With Walter I walked behind one of the round flanking towers, scrambling over the fallen masonry, and when out of sight of the others we commenced to carefully search for any traces of previous visitors. The rank grass and weeds were trodden down here and there by recent footsteps; but we concluded that it had been done by some of our party who had wandered about the place prior to our own landing. We wondered whether Lord Glenelg or his companions had already been there; but the absence of any evidence that the laird's boat had been used for months convinced us that they had not.

'Our first direction is to follow the shadow of the keep to its easterly angle when the sun shines, at 3.30, on the 17th of September. This we cannot do for nearly three weeks,' I remarked. 'Yet it will be half-past three before we leave to-day, and we shall then, at any rate, be able to see the vicinity of the spot, although we cannot fix it exactly until the day and hour indicated.'

'I wonder whether we shall really find the casket?' Walter said eagerly. 'To me this seems just the sort of place where some treasure lies buried. The day before we left town I went to the British Museum and looked up the history of the place. Our record in The Closed Book is certainly borne out by history. Maxwell of Terregles was keeper of the Threave in Godfrey's day, the dawn of the Reformation, and seems to have had rather a rough time of it, just as the old monk has written. John Gordon of Lochinvar; Dean Vaus of Soulseat; the Macdowalls of Freuch and of Mindork, who burned Brodick Castle and invaded Arran; and James Earl of Rothwell, of Earlston, as mentioned by Godfrey Lovel, were all his prominent contemporaries. Therefore it is certainly likely that the ex-favourite of Lucrezia Borgia did actually conceal the casket entrusted to him somewhere on this island, which in his day was, of course, impregnable.'

'I quite agree,' I answered, looking wonderingly around. 'Of course, the directions are complicated, purposely no doubt; and to-day it seems quite useless to attempt to follow them. We must arouse no suspicion of our intentions.'

'We shall require assistance when we really do investigate,' my companion remarked.

'Then we 'll take Fred into our confidence. He would thoroughly enter into the spirit of the thing—that I know.'

We walked back to where the others were still seated on the grass, in the shadow of the high gray wall, with its grim 'hanging-knob,' and a chorus of jeers at my studious nature greeted me.

'Going to write a book, I suppose, Allan?' cried Sammy Waldron, his mouth full of sandwich. 'Put me in it, old fellow. I 'm good-looking enough to be a hero, am I not?'

'What!' exclaimed Jack Handsworth, pausing to light a cigar. 'Is that really your face, Sammy?' Whereat the walls of the old place gave back echoes of wild laughter.

Bertie Sale opened a bottle of soda clumsily, and squirted it in a lady's face; and Mrs Payling, to whom Walter turned his attention, was discovered actually talking frocks with Connie, and was allowed to continue, for both men and women admired her for being so well turned-out on every occasion.

Fred Fenwicke and Connie looked after every one's comfort. On such occasions they never took servants. Every one helped himself and looked after a lady, and as such *al fresco* luncheons were weekly in the shooting season, this kind of entertainment had been brought to a fine art.

The men smoked and idled, some of them lying stretched upon the grass, while others escorted the ladies around the ruins, the chief excitement being the loss of Connie's Aberdeen 'Jack,' a one-eyed dog of Satanic expression and cunning, the terror of Campbell, the sturdy, good-humoured gamekeeper of Crailloch.

The afternoon was absolutely perfect, with as blue a sky as is ever seen in Italy, and across the wide sweep of river, towards Greenlaw, rose the long, low heathery hills.

From where we idled Mr Batten pointed out to us the peaks Bengairn and Cairntosh and the highlands of Balmaghie, and related several archæological

facts that, in view of our forthcoming explorations, were of intense interest to us.

'You see that great rugged hole in the wall halfway up the front of the castle?' he said, pointing to it. 'The hole looks almost like a window, but it is a breach made by the cannon known as Mons Meg, now to be seen at Edinburgh Castle. The piece of artillery was made by a blacksmith and his sons at Buchan, and was used by the king in his operations against Threave. The charge consisted of a peck of gunpowder and a granite ball the weight of a Carsphairn cow. The first discharge produced a panic among the inmates of the castle, and the second shot went through the walls and carried away the right hand of the Countess, the celebrated Fair Maid of Galloway, as she sat at table in the banqueting-hall about to raise a wine-cup to her lips. The garrison quickly surrendered, and the blacksmith was granted the forfeited lands of Mollance and Barncrosh.'

'Curious!' I remarked. 'Only a legend, I suppose?'

'Not at all—a historical fact. As late as 1841 Mr Gordon of Greenlaw, tenant of this island, discovered an immense granite ball which, on examination, was found to be a bullet, in all respects the same as those belonging to Mons Meg, while a massive gold ring inscribed "Margaret de Douglas" was discovered by a workman employed to clear out some rubbish when the castle was repaired as a barrack for French prisoners. This was the actual ring supposed to have been on the hand of the Fair Maid of Galloway when it was blown away at the siege.'

Such discovery caused hope to arise within us. I exchanged glances with Wyman, and saw that he considered this additional evidence that treasure might be hidden beneath that turf on which we were lounging.

Presently we all rose to rejoin the party, and again Walter and I managed to separate ourselves from the rest and strolled around the small marshy island.

It was ten minutes past three, and the sun, still shining brightly, cast a long, straight, sharply defined shadow in the direction of the broad river and the high land of Greenlaw. The great square tower was higher on the eastern angle than the western; therefore from its position to the sun the eastern angle threw a longer shadow, which, together, we followed through the grass-grown ditch which was once the fosse, and up the bank; then, counting forty-three paces, we halted at a spot covered with nettles and grass.

'The starting-point for measurements must be somewhere here. Fifty-six paces with the face towards Bengairn,' I remarked. 'I'm no astronomer; but I suppose that on the date mentioned the shadow will be more to eastward or to westward. We will, at any rate, mark this spot;' and, finding a piece of broken hurdle, used some time or other to pen in cattle which had grazed on the island, I stuck it deeply in the ground just at the farthermost point of the great oblong shadow across the grass.

Wyman had been standing thinking when I did this, and when I had finished he took out his cigarettes, deliberately lit one, and then said:

'Those instructions are all very well; but has it ever struck you that since they were written the calendar has been altered? What was the 17th of September in the sixteenth century is not the 17th in the present day.'

'By Jove!' I gasped; 'I never thought of that. Our modern calendar is not the same as in King Henry's time.'

(To be continued.)

THE WILD-DOG OF ENNERDALE.

THOUGH wolves and other ravening beasts have long been exterminated out of Britain, the sheep-farmer has still to contend with the killing and maiming of his flock by foes from within his own household. Speaking as President of the Board of Agriculture, Lord Onslow recently declared that the slaughter of sheep by savage dogs has become so serious that it would justify the enactment of a canine curfew bell, after the ringing of which no dog must be out of doors. A Bill to this end has since been introduced in the present session of Parliament. In Perthshire, for instance, hundreds of sheep were killed last year by prowling dogs, as many as twenty sheep being worried to death in one flock in a single night. Circumstances, rather than innate vice, account for a dog's decivilisation and sudden return to the slaughtering and hunting trait of its wild ancestors. In severe weather, either snow or long-continued rain, sheep lose themselves and die on the upper fells and in mountain hollows. The dog finds them and makes a hearty meal. The taste of raw flesh rouses the dog's slumbering blood-lust, and it seeks for more. After it has once been 'blooded,' the dog does not hesitate to attack stray sheep and to make midnight forays on a flock.

Any dog may thus turn sheep-worrier, and each pursues its victim after its kind. The bull-dog is a rare offender, for it lacks speed; but, taking a sheep unawares, it flies at its nose and throat. The greyhound runs down a sheep as it does a hare, grabbing it by the loin or tossing it over into the air. Pointers or setters are the most destructive dogs among sheep by reason of their speed and strength; but they

usually attack in the daytime, so that detection is more easy. They run down a sheep, and springing on its flank, bite into its flesh until the quarry is brought to a standstill, and the defenceless victim is speedily despatched. Foxhounds rarely worry sheep; mongrels are frequent offenders; but the most dangerous of all is the sheep-dog. It is too clever and cunning to go hunting in its own flock, but at midnight sneaks away two or three miles to a neighbouring farm. With never a bark or faintest yelp, it flies at the sheep's throat, overturns it, and throttles it. In its mad lust for slaughter the dog often leaves its victim mortally struggling and dashes off to kill another sheep, for the dog seeks pleasure merely, and not food. Sometimes the sheep-dog takes a younger dog with him and initiates him into the sport of slaughter. After a lively hour or two spent in this midnight destruction, the dog rolls itself well in the grass and returns home clean and tidy, to be found in its kennel ready for breakfast and work. By such malicious cunning the dog may escape detection for months, and the unsuspecting farmer is at his wits'-end to discover the ravager of his flock, which is reduced sometimes by forty lambs in a single night.

Once detected in sheep-worrying, a dog has short shrift. Whatever its value or its master's affection for it, death is the penalty, for the vice is ineradicable. On the Cumbrian fells a series of such cases brings the shepherds together on a dog-hunting expedition. It is a grimly serious business. The dogs—they nearly always worry in couples—become alive to the danger of their situation, and with rare cunning select the weakest point of the enclosing cordon to break away, so that the hunt often extends into days before a lucky shot bowls over the marauders. The fame of the wild-dog of Ennerdale still exists in Cumberland, and it is indeed a story of remarkable interest. Once a tiger has been marked down in India it rarely escapes to be hunted another day, and even in the great Russian forests a wolf can barely hope to escape its pursuers. But for five months, less than a century ago, a dog defied the organised attempts at its death of the entire county of Cumberland, and continued unchecked its ravages among the sheep and lambs. It was a large smooth-coated dog, of tawny colour, with tigerish stripes, most probably a cross between a mastiff and a greyhound. Whence it came was never known; but suddenly in May 1810 it appeared in Lower Ennerdale, and commenced its destruction among the flocks. Thenceforward it fed on living mutton, pulling down a sheep and tearing the flesh from its quivering body. Often it killed seven or eight sheep in a night, for it seldom fed during the day. With instinctive cunning, it never attacked the same flock on successive nights, but went farther afield, to return to its first hunting-ground when the alarm had subsided. Not a single bark or growl broke the silence of its ravaging. It invariably attacked the plumpest sheep, and overthrowing it, bit into the jugular vein and drank the hot blood.

Many and furious were the dalesmen's chases after this dog. The farmers and their employees divided themselves into two bands, which watched the fells alternate nights with hounds and guns to hand. A shot or a shout was the signal of the dog's discovery; but this was seldom heard, for it did its work in the least-suspected district and with diabolical stealthiness and silence. Now and again it was seen in the daytime, and all took up the chase. Ploughmen unyoked their horses and farmers left their cart by the roadside to ride bare-backed in pursuit. When their horses failed, the riders left them and continued the chase on foot, throwing aside hats and coats which hindered progress. With its long galloping stride, the 'girt dog' led its pursuers ten or fifteen miles across country, and, finally shaking them off, left them to a weary homeward journey in the darkness. That very night or the next the dog resumed its deadly work on its old ground. So easily did it outdistance its hunters that it would even turn and wait for the leading hound of the pack. Then its powerful jaws closed on the forelegs of its pursuer, so that no hound would attack it twice.

Poison and traps were laid in vain, and the slaughter of sheep went on unchecked for weeks. Hired men were called in to recruit the ranks of watchers, for the male folk of Ennerdale were exhausted with their constant vigils and chases. Field-labour was almost entirely neglected, crops wasted, cows were sometimes left unmilked, horses unfed, and hay uncut, because the men were hunting the sheep-killing dog, and their womenkind were worn-out with doing the men's work on the farm. Children were terrified, and feared to go to school or into the fields, though the dog always fled hastily from the sight of man. Once it slunk out of a corn-field thirty yards ahead of a farmer; but at the critical moment the rustic's gun missed fire.

In July, two months after the dog's first appearance, a fund was raised for the hire of a good pack of foxhounds. The runs which ensued surpassed any ever afforded by reynard. Once the dog led two hundred men and the hounds from Kinniside by Wastwater to the coast at Seascale, and eluded them. Two or three times a week the dog was thus hunted out of Ennerdale; but any hope that it would not return was shattered by the speedy discovery of more carcasses of sheep. One Sunday morning the watchers returning from their nightly vigil espied the lurking tawny form of the marauder. In full chase the hounds and men swept by Ennerdale Church, and out came the men of the congregation and joined the pursuit. Even the vicar left his sermon and, flinging aside his surplice, followed hot on the trail. That day's stern-chase ended fruitlessly at Cockermouth. Another day it was a twenty-mile run to the Derwent; as long a chase o'er fell and fen to St Bees ended in the surrounding of the dog; but through the very legs of one of the hunters it got clear away to safety and more slaughter. As the harvest approached, the standing

corn afforded good shelter for the beast, and the pursuit was slackened until the fields were cut. But before this was done the end came. The 'girt dog' was seen to enter a corn-field, and armed men were quickly summoned to surround it. Hounds drove out the beast; but in the fusillade it was only wounded. Away it went, hounds and men pell-mell after it. The foremost pursuer found the dog coolly bathing its bleeding paw in the Eden River, while the hounds fearfully splashed around it, not daring to attack. Again the dog got away for the moment; but running into the path of a pursuer, it was bowled over by a shot at close quarters. It was now the 12th of September, exactly five months after the dog's first appearance, during which time it had defied the attack of the entire population, and had destroyed hundreds of sheep. Its name as 't'girt dog' was well justified, for its carcass was found to weigh eight stones. Stuffed and exhibited in the Keswick Museum, it was long an object of wonder, and to this day its demoniac career is quoted round Cumbrian firesides.

AN UNDERSTUDY.

PART II.

I WOKE in broad daylight with a racking headache and a terrible feeling of sickness. Heavens! how hard the bed was! Susan *must* shake it better. Bed! What caused me to be lying on the floor? And where? I pressed my hands to my eyes, and the events of the past evening came slowly and painfully back to me. I staggered up, and reeled dizzily against the table.

There was a water-tap in the corner of the kitchen, and I held my head under the cold stream and took a long gulp. I took out my watch; it had stopped at four that morning. That was curious, for I always wound it in the morning, and it should have gone till now—towards noon, to judge by the sun, which streamed in at the window.

I tried the handle of the kitchen door, and it opened. I stood and listened; there was no sound of movement in the house. The back-door was locked, but the key was in the lock; in a moment I was outside, almost falling over a milk-can which stood on the step. The side-gate by which we had entered the night before was secured by a padlock, but I climbed it and stood in the road. I glanced at the house-front; the blinds were drawn down, and no smoke came from the chimneys. Then I made my way to Lewisham Station.

While waiting for the next train to town I did what nearly every man does, however great his distress or excitement—I bought a morning paper. I opened it at the middle, and was folding it back when the topmost line of the page caught my eye, and I gasped with astonishment: 'Saturday, November 17.' Saturday! I had lain sleeping in that house two nights and a day! Drugged, then. But how? And for what dreadful purpose? What had been going on while I was thus put out of the way? A terrible fear seized me. A sweat broke out all over me, and my hands shook till the paper rustled loudly. I dreaded to look further; but at last I nerved myself, and cast my eyes down the short summary of news. The longest paragraph of all was as follows:

'A daring robbery was discovered yesterday morning in the West End. Sir Andrew de Boinville, the well-known collector of precious stones and antiques, was found insensible in his library, having evidently been drugged. The apartment and the safe in the bedroom behind had been rifled of nearly all their priceless contents, including the Lalonde collection of diamonds recently purchased by Sir Andrew. The butler, William Morris, who waited on Sir Andrew at dinner on Thursday night, and who has been twenty years in his service, has disappeared. The missing valuables are estimated to be worth upwards of two hundred thousand pounds.'

'The butler, William Morris, who waited on Sir Andrew at dinner on Thursday night'! Thursday night—when I sat handcuffed in the silent house at Blackheath! My brain whirled. Then, at last, a light dawned on me, and I saw the whole daring, villainous plot. Another—my chief assailant—had personated me. He was a man of my own build—was my own height to half-an-inch or less; he had a similarly shaped head. The busy fingers of the small man's right hand as they worked behind the screen, his eyes turning to and from my face, had done the rest. A 'made-up' William Morris had served my master that night—had drugged and robbed him.

I was turning over the sheet to find the further particulars when a hand was laid quietly on my arm. I turned and saw a well-dressed man at my side.

'Mr William Morris, I think?' he said.

'I am.'

'Then I must arrest you on a charge of stealing diamonds and other valuables from the house of your master, Sir Andrew de Boinville,' he continued; 'and anything you say may be used as evidence against you.'

I was cool now. 'I have a complete answer to the charge, and will come with you quietly,' I said. 'But just tell me one thing: is Sir Andrew in any danger?'

'I warn you not to commit yourself,' said the detective, looking curiously at me.

'Is he in danger? For Heaven's sake tell me!' I cried impatiently.

'No, I believe not, now,' he replied.

'Thank God!' I exclaimed. 'And now take me quickly; I've a ticket for Charing Cross.'

The detective stared, but made no comment. A train coming in at that moment, he took me into an empty carriage, and made the guard lock the door. From Charing Cross we drove in a cab to —— Street Police Station.

The detective gave his account of my arrest accurately, including, of course, my reply and question as to Sir Andrew.

The superintendent eyed me curiously. 'You say he did not attempt to evade arrest in any way?'

'Not in the least.'

'And he had already booked for Charing Cross?'

'Yes.' The detective produced the ticket, which he had not given up to the collector.

'Do you wish to make any statement to me?'

I told my tale, to which the officer listened attentively. He turned to his desk, wrote a short letter, addressed it, and handed it silently to a constable. Then he motioned me to take a seat.

Twenty minutes later a cab drove up to the office; another moment and my master entered. He looked terribly worn and ill; partly, as I guessed, from the effects of the drug, and partly, as I gathered later, from the blow to his pride. Indeed, I believe the actual loss of a couple of hundred thousand pounds' worth of jewels affected him far less than the thought that a man had lived with him twenty years and deceived him.

'Morris!' he exclaimed on seeing me, startled out of his usual silent calm.

'He was arrested an hour ago, Sir Andrew,' said the superintendent. 'He makes a curious statement, and there are facts about his arrest which I felt it better you should hear at once.—Tell Sir Andrew of the arrest, Milne.'

'I arrested the prisoner at Lewisham Station. He was standing on the up-platform reading a newspaper. He seemed more staggered at what he was reading than at his arrest. He made no resistance, and had a ticket for Charing Cross in his possession.'

'Now, tell your story,' said the superintendent to me.

I did so, and the officer compared it with the notes he had taken of my first account. When I had finished he turned to my master.

'You say, Sir Andrew, that this man returned on Thursday evening about 6.30, served you as usual at dinner and up to nine o'clock, when he handed you what proves to have been a heavily drugged cup of coffee. Do you think it absolutely impossible that your servant that night could have been a cleverly got-up—er—fac-simile of William Morris?'

'I should certainly have *thought* it impossible that I could be so imposed upon,' said my master.

The officer sat silent a minute.

'Did you give your servant any order which it is quite impossible any one but Morris could have obeyed? Or did you happen to ask him any question about his private affairs—about the uncle he had been to see, for instance?'

'I rarely enter into conversation with my servants, and *never* about their private affairs,' said my master emphatically and somewhat stiffly.

The superintendent passed his hand across his mouth. I am used to my master's ways, but it struck me, and I think the officer also, that a little friendly conversation now and again between master and servants might have kept the Lalonde diamonds in their right place.

'If he imposed on you, Sir Andrew, I suppose the other servants might not detect him?'

'No. And from seven till nine he need see very little of them.'

'About dinner,' continued the superintendent: 'I suppose he would merely have to go to and from the kitchen with the dishes. But how about the wine? Could he get the right brands from your cellar?'

'He would not need to go to the cellar at all. Just now I am only drinking a light claret, and Morris should, and doubtless does, bring it from the bin to his room early in the day in order to take the chill off. Wine should change temperature gradually.'

There was a minute's silence. Then the superintendent took up his pen and said, 'Well, Sir Andrew, do you charge Morris with the robbery?'

My master hesitated. I felt my forehead grow damp with anxiety, and drew my handkerchief from my pocket. Sir Andrew started from his chair. 'By Jove!' he cried, 'I had forgotten. Show me your left thumb.'

Astonished, I held it out. He glanced at it; then for the first time in twenty years he shook my right hand warmly.

'William,' he said, 'I heartily ask your pardon. If I did not know you to be above dishonesty, at least I might have known you were above clumsiness.'—He turned to the superintendent. 'His handkerchief recalled what I suppose the drug helped me to forget. I am old-fashioned enough to carve my own game. The knife seemed to be blunt, and I handed it to—Morris's "double" to be steeled. In sharpening it he cut the end of his left thumb. I saw it bleed sharply till he bandaged it. It was a slight cut, skin-deep; but I am sure it is visible on his hand this morning. It should prove a useful clue.'

'I am afraid, Sir Andrew, that he is beyond such a clue by now; he has had thirty-six hours' start. We've been looking for William Morris—plain or coloured; now we've got to begin and look for Heaven knows whom—but a smart man, whoever he is.'

'I can't quite understand the scoundrel's treating Morris so gently,' said my master.

'Well, you see,' said the officer, 'they secured a long start—two nights and a day—by drugging him. Besides, in such a very risky game, they did not want to have a murder to answer for if it failed. As

it is, had you discovered the fraud you could have brought no very serious charge. The man would very likely have sworn it was done for a joke or a wager.'

The superintendent was right. The thirty-six hours' start proved too much for the police, who, although they professed to get clues once or twice, never got so far as an arrest. Nor were the bulk of the stolen jewels ever recovered. One or two items, including what he felt sure were some of the diamonds, came into my master's hands as time went on, from American and Continental dealers. Of course I took the police to the Blackheath house, and found it just as I left it. It had been placed in the charge of care-takers a couple of months before, when the family went to the Riviera for the winter; and the care-takers—a man and a woman—had vanished.

But though, after every investigation, the police failed to lay their hands on either men or jewels, they had a theory as to how the thieves got their knowledge of the house and of Sir Andrew's habits—and mine. They made out that the girl Susan was so repressed and sat on by Mrs Stevens and me that, not being allowed to talk her fill to us of what went on outside, she let her tongue wag about the house and its ways when she was outside herself. Anyway, she had to admit that she might have let drop just a word or two about how dull and quiet the place was, and so on, to a young policeman whom she used to walk out with; and, sure enough, it turned out that her friend had retired from the force and disappeared a week or two before the robbery. Also, a porter at Lewisham Station remembered that a man answering the description of the smaller rascal had hung about the platform several Thursday afternoons during the autumn. And, considering the value of the stake, it is not difficult to see how a gang of clever scoundrels could play the game as well as they did.

Of course there were plenty of people who hinted to my master that I was nevertheless one of the gang. But having doubted me once, he seemed determined not to admit such an idea again; and as it is ten years and more ago, the most suspicious minds must admit that I am waiting very patiently for my share of any advantage from the plunder of a good master.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE WORLD'S FAIR.

THE first of the great international exhibitions, that of the year 1851, which was held in Hyde Park, London, was from a financial point of view the most successful ever held, and the Metropolis is still reaping the benefit of that wonderful enterprise in grants made for the establishment of museums, &c., out of the accumulated funds. Since that time the world has grown bigger, and its ideas as to exhibitions have grown so large that the Crystal Palace of more than half-a-century ago fades into insignificance beside the vast schemes now conceived. The Paris Exposition, which marked the opening of a new century, was regarded as one of the grandest ever opened; it covered a space of three hundred and thirty-six acres; but the present exhibition at St Louis, U.S.A., covers twelve hundred and forty acres, the actual buildings on the ground taking up a space of more than five million cubic feet. Some of these buildings would in former times have been quite large enough for the purpose of an international exhibition, and under the title of 'Palace of Electricity,' 'Palace of Machinery,' 'Palace of Varied Industries,' &c., we feel that they are not misnamed, for each one constitutes an architectural monument of vast size. The St Louis World's Fair differs from former exhibitions of the kind in that processes are shown as well as products, for in the extensive grounds are illustrated the working of gold-mines, of oil-wells, of collieries, and many other important industries.

WASTE AT PANAMÁ.

A writer in *Cassier's Magazine* gives a vivid picture of the terrible waste in machinery which has taken place along the route of the proposed Panamá Canal, which twenty-five years ago was employing thousands of workmen. The moist atmosphere has such an effect upon unprotected iron and steel that rust appears in a few hours, and this action going on unchecked for years has left the discarded machinery in such a state that a knife can be thrust into the metal just as if it were so much soft cheese. The writer estimates that probably the original value of the old machinery, which might have been saved with proper care, was no less than ten millions sterling. It is now practically worthless. The machinery thus doomed to decay includes miles of steel rails, thousands of dumping-cars, scores of locomotives which have never seen any kind of service, machine-shops, hospitals, houses for different purposes, and other valuable plant. At the entrance to the canal and in the harbours among the vessels rotting at their moorings are tugs, steam-dredgers, pontoons, and many minor craft; and we learn that little attempt has been made to preserve any of them from decay.

GERMAN TOYS.

An interesting account of the German toy industry has lately been given by the American commercial agent at Eibenstock, who states that

toy-making in that country gives employment to no fewer than fifty thousand persons. The industry has become centred chiefly in Nuremberg and Sonneberg, which two towns make about 80 per cent. of the toys exported from the empire. In Sonneberg the making of dolls' clothing is in the hands of women and girls; but the industry consists in the main of papier-mâché toys, which are pushing wax-dolls out of favour by reason of their more durable qualities. At Sonneberg the toys are almost wholly made by hand, and are principally dolls and articles favoured by girls. Nuremberg, on the other hand, makes use of machinery of the most modern kind, and turns out leaden soldiers, railway trains, models of machinery, and such things in which boys delight; so that there is no kind of rivalry between the two towns, their products being quite distinct. It is interesting to note that Great Britain takes more than a third of the total exports of German toys. It would seem that there is here an opening for capital in our own country, for it should be as easy to make toys in Britain as it is in Germany. There might be some difficulty in getting suitable wood for this industry, but papier-mâché, lead, and tin are procurable everywhere.

ARTIFICIAL SNAILS.

Snails the only genuine part of which are the shells are now being sold in Paris, and it is said that the imitation of the real article is so close that many epicures have a high opinion of the sham product. But it is to be presumed that they do not know that the snails are artificial, and they are certainly ignorant of the method by which the snails are manufactured. Snail-shells, it seems, are bought from the dustmen and rag-pickers, and after being cleaned are filled with 'lights' or cats' meat, the soft flesh being cut into corkscrew form, so as to fit the shell, by a skilfully designed machine. The receptacle is then sealed by means of liquid fat, and the escargot is ready for the consumer. The secret came out in consequence of an action brought by a man employed at the snail-factory to recover damages for a finger mutilated by one of the machines. The artificial snails find a ready market at twenty centimes per dozen.

DUTY-FREE ALCOHOL.

The chemical industries of this country have long suffered under a very real grievance in having to pay a duty on alcohol used for manufacturing purposes, which renders it quite impossible for them to compete with foreigners in the production of a number of important compounds. As a case in point, Professor Green, of the Yorkshire College of Science, recently pointed to dimethylaniline, a coal-tar product which is of much importance in the aniline colour industry. If this commodity be made in England, the cost of the raw materials works out at two shillings and fourpence per pound, while the German manufacturer can make the same product at a cost of less than fourpence per pound. The difference represents the duty which must be paid by the English manufacturer for the use of alcohol. This is a crying evil which should at once be remedied. By a little timely legislation the manufacture of aniline colours, which grew out of the researches of a British worker, might have been kept in this country instead of being monopolised by Germany.

A WATER-BEARING PLANT.

An interesting account has recently been given by Mr F. V. Coville of the manner in which the Indians of the desert hills west of Torres, Mexico, obtain water in times of drought from the barrel cactus. They select a plant about five feet in height, and after cutting its top off, pound the soft tissues within the trunk to a pulp, after which they remove the spongy material handful by handful, squeezing the water from it into the hollow, and throwing the exhausted pulp on one side. In this way an ordinary plant is made to yield two or three quarts of clear water, which, although slightly salt and rather bitter, is of better quality than that obtained from any of the other sources upon which the traveller is sometimes compelled to rely. The Indians prefer it to any other water obtainable, and use it not only for drinking purposes but also for mixing meal in bread-making.

ELECTRO-PLATING ALUMINIUM.

Aluminium, on account of its lightness and its great toughness when alloyed with other metals, has, since its production has been so enormously cheapened, come into general use for a multiplicity of purposes. But one great drawback to its use is the rapidity with which its surface becomes dull and leaden in hue owing to rapid oxidation. This characteristic has hitherto prevented aluminium from being easily electro-plated with gold or silver, as is the case with copper; but, according to an announcement in *Electro-Chemical Industry*, this difficulty has been removed by the discovery of a method by which aluminium can be given a coating of any desired metal. The film of oxide which covers the surface of the aluminium is removed by adding to the plating-bath a small quantity of a soluble fluoride, and the metal then receives a superficial coating of zinc or copper, upon which silver or gold can be subsequently deposited. The new process will doubtless be highly valued by the makers of opera-glasses, photographic lenses, telescopes, and other instruments.

DESTRUCTIVE IVY.

A recent article in the *Athenæum* describes the demolition of the old Essex church of Chingford by the action of the ivy which unfortunately had been allowed to grow without check over its walls and roof. It seems that a new parish church was built some years ago, and the old edifice was partially abandoned, the windows being left barred but not glazed, so that the parasitic ivy had full liberty to

roam where it liked, both within and without the building. Indeed, its growth was encouraged, for the ivy was not only regarded as picturesque, but it was supposed to actually protect the walls, which in reality it was rending. Possibly ivy, like some other creeping plants, is a protective to walls in keeping them dry, but it should be kept within bounds and not allowed to grow until it throws out limbs with a girth of more than two feet, as was the case at Chingford. It was in February last that the crash came, although for years the building had been split and undermined by the fast-growing greenery, the entire roof of the nave and the south aisle being completely wrecked during a high wind. The trunk of the ivy, which lies against one of the buttresses of the church so closely that neither tape nor rule can be passed between it and the wall, measures from side to side no less than thirty-three inches. Captain Norman, R.N., pointed out in the Proceedings of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club for 1899, an instance of ivy clinging to the wall of the gamekeeper's house at Overbury Court, Worcestershire. Although the stems had been completely severed more than eighteen years previously, the ivy continued to flower, fruit, and flourish, and even to spread and send out shoots.

DRIED BANANAS.

A writer in the *Scientific American* prophesies for this product permanent and profitable returns. Ripe peeled bananas, he tells us, only weigh about one-ninth of the original bunches when their moisture has been driven off, so that by transporting the fruit in the desiccated state much space is saved as well as the expense of cold storage, without which the fresh fruit cannot be sent abroad. Dried bananas might be sold more cheaply and extensively in one-pound packets for breakfast food, for cakes, puddings, ice-creams, &c.; and when compressed into small space the fruit makes an ideal ration for soldiers or travellers, for the banana embodies more nutritive matter than any other fruit, not even excepting dates, which are said to do such wonders in the way of feeding Arabs, who in crossing the desert live on a handful or two. The evaporated fruit will keep for any reasonable time if protected from the inroads of insects, and we may hope at an early date to see dried bananas added to our available luxuries.

PORTABLE FIRE-ESCAPE.

An Englishman sleeping, or rather trying to sleep, in an American 'skyscraper' hotel, tried to think, as many nervous travellers have done, how he could escape from his aerial bedroom in case of fire; and he evolved from his inner consciousness an invention of a very simple character which certainly does something towards solving a very serious problem. He has devised a method of turning a portmanteau into a fire-escape, the bag being large enough to act as a car in which the traveller can sit. This bag, by simple attachments, is connected with a long light cord such as Alpine travellers rope themselves together with, and a simple form of brake completes the arrangement. One end of the cord is attached to the bedstead or other heavy article of furniture, the bag is hooked into place and placed outside the window, the traveller steps into it, and lowers himself steadily to the ground. It is probable that a traveller might carry this portmanteau about with him for years without requiring its aid as a fire-escape, but the knowledge that he had it at hand in case of need would certainly add to his sense of security wherever he might happen to be.

OCEAN DAILY NEWSPAPERS.

Signor Marconi of wireless telegraphy fame, who lately landed at New York from the Cunard liner *Campania*, is reported to have stated that before the summer is over daily newspapers containing the chief items of the world's latest doings will be published on board the Atlantic passenger-steamers. It seems that this is the direct result of Signor Marconi's experiments on the voyage out to America, the ship being in communication with the British station at Poldhu up to seventeen hundred miles out, when the station at Cape Cod was hailed, and messages were exchanged with the transatlantic shore for the rest of the voyage. The Italian inventor has now arranged with the Cunard Company to supply their steamers with two hundred words of telegraphic news daily during their Atlantic crossings, and these messages will be printed on board and issued in the form of a *Cunard Bulletin*. Two hundred words mean only about twenty lines of ordinary newspaper type, but possibly a code will be employed which will better satisfy the aspirations of expectant readers.

WANTED, A SOUND-QUENCHER.

An inventor who could devise some material which should be an insulator of sound, just as rubber is an insulator of electricity, would be a benefactor to his species, and more especially to the large number of his fellow-beings who from choice or necessity live in flats. We are constantly hearing through the newspapers of the harmony of these dwellings being disturbed by the ubiquitous piano; and when we remember that it is possible in a skilfully devised flat for its inmates to listen to three of these instruments being played simultaneously in adjoining apartments, we can hardly wonder at the inevitable sequel in the police court. A student in Berlin who was thus tortured adopted the drastic expedient of pumping sulphurous vapour into the flat above through a small hole bored in the ceiling of his room; but the opening was discovered, and he was fined. Another one we once heard of who succeeded in deranging the wires of the piano next door by means of a powerful electro-magnet. It is obvious that such inconvenient expedients would not be adopted if a sound-insulator could be

discovered. The invention would bring comfort to many and fortune to its originator, and we commend the idea to those who are looking for a profitable outlet for their ingenuity.

PRINTING WITHOUT TYPE.

A newspaper known as the *New York Commercial Advertiser* describes a new form of composing and printing machine which seems to put that wonderful triumph of mechanism the linotype quite into the shade. So far as we can gather from this not too clear account of the apparatus, it is in two parts, the one with a typewriter keyboard furnishing a perforated tape, which is fed into the other part of the machine. To quote the exact words: 'This ribbon runs into another device operated automatically, which in turn grinds out the proof-sheet in an endless column, printed as from movable type with black ink on white paper.' This column of printed matter is cut up to form pages, the pages are pressed against an aluminium plate, the lettering is transferred to that plate, and after the metal is adjusted to a cylindrical press copies are run off to the number of a million if required 'without the slightest tendency toward effacement.' The article is headed 'A Typeless Press;' but we are not told how the printing 'as from movable type' is produced without them.

HOW THE 'SAINT JOHN' CAME HOME.

By W. Victor Cook.

THE skipper and the two mates of the brig *Saint John* lowered their sextants from their eyes.

'That will do,' said the skipper. 'It's a beautiful horizon.' He turned to the man in the wheelhouse beside him on the poop, and said, 'Ring eight bells.'

The four double notes clanged sharply on the air of noon. The afternoon watch came running from the fo'c's'le at the signal, and another sailor approached to take the wheel. The skipper took a final peep in the magnifier of his sextant.

'South-east by east, half-south, sir,' said the man at the wheel as he relinquished his charge to the relief, and the skipper, in the usual way, answered, 'All right.'

The next moment the man whipped out a revolver, and without another word shot the captain dead. As if at a signal, the new helmsman left the ship to fall away before the light breeze, and flung himself on the mate, striking him to the deck before he had time to move hand or foot. The second-mate sprang to the wheelhouse, and set his back against it as three of the new watch rushed to attack him.

'It's no good, sir,' cried he who had shot the captain. 'You'd best give in. We're all together in this job. Put up your hands, and you shall be safe.'

'Never!' cried the second-mate, and sprang at the fellow like a proper man. But there were half-a-dozen to one, and that one unarmed; and by the time he had landed a couple of knock-down blows among his adversaries, a knife-thrust between the shoulders stretched the plucky second-mate bleeding on the deck beside his skipper.

For a moment the mutineers stood and looked each at the other, as though surprised and half-scared at their own deed.

'Who stabbed *him?*' asked the man with the revolver, nodding in the direction of the second-mate.

A brawny fellow with a sullen, lowering face and a heavy jaw answered, 'I did, Jim Blacker. He rope's-ended me yesterday. He 'll rope's-end nobody again, I reckon.'

'Guess that's so,' said Blacker. 'He shouldn't have been a fool and cut up rough. As for them other two'—— He kicked the dead body of the captain, and broke into a torrent of obscene abuse. 'But, seein' they are all dead, the question is, who is goin' to navigate the ship? That's why I didn't want *him* to show fight, and that's why it's a pity you took your knife to him, Dandy.'

'There's the steward,' another of the mutineers said. 'He's got a second-mate's ticket. He told me so himself.'

'Talk o' the devil,' said the leader. 'Here he comes. I 'll tackle him.'

All eyes turned to the after-companion, from which emerged a young man in a peaked cap. The mutineers, who by now numbered about a dozen, grouped themselves as by mutual consent in front of the three dead officers, screening them for the moment from view.

The steward, a man of perhaps five-and-twenty, with a strong square face and brown eyes, hesitated at the top of the stairway at the unusual spectacle of more than half the crew assembled on the poop.

'Hullo, Charlie!' cried one to him.

'I came up to see what all the row was about,' remarked the steward. 'Anything the matter, carpenter?'

'Come up here, Charlie,' they invited him.

The young man advanced, still hesitating a little, till his glance fell on the dead men and the blood-stains on the deck. His jaw dropped, and he stepped back.

'Don't go away, Charlie. Come on. We ain't goin' to eat you.'

'What does it all mean, Jim Blacker?' said the steward.

'It means that sailor-men ain't dogs to be kicked and bullied out of their lives by a drunken skipper,

and rope's-ended by a half-bred monkey of a mate; and that they ain't to be starved out of their victuals to pay for the skipper's drinks, and clapped in irons when they ask for justice. It means that men is men, and not bloomin' pack-horses, and that there 's some things flesh and blood won't stand. That 's what it means, Charlie.'

'It means mutiny and murder on the high seas, and hanging for every mother's son of you at the first port,' said the steward boldly enough, though his heart sank within him at the black looks of the crew and the bloody streaks on the white deck.

'Mutiny if you like. As for hangin', that 's our affair. We 're all together—eh, mates?'

'Ay, ay, all together,' they answered.

'Seein' that the second-mate is dead too, through an accident,' pursued Jim Blacker, 'you must take the ship where we want her to go, Charlie. You understand navigation; we don't—at least, not enough to lay a straight course.'

'And if I don't?' queried the steward.

'Then this.' Blacker pointed with his left hand to the revolver still held in his right.

The steward stood a while silent, watching the group of desperate men. More than one, he noticed, had possessed themselves of pistols—apparently stolen from the officers' cabins. 'And what about Miss Fauley?' he asked at length, slowly.

The men looked at one another doubtfully, as if this was a question they had not fully considered.

'I reckon,' said the sullen fellow who had been called Dandy, 'we shall put her afloat in a boat where she 'll be picked up somewhere when we get in the track of ships.'

'It won't do,' said the steward decisively.

'The old man shouldn't have brought her. We can't risk losin' all our bloomin' lives for a slip of a girl,' said Blacker.

'I tell you it won't do,' repeated the steward, ramming his hands in his pockets in a dogged sort of way. 'And I 'll tell you something else too. There 's twenty of you to one, if you like. But the first man on this ship that lays hands on the captain's daughter gets his brains knocked out by me. *He* 'll die, anyway. Then you will shoot me, I suppose; but as there 's not a lubber of you all can work the ship, you will bungle her here and there till one of three good things happens: a gale will send you all to Davy Jones, or the tanks will give out and you will all go mad, or you 'll make land—if you have so much luck—where you won't know your bearings, and you 'll all be safely hanged. You 've got my life to play with, but when you take it you take your own. And you 'll have to take it if you touch the skipper's daughter.' The steward looked up and down the murderous assembly to mark the effect of his words.

The mutineers glanced uneasily at each other. He could read in the eyes of several the wish to send him along with the captain and the mates; but with the majority the truth of his words had gone home.

'We must protect ourselves,' said Dandy sullenly.

'Look ye, Charles,' said Jim Blacker, 'take us as far as the Rock; and when we get into the Mediterranean we will set you and the girl and a few of the Dagos aboard who ain't in the swim in a boat near the land, somewhere where there ain't any telegraphs, and you can take your hook, and we can take ours. That 's fair.'

'And how am I to know you 'll keep to it?'

'I reckon you will have to trust our sense of honour, Charles,' said Dandy, with a grin. 'If you don't think you can trust us, why, we shall just drop you and the lady overside right away, and shift as we can.'

'I know that—curse you!' said the steward. 'But I 've got my skin to save, the same as you fellows. Needs must when the devil drives. Man the wheel there, one of you!'

'Stop a minute, Charlie,' said Blacker, coming up close to him and glowering grimly. 'No tricks, you understand. Play crooked, and you 're a dead man.'

The steward shrugged his shoulders. 'I know what I 'm doing, and whom I 'm doing it for. You needn't preach,' he said.—'Keep her away as before,' he told the man who had gone to the wheel.—'Now then, there 's a blow coming. Get away aloft, some of you, and take in the royals, and for heaven's sake put *those* overboard before the girl comes on deck!' He pointed to the three bodies. 'I 'll go and keep her below,' he added, 'till it 's done.'

'Ay, ay, sir,' answered Blacker, in tones half-mocking, half-born of the habit of discipline. Thus Charles Donaldson took over the brig *Saint John*.

He descended the companion to the captain's cabin. At the table sat a fair-haired girl of some eighteen summers, busily writing letters. She looked up as he entered.

'Whatever was all that noise on deck a while since?' she asked. 'I thought somebody was shooting.'

'Yes, somebody was shooting, Miss Daisy.'

'I wish they wouldn't shoot the poor gulls,' said the girl. 'It does seem so cruel—especially as they 're no good to anybody when they 're shot.' She stopped suddenly, arrested by something in the steward's face.

'They weren't shooting gulls, Miss Daisy,' he said.

The girl stood up and turned pale. 'What do you mean, Charles? Something has happened.'

'Yes, something has happened.'

'What is the matter? My father—something has happened to my father! Let me go up!'

She made to go up the companion; but at the door the steward laid his hand on her arm—a firm grasp that held her fast.

'You must not go up—indeed, Miss Daisy, you must not go up just now! Oh, my dear, I am so sorry for you!'

'I will go up, Charlie—steward! Let go my arm! Let me go up to the captain!'

But Charlie kept his hold. 'Listen to me, Miss Daisy. A terrible thing has happened—it is dread-

ful for me to have to tell you. They have killed the captain and the officers, and flung them overboard.'

She did not swoon, as he had half-expected her to, but leaned back against the cabin panels and stared at him wide-eyed, her face ghastly. He sat her tenderly in one of the revolving-chairs round the cabin table, and poured her out some spirit, which she drank mechanically, while he stood watching her.

Suddenly she sprang to her feet, and flashed upon him a look of terror and suspicion.

'*You*—how is it you are here? Why did you not prevent them? Why are you here?'

'I went up to see what the noise was about. Your father and the mates were dead upon the deck,' he answered simply. 'Miss Daisy, they would have killed you too. You and I together have a charge upon us: to save our lives, and to bring these villains to justice. I am with you to the death.' He held out his hand. She took it, and burst into passionate weeping.

'Cry,' he said; 'it will do you good, Daisy. To save your life and mine, I have taken the ship in charge to bring her to safety. You know I served my time and have a certificate. These fellows will watch us every hour of the day; but we must ward off their suspicions; and it will go hard'—his words came through his set teeth—'it will go hard if an honest man cannot get over a pack of mutinous cut-throats like yon.'

Under her new commander, the brig *Saint John* sailed on day after day over the wide waste of the Western Ocean. Now on the starboard tack, now on the port, she made way but slowly Europe-wards. Frequently she would have to heave-to under close-reefed topsails, and once for two whole days she reeled through a hurricane under bare poles. The mutineers cursed at their ill luck, and, superstitious like all sailors, grew uneasy at the failure of the usual favourable winds from the south-westward. But all the time the new commander made no complaint. The cargo was a good and a safe one—four hundred tons of Nova Scotian grain—and the brig was taut and strong, and though the hurricane seas ran at her like charging mountains of green water, she rode them like a very sea-bird.

'The weather fights for us,' he said grimly to the captain's daughter as they sat at table together in the cabin. For he had made it a condition of his bringing the ship to safety that the men should respect the sanctity of the cabin; and they, though they flung foul gibes that made his blood boil, had perforce given way.

One day Daisy came upon him as he was busily engaged in the medicine cupboard.

'Two of my gentlemen are sick,' he said in reply to her question. 'A dose of castor-oil will be good for them.'

'But you don't put phosphorus paint in castor-oil!' cried the girl. 'Charlie, what are you doing?'

'Oh, the phosphorus. That is a little experiment I am trying. Do you know where we are?'

'I overheard the bo's'n say he thought we must be nearing Cape St Vincent.'

'I'm glad he thinks so. That is what I want him to think, Daisy.' He turned and looked carefully up and down the alleyway. 'The time is coming, dear, for both of us to be brave. We are in the English Channel. You saw the light last night through the glass?'

'The one you said was the Lisbon boat for the Brazils?'

'Yes; I said that for the benefit of Jim Blacker and company. That was the Ushant light. We are tacking slowly up-Channel, keeping as far as I can from the course of the regular lines.'

'Charlie, if they find out!'

'You must be brave, dear little girl. I do not think they will. And now I want you to help me.'

'I will do anything.'

'Here are a lot of empty bottles. I have thrown over several during the past week. Here is a paper which I have written out. I want you to smear each of the bottles carefully with the paint, put into it a copy of that paper, and cork it up tightly. During the next two days, at frequent intervals, open the port of your berth and quietly drop the bottles into the water. It is our only chance.'

'You may rely on me, Charlie,' said the girl.

He bent and kissed her, and she made no resistance. 'My brave little Daisy!' he said tenderly.

She shut herself in her berth and began to copy the writing on slips of paper. It read thus:

'Crew of brig *Saint John*, Halifax, N.S., to Liverpool, mutinied May 3rd in mid-Atlantic, killing captain and officers. Captain's daughter still on board. I have navigated ship to the Channel, and, weather permitting, will be in lat. 51 N., long. ½ W., at midnight on June 2nd. Shall be on the look-out for help. If rescuers on sighting will fire a distress rocket, will reply with blue light. Will finder of this signal same first opportunity?

'CHARLES DONALDSON, *Steward*.'

The night of 2nd June fell warm and clear, a true midsummer's night, with soft starlight twinkling down upon a phosphorescent sea. With all sail set, the *Saint John* glided almost imperceptibly along, the outlines of her spreading canvas showing ghost-like against the twinkling sky. The faint lapping from her bows made the only sound upon the slumbering deep.

On the poop two men were smoking, Charlie Donaldson and Dandy; the silence that men keep at sea intensified between them by mutual suspicion. Midnight drew on. Anxiously, yet secretly, the steward scanned the dark face of the waters; but though once and again a light glimmered in the farthest distance, he could catch no glimpse of what he sought.

Half-an-hour before midnight an eastward-bound liner passed them close at hand, flashing all over with electric lights like a floating township.

'Where's *she* bound? She's an English ship, by

the look of her,' growled Dandy. 'What's she doin' here? There ain't no liners runnin' this far south.'

'Expect she's got an American pleasure-party for the Mediterranean,' said Charlie casually. 'Well, she'll make St Vincent before us, anyway.'

The liner's lights dimmed and vanished ahead. Midnight passed, and eight bells rang. Jim Blacker came to relieve the sullen Dandy, who turned to leave the poop.

'Ain't you goin' to turn in?' he growled, seeing the steward make no motion to go below.

'Not yet awhile. If I'm not out, we should sight the land-lights before long.'

Almost as he spoke the words, suddenly, from about a mile away, where no light had been visible, a trail of fire leaped up into the sky, and hard on the flash came a deep, dull boom.

The three men started. Even he who had been awaiting it was staggered by the suddenness and nearness of the sign. The steward spoke first—to the man at the wheel.

'Hard aport! There's a craft in distress.'

The brig swung round till the breeze that had been abeam came almost astern.

'Hold on!' cried Blacker, with an oath. 'What are you doin', you fool? Do you think we're out for a pleasure-trip, that we can go and pick up every beggar that has got himself in trouble? It's a calm night; let him get his boats out, or stand and drown.'

'Man, you wouldn't let them drown before your eyes!' protested Charlie.

'Wouldn't I? We'll see,' answered the fellow, with a chuckle.

'Course there, sonny,' he ordered the helmsman.

'Are you going to stand by and let a shipful of fellow-creatures go down?' The steward turned from one to another of the mutineers.

'Oh, shut up! This ain't a Sunday-school. You can go below, skipper, if your bloomin' feelings is too much for you. Who says that bloomin' ship isn't full of blue-jackets? Where do we come in?' Blacker meaningly made the sign of a noose about his neck.

Without another word the steward went below, but not to sleep. In the cabin Daisy waited for him.

'Oh Charlie, are we to be saved?'

'You heard the signal, dearest. They must have kept their lights out on purpose, for they are close up. In half-an-hour we shall know our fate.'

'Have you fired the train?'

'Yes. See!' He drew her to the foot of the companion. They waited a few moments, and suddenly a sickly purple gleam from the deck lit up the opening at the head of the stairs. An outcry arose above them on the poop. 'Quick, now,' he said, and, pulling her back, pushed-to the door and slid the bolt in its socket. 'Go to your berth,' he said, 'and fasten the door. Here, take this; and if any of them get through, shoot without a moment's hesitation.' He gave her his revolver. 'If they come down I will hold them here. But perhaps they won't come down.'

'Charlie, I won't leave you!' she cried.

'Oh, my dearest! But you must do as I say. With you here I could not fight.'

'Hark! What was that?' exclaimed the girl.

'A gun, Daisy! A gun! Hurrah! 'Tis a warship telling us to heave-to. The scoundrels will know what that means.'

There was a scurrying of feet upon the deck, and a confused clamour of voices. Suddenly the cabin was flooded with brilliant light that drowned the shine of the lamps.

'There comes her searchlight!' cried Charlie. 'Jack's the boy! Hurrah!'

A few minutes passed, and by the changed motion of the ship they knew she was hove-to. The scurry on deck ceased. By-and-by there came a knocking at the cabin door.

'Stand away, there!' shouted the steward. 'I've got six men's lives in my hand.'

'Well, so have I, for that matter,' called a cheery voice from without. 'And there are a dozen good fellows with me, with the same number in each of theirs. So you'd better open before I damage the furniture.'

The steward caught his companion in his arms and kissed her. 'It's the boys in blue already,' he said, and with a ready 'Ay, ay, sir,' threw open the door.

'Where's Charles Donaldson?' said an officer in gold epaulets.

'Here, sir,' said Daisy. The officer raised his eyebrows, pursed up his lips, and whistled softly.

'You needn't have locked the door,' he said. 'Your fellows here have made themselves scarce in the fo'c's'le, where I suppose I shall have to go and dig them out presently. Mr Donaldson, and you, young lady, allow me to congratulate you;' and with this suggestive compliment the officer shook hands with both, and led his men for'ard.

A week after that the papers were full of the romantic story of the mutiny of the *Saint John*. Later on, when the mutiny trial was over and the captain's orphan daughter was married to the brig's former steward, one of the wedding presents was a little model of the ship in silver; and the owners had wrapped up this their gift in a cheque for two hundred pounds, with a note dedicating the same 'To Mr Charles Donaldson, in recognition of his pluck and resource in bringing home the brig *Saint John*.'

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SIXTH SERIES.

HER EXCELLENCE.

By CARLTON DAWE.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

BOTH within and without the Forbidden City there was but one dominating personality, and it was not that of the Son of Heaven. Ostensibly the ruler of the vast Middle Kingdom, with its four hundred million of struggling souls, the Emperor was in reality but a pasteboard effigy, a puppet in the hands of a designing and unscrupulous woman. With a rod of iron the masterful Empress ruled the Court, the imperial city, and the imperial provinces. Her frown meant annihilation: her smile meant many things.

When Hué first saw that smile his eyes fell and a trembling seized him. It was as though the Board of Punishments had pronounced his doom, as though the executioners had already laid their clammy claws upon him. He could scarcely credit his senses. She—she had actually looked upon him, and she had smiled! Had she? Was it true, or was it but a fancy, a thought, a dread? He feared to know, and yet know he must. Slowly his frightened glance sought once more the Presence, and he saw her black, uncanny eyes burning fiercely into his. Yet he made no sign, having himself, outwardly at least, well in hand. It would not be wise to show that he knew she had singled him out for the imperial approbation.

Hué was a handsome man of twenty-six or twenty-seven, a favourite of the Emperor, and a Grand Secretary to that illustrious puppet. A scholar, too, of no little pretensions, he was universally suspected of some ambition, his intimacy with the Emperor favouring many rumours which were set afloat concerning him. If left to himself there was no doubt of the Emperor pushing his favourite from pinnacle to pinnacle; but in all matters of State there was one greater than he, and though he fumed and fretted like a spoilt child, he was forced to bow to the inevitable. Therefore Hué, like so many worthy creatures who have an axe to grind, was forced to bask in the debilitating smiles of royalty. But he was young: he could wait and hope. Meanwhile, disease or the devil might carry off the Empress. One cannot accurately gauge the evolutions of a streak of luck.

And then one day fortune permitted him a happiness beyond his deserts by allowing him to gaze for a moment upon the resplendent loveliness of Foi-Min, the daughter of one of the great Secretaries of State. Her face was like the pearly cloud that catches the rosy beams of the morning sun; her eyes were deeper and profounder than the deep darkness of a moonless night of summer. Yet, gazing into them, Hué thought he beheld, deep down, the immaculate soul shining like a star, and to that star he yearned to pay his devotions. But she was one of the immediate *entourage* of Her Excellence, and no lioness guarded her whelps with stricter vigilance than did that dominating creature the bevy of fair damsels who surrounded her. For it was notorious that her women were the fairest of their sex, it being a perverse notion of the mistress, who was neither young nor fair, to have about her those to whom nature had been most kind. Great and masterful as she might be in imperial matters, she was replete with feminine tricks and artifices and petty ways. Consequently she had all a woman's jealousy of that feminine beauty which, in spite of her greatness, she could not command, and it was the delight of her feline nature to thwart the natural currents of affection in youth. Indeed, to her way of thinking, there was but one woman at Court, one woman in the whole empire, who mattered, and that was her imperial self. Masterful ever, unscrupulous to a degree, brooking interference in no particular, with her to desire was to have.

None knew her ways or her weaknesses better than Hué, and he therefore viewed with immeasurable alarm that unentrancing smile of friendship. Many men had been called to her counsels, and they had shone magnificently for a brief period, and

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then night had enveloped them. Her Excellence had a way of *losing* her friends which struck a chill upon the heart. A man was singled out from the mob of men; and even while he dreamt of glory, behold! he passed away into oblivion, and his name was mentioned no more. For walls have ears, and the ears of Her Excellence, dainty, shell-like trifles, were spread wide over the land. And it was not wise to speak of one who had incurred her royal displeasure. The Chinese proverb says, 'When you converse in the road, remember there are men in the grass.' This was a piece of advice doubly applicable to those who surrounded Her Excellence.

It was with no little trepidation that Hué remembered that gracious glance. It might mean many things, but one thing surely. And if there was one personage in the Forbidden City whom he detested and feared, it was the woman who wielded her authority with so little consideration for the feelings or opinions of others. It was not flattering, this approbation; it did not make the wise man forget himself and dream impossible dreams. He was not the only man on whom that insidious glance had been turned. It might be Hué to-day—but to-morrow? Her Excellence liked old lovers no better than old shoes, and the one was discarded as lightly as the other.

He was a courtier, and ambitious, and not a little daring, and he knew that the man who could dominate Her Excellence would be the practical ruler of the Chinese Empire. But it would be a precarious pinnacle on which to stand, a little erratic balancing precipitating one into an unfathomable abyss. But, nevertheless, he had thought of it, had dreamt, perhaps, as the adventurous will dream; and then fate permitted him to gaze upon the loveliness of Foi-Min. After that he thought no more of Her Excellence or any other woman. The moon-faced divinity came between him and repose. There was just one face and just one pair of eyes in all the world.

Perhaps he had misconstrued that look. He was nervous, and he had but glanced furtively in her direction. After all, Her Excellence might be an unscrupulous woman, but she was the greatest woman in the land, and she owed something to the unapproachable dignity of her august position. It was just possible that she was in a good humour, that she had smiled on others as she had smiled on him. He was foolish, nervous, and above all things vain. Why, the mere thought was treason of the blackest, and it was well for him that her omnipotence stopped short at reading the minds of men.

And yet he could not wholly wave aside the intuition as a false one, though he stung his vanity with many an uncomplimentary epithet. What was he but a contemptible worm who for a moment had been permitted to bask in the effulgence of the sun? How could he have the unspeakable audacity to imagine that his insignificant presence had caught the eye of the gods?

And yet that evening, as he sat alone strenuously penning a poem in honour of the lady of his soul, one of his servants broke in upon his meditations with the information that a messenger from Her Excellence requested the honour of an interview. The shock awoke him to the realities of life. He came down from the clouds, where amid sunbeams and moonbeams he had so lately been soaring, and hurriedly hid his effusion beneath a mass of papers. There was but one moon-faced divinity in the Celestial Empire, one woman whose eyes were like the stars, one goddess whose breath was the breath of morn in a garden of roses, and to imagine any other woman possessing such attributes was to commit the most reprehensible of crimes. Her Excellence may have had many faults, but weakness was not one of them, and she could not forgive the man who saw beauty in any eyes but hers.

The messenger was admitted, a womanish sort of person with a flabby face and figure, and a squeaking voice which sounded incongruous coming from such a source.

Hué bowed low, for this being was one who held a post of some authority in the household of Her Excellence.

'I am greatly honoured in thus being permitted to receive you beneath my contemptible roof,' said Hué.

The Creature grinned unpleasantly. 'It is a delight for so insignificant a worm to wriggle in the gracious glance of your illustrious condescension.'

'I would that my debased hospitality were more worthy of your august acceptance.'

'I would that my degraded presence were less offensive to your High-Attractiveness.'

And so they complimented each other in true Celestial fashion, until, the social manœuvring being duly completed, the Creature condescended to state the object of his visit. But this was not until the young man's patience had been completely exhausted. Etiquette forbade that he should question his guest, and the guest, knowing this, adroitly prolonged the torture.

'You are greatly honoured, Most Illustrious,' he at length began.

'Is it possible that one so insignificant should be espied among so many who are worthy?'

'Quite possible, O superb humility!' He smiled an oily, unpleasant smile. Hué thought things, and shuddered. 'The eyes that see to the stars do not disdain the earth. Your Excellency will not forget your degraded slave, the abhorred worm who crawls before your August Serenity?'

Hué felt himself grow a shade paler, but he managed to say, 'I do not understand.'

'How should a mortal comprehend the ways of the deity? Most honoured of men, Her Excellence'—he made obeisance as he uttered the sacred name—'requests an interview. Even now I have come to escort you to the Presence.'

'Even now?'

'So art thou honoured.'

He saw the indecision, the hesitancy in the young man's face, and the smiles deepened the wrinkles of his yellow skin. Probably it was not the first time he had come on such an embassy; probably he remembered the fate of those who had been similarly honoured. A peculiarly soft and sickening smile played about his protruding lips; in his narrow black eyes shone an exultation which set the busy brain thinking unpleasant thoughts.

'Is it possible that Her Excellence has deigned to notice my unworthiness?'

'All that is noble and good is of an affinity with Her Excellence,' squeaked the Creature. 'She has the seeing eye, the hearing ear. When the Daughter of Heaven flashes her imperial glance across the world nothing escapes her vision. Even your Excellency's microscopic virtues are to her as an open book.'

'Ah, so!' But even now the expression on the young man's face was one more of annoyance than delight. The Creature smiled complacently and rubbed his soft, plump hands one over the other.

'It will cause Her Excellence much joy to know with what delight you have received her sublime commands.'

This awoke Hué to a truer knowledge of his position. The being before him was a spy as well as an ambassador.

'I am prostrate with the thought of my unworthiness,' he said. 'The honour is one of which I had not dared to dream. It robs me of my reason, confounds my sense. I quail at the thought of meeting those imperial eyes. Thinkest thou, my friend, a contemptible earthworm may gaze into those eyes and live?'

The other laughed softly. 'Truly, I have known many gaze into them—and die.' This last he uttered with a peculiar articulation which seemed like a cross between the cry of a woman and the gleeful splutter of a babe.

'What better death could a wretch so degraded hope for? Glory shine on Her Excellence! May she, the happy possessor of ten thousand virtues, live for ten thousand happy years!'

Then he went and arrayed himself in an apparel which should be worthy of the presence he was about to enter, and when he reappeared the messenger received him with a smile of approbation.

'It is well,' he said. 'Long is it since Her Excellence has gazed upon so proper a man. Have I now the permission of your Exalted High-Perfection?' Obsequiously he bowed towards the door. Hué nodded, and they set forth.

The guide led him straight to the palace of Her Excellence, no word passing between them as they walked. Now and again he would turn and smile mysteriously upon the man by his side; but Hué was too engrossed with his own thoughts to notice how singularly unpleasant that smile really was.

Gates and doors opened at the nod of the guide, and presently Hué found himself treading the forbidden precincts. By stairs and corridors innumerable he was led, until, at the end of a long passage, he was ushered into a dimly lighted chamber and there bidden to await the royal pleasure.

His breast surged with strange emotions; confused and troubled thoughts flashed through his mind. What would be the outcome of this singular adventure he dared not even imagine. What did this woman want? On what terms was he about to meet her? With much of his old bravado he told himself over and over again that she was only a woman, and in his day he had seen something of women. And yet this one was like no other woman in the world. Masterful, dominant, she was the incarnation of success or failure, of life and death. To please her was to ensure all that men hope for on earth; to thwart her was to court inevitable annihilation. For she was king, emperor, and empress rolled in one, as surely the true ruler of his master and the empire as that weak, pliable creature was its ostensible head. She made and cancelled appointments, she punished and she forgave, and the debilitated puppet had been taught to acquiesce without so much as a show of authority. And this terrible woman had set her eyes on him—for what purpose he could not conceive; and though Hué was no coward, he knew this was no ordinary ordeal he had to face. If Her Excellence smiled there would be no more envied man in the Middle Kingdom. But on the whole he would rather she had not seen.

He had not been left alone many minutes before a curtain at the far end of the room was drawn aside and he beheld a female figure bowing before him. He bowed very low in acknowledgment, favouring the woman with nothing more than a formal glance, and it was not until she said in a peculiarly sweet voice, 'This way, Excellency. Her Majesty awaits you,' that he peered closer. Then he gave a gasp and a sudden start, for she who had been sent to conduct him to the Presence was none other than Foi-Min.

'Is it you indeed?' he cried, enraptured. 'Am I so favoured by the gods?'

'Her Excellence awaits,' she answered in a low voice.

'For such as you,' he murmured, 'Heaven itself should wait.'

'Hush!' and she looked nervously around.

'I must speak or my heart will break,' he whispered passionately; 'I must tell you what is in my soul or I shall die, O my shining star! my lily and my lotus in one! I saw you and I have dreamt delightfully. You have come to me in my dreams and whispered in my ear, and the air has blown sweet like a garden of roses. I have seen your face gliding like the silver moon across a summer sea, and I have striven to lave my soul in its beams. Your smile, O Gracious One, is as the sun and the moon to this your unworthy adorer. Therefore, smile, smile on me so that my soul may revel in the glow of your dazzling perfection.'

'Excellency, your words are sweeter than honey; your tongue rivals the nightingale. My soul swoons in the cloud of your adoring incense. But, Excellency, She waits!' and she cast a terrified and appealing glance upon him.

'And wilt thou too wait?' he said, taking her by the hand and stroking it gently. 'Foi-Min, I am unworthy to touch these delicate fingers; but I love thee, I adore thee! Thou hast my soul to trample upon, to spurn, if it should please thee thus to treat thy slave; but even as thou spurnest, it will look up into thy face and cry, "I love thee—I adore thee!"'

'It is heaven to hear thee speak,' she murmured, gazing upon him with wistful eyes. 'It is as though the sky were full of birds and every rose-leaf breathed sweet music through its scented veins. Couldst thou talk thus for ever?'

'Thus should I talk for ever if thou wert near. Like a sleeping garden is my soul until awakened by the sunshine of your eyes.'

'Like a dead lotus was my soul until refreshed by the dew of your sweet sympathy.'

'I swoon in a garden of delight, O my beloved!'

'I tremble beneath thy touch as one who feels the presence of a god.'

The curtains parted softly and a sinister pair of eyes peeped through.

'Her Excellence awaits,' said a voice.

The two sprang guiltily apart, though instantly the man made a low obeisance.

'I await your commands,' he said.

With a pale face and a trembling step, Foi-Min led the way, the person with the sinister eyes having disappeared as mysteriously as she had come.

'Who was that woman who spoke?' he asked. But she put her finger to her lips by way of enjoining silence. He followed mutely, knowing that within this palace one, if one were wise, would scarcely venture to think.

SOMETHING ABOUT SUNDIALS.

SUNDIALS have come again into fashion. They are to be seen everywhere, and very often wrongly placed. Elegant designs, too, are the modern ones, and a large place of business in London is kept almost wholly occupied in making new models to attract the eye and appeal to the imagination. A large quantity of the stones of Christ's Hospital and old Kew Bridge were bought, and are carved into nice pedestals with a historic flavour.

In the old days no church was without its sundial. Old St Cuthbert's in Edinburgh, for example, has a dial on the original tower to which the new building was added. In many old country towns the dial has for centuries occupied a prominent place on the church or in the kirkyard. It was the standard timekeeper. But one farmer's wife in Yorkshire has a series of grooves on the stone flag of her house door, and has always the correct time under her eye—when the sun shines.

A pretty new dial decorates Inverleith Park, Edinburgh; and this is a very useful addition to public places and gardens. Lord Haddington has a very handsome sundial of massive design in his gardens at Tyninghame. Lord Ilchester has a variety of dials so placed that he can tell the time on the glass of his bedroom window without getting out of bed. At Sandringham there is a very fine dial engraved on a slab of slate and built into the walls of the house. The mottoes chosen by the King and Queen are: 'My time is in Thy hand,' and 'Let others tell of storms and showers, I'll only count your sunny hours.' A huge stone dial six feet square is on the wall of the Old Tile House in Buckinghamshire.

'Begone about your business' was inscribed on the dial of the old brick house which stood in Inner Temple Terrace, London; and the present old sun-clock in Pump Court has marked the disappearing hours for over three centuries. While various cathedrals, such as Ripon Minster, have very old dials, singular to say St Paul's, London, has none; but as clocks were just appearing when Wren designed his masterpiece, it is probable that the old time had to give place to the new. That unsavoury locality known as Seven Dials derived its name from a large stone dial which stood in the centre of the square with streets branching off. A splendid example of Inigo Jones's architecture stood for years in the middle of the new square at Lincoln's Inn, with the proud motto, 'Let your light so shine before men;' and the irony of fate was exemplified when it was removed to make room for a large flaring gas-lamp.

Glamis Castle has an elaborate dial: a tall pillar with four lions erect and back to back, bearing the plate. A coronet surmounts all. Doubtless when Macbeth was Thane of Glamis he would eye some sunclock when he wanted to know how the time passed. Lord Glasgow has an ancient time-plate standing ten feet four inches high, and bearing date 1707; and Lord Rosebery has a pleasing dial at Dalmeny.

What is said to be the most costly sundial ever erected was one in pyramidal form, set up in the year 1669 by order of Charles II., facing the Banqueting House at Whitehall. Its inventor was a Jesuit and Professor of Mathematics at Liége. This tall pyramid contained no fewer than two hundred and seventy-one different dials. Some showed the hours according to the Jewish,

Babylonian, Italian, and astronomical ways of counting, while others displayed tables pertaining to astronomy, geography, astrology, &c. There were portraits on glass of the king and queen, the Duke of York, and Prince Rupert. The cost of this royal toy was enormous; and even to repair it on one occasion the bill came to five hundred pounds.

Skibo Castle has a very ancient sunclock, although Mr Carnegie personally prefers his household to be regulated by Greenwich time. The Duke of Sutherland has had a very expensive dial erected quite recently in the gardens at Chorley Wood, Surrey. Quite unique has been the idea of the Duke of Newcastle. In his house at Clumber he has a pedestal on which are two iron hoops about a yard in diameter placed transversely, one inside the other, with a rod across the middle. In the centre is a knob which, when the sun shines, throws its shadow on the figures that are marked in gold on the hoops, so that a very attractive time-clock is produced.

Another departure from the conventional stone pedestal is on the lonely island of St Mary's, one of the Scilly group. An old cannon is stuck upwards with a dial-plate fixed across its mouth. An obelisk at Rome, which was brought from Egypt by the Emperor Augustus, has been set up as a gnomon. On the pavement around it are lines marked in bronze, and for over a century Romans have glanced at the 'hour o'clock' as they proceeded on their way. There was ingenuity on the part of the French gunner at Paris who had charge of the gun for proclaiming the hour of noon. He so arranged a dial that the hour of noon concentrated the rays of the sun through a burning-glass on the powder at the cannon's touch-hole, and the time-gun was thus fired. Perhaps the present method of firing by electricity at Edinburgh Castle is the more reliable, for on some days the sun is obscured by clouds.

Holyrood Palace has a beautiful dial due to the unhappy Charles I. It is called Queen Mary's, but the Mary referred to was Henrietta Maria. For hewing the stone alone an Edinburgh mason was paid four hundred and eight pounds. In the beautiful cemetery of Marylebone is an unfinished dial whose shaft was from a design by Mr Gilbert, R.A. It is dedicated to the wife of Joseph Hatton. One well-known man has gone so far as to have a beautifully carved sunclock erected on the marble stone which covers his family burying-place—a constant reminder, truly, of the passage of days.

To get a pretty sundial is not a costly thing to-day. A brass horizontal plate with carefully adjusted gnomon, but without equation-table or pedestal, can be had eight inches in diameter for two pounds five shillings. A vertical dial three feet by two feet six inches, with bright gun-metal gnomon, and with all lines and figures cut and gilt in, would probably cost thirty pounds. This is of Portland stone, with mottoes, and similar to that at Sandringham. Between these prices there is wide choice. Each purchaser has his own ideas as to a pedestal should he not wish to fix his clock to the house or garden wall. The multipartite dial is much too elaborate an article for the ordinary man. It bears on its brass face divisions showing the difference of time between the place where it is erected and other places on the globe, such as Jerusalem, Moscow, Cairo, and Yokohama.

In setting up a dial care has to be taken that it is correct as regards latitude. That is to say, a plate and gnomon set for London or Glasgow would only be good for places twenty to thirty miles in a radius from these cities. If the shadow is noted against the time given on a good watch, it will be found that that is the easiest way to get a sunclock fixed. When the Incorporation of Clockmakers was instituted by charter in 1631, they had jurisdiction not only over clocks but also over sundials, and had authority to search for and break all bad and unreliable dials. There must have been many in error in the years that have elapsed since it was first known how to calculate the flight of time by the sun, for we read that King Ahaz had a sunclock, and it was in 742 B.C. that he reigned over Judah.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

By William Le Queux.

CHAPTER XXXII.—THE MAJOR MAKES A STATEMENT.

HILE the rest of the party examined the dungeon I clambered over the ruins, and ascended by the winding, broken stairway to the summit. I walked with Wyman across the weedy, neglected ground beyond the dried-up fosse, reconstructing the stronghold in imagination by the position of the broken barbican.

Over the self-same ground the unfrocked monk of Crowland had wandered with his companion in misfortune, the monk Malcolm. We looked back at the gateway of the castle, so high up that it was on a level with the second floor. Through that, the only exit from the castle, old Godfrey had fled with his fair charge across the drawbridge, over the island to the river, and across the narrow temporary bridge, then existing, to the shore—away back to safety in England, leaving Lucrezia's casket, with its precious contents, safely hidden.

We recalled all that was written in the envenomed chronicle, and recognised the places which he men-

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tioned. The one important fact concealed from us, however, was the actual hiding-place of the Borgia jewels. The secret was ours, it was true; but so intricate were the instructions to find the exact spot that we both felt the difficulties well-nigh insurmountable.

The long, straight shadow veered round slowly; and by four o'clock, when the party carrying the empty baskets and picnic accessories strolled back to the spot of embarkation, it had shifted a considerable distance from the spot where I had driven in the stake.

Every one pronounced the picnic a distinct success. It was an entire novelty to go to that historic spot, unvisited from one year's end to another, and certainly to us it had been a very interesting experience. We had taken certain observations which would, later on, be of the greatest use to us.

The ferrying back of the party, in twos, by Sammy Waldron and Berty Sale, was fraught with just as much hilarity as the arrival. The old boat was found to be leaky, for it now had a quantity of water in it, and on the first trip Bertie 'caught a crab,' owing to the absence of blade to his oar, and the remainder of the rowing was done Indian fashion, the craft, being rudderless, always taking an erratic course. Time after time they crossed and recrossed until there remained only Fred Fenwicke, Walter, and myself. All of us embarked at last, and, with triumphant shouts, set a course towards the opposite shore; but ere we had gone far we ran deep into a submerged mud-bank, and notwithstanding our combined efforts for nearly half-an-hour, to the accompaniment of the derisive cheers of the rest of the party, we remained there.

One desperate effort, in which Sammy broke his oar in half, resulted in our getting clear at last, and slowly we continued across to the opposite bank, being greeted with mock welcome on our return from that perilous voyage, during which the vessel had been so long overdue.

Together we walked in a straggling line back to our brake, which we left at the farmhouse of Kelton Mains, and at the invitation of Mr Batten we drove back into the clean, prosperous little town of Castle-Douglas and took tea with him, after inspecting his pictures; for, in addition to being a well-known archæologist, he was an amateur artist of no small merit. True to his promise, he lent me a collection of valuable books dealing with Threave, and then, in the glorious sunset, we set out on our long drive back through the Glenkens to Crailloch, the cyclist contingent going on ahead.

Ten days of merriment went by. One night dinner was as usual a merry function, but the ladies, being tired, retired early, while the men idled, gossiped, and played billiards. Connie's boudoir adjoined the billiard-room, and I was sitting there alone with Fred about half-past one, preliminary to turning in, when, looking me straight in the face, he said:

'Look here, Allan! What's your game over at Threave? I watched you that afternoon, and saw you poking about and counting your paces. I was on the top of the castle wall, and looked down on both of you when you thought yourselves unobserved.'

For the moment I was somewhat taken aback, for I had no idea we had been watched, nor that we had aroused his suspicions. When a man is in search of hidden treasure he does not usually tell it to the world, for fear of derision being cast upon him; therefore I again naturally hesitated to explain our real object.

But he continued to press me; and as he was one of my oldest and most intimate friends, I called in Walter, and, closing the door again, explained briefly the explorations we intended to make, and how I had gained the knowledge of the hidden casket.

He listened to me open-mouthed, in amazement, especially when I described the deadly contact of those forbidden pages, and the attempt made by Lord Glenelg and his companions to find the treasure of Crowland Abbey.

'Lord Glenelg, did you say?' Fred remarked when I mentioned the name. 'I know both him and his daughter Lady Judith Gordon. We first met them in Wellington, New Zealand, three years ago. He has a shoot up in Inverness, and, curiously enough, they're both coming here to stay with us on Saturday.'

'Coming here?' I gasped. 'Lady Judith coming here?'

'Yes. Pretty girl, isn't she? I'd be gone on her myself if I were a bachelor. Perhaps you are, old chap.'

I did not respond, except to extract a strict promise from my host to preserve my secret.

'Of course I shall say nothing,' he assured me. 'Father and daughter are, however, a strange pair. It's very remarkable—this story you've just told me. I don't half like the idea of that bear-cub being shown in the window in Bloomsbury. There's something uncanny about it.'

I agreed; but all my thoughts were of his lordship's motive for coming there. Like myself, he had shot with Fred before, it seemed, and my host and Connie had, last season, been his guests for a week up at Callart. In Scotland hospitality seems always more open, more genuine, and more spontaneous than in England.

'Of course, Glenelg is something of an archæologist, like yourself,' Fred said; 'but if what you say is true, there seems to be some extraordinary conspiracy afoot to obtain possession of certain treasure, which by right should be yours, as the purchaser of this remarkable book. I must admit that Glenelg and his daughter have been, both to Connie and myself, something of mysteries. When we were in town last Christmas, Connie swore she saw Lady Judith dressed in a very shabby kit coming out of an aerated bread shop in the Fulham Road. My wife stopped to speak, but the girl pretended not to know her. Connie knew her by that

small piece of gold-stopping in one of her front teeth.'

'But why should she go about like that?' I asked.

'How can I tell? They were supposed to be away in Canada, or somewhere, at the time; they're nearly always travelling, you know. We came home with them on the *Caledonia* the first season we met them.'

'They're mysteries!' declared Wyman bluntly. 'The girl is, at any rate.'

'What do you know of her?' inquired Fred eagerly.

But Walter would not satisfy us. He merely said:

'I've heard one or two strange rumours—that's all.'

I had told neither of my intense love for Lady Judith, nor did I intend to do so. Yet I was torn by conflicting desires: the desire not to meet his lordship beneath that roof, and the all-impelling desire to be afforded an opportunity of more intimate friendship with that sweet, sad-hearted woman whom I adored.

Fred Fenwicke was just as interested in the strange circumstances as we were, and promised at once to do all in his power to assist us. I knew him to be a man of sterling worth, whose word was his bond, and whose friendship was true and continuous. Equally with Walter Wyman, he was my best friend, and, with the exception of keeping back the fact that I loved Lady Judith, I was perfectly frank with him, telling him the suggestion that had crossed my mind—namely, that it would perhaps be as well if I left Crailloch before his lordship's arrival.

'Why?' asked the Major at once. 'Does he know that you are making this search?'

'I suppose he does,' Wyman replied. 'He evidently knows that The Closed Book has been in Allan's hands, and that he has deciphered it.'

Fred remained thoughtful for a moment, then said:

'But it may be that he's coming here with the same object as yourselves—to see Threave and make investigations. If that's so, I'd go over to Castle-Douglas and stay at the "Douglas Arms"—a very comfortable hotel. You'd then be right on the spot.'

'Yes,' I said; 'that's what we will do. And meanwhile you will watch his lordship's movements for us, won't you?'

'Of course,' laughed Fred, now entering thoroughly into the spirit of the thing, for the excitement of a treasure-hunt appealed to his vigorous nature.

Our plans were, however, quickly doomed to failure; for next morning, at breakfast, Fred announced to us that Lord Glenelg had written from Edinburgh to say that urgent family affairs called him to Paris, and that neither he nor his daughter could come to Crailloch just at present.

The very wording of the letter, which Fred read to those at his end of the table, was to us suspicious that his lordship had learnt that we were Fred Fenwicke's guests, and on that account feared to come. This idea I put later to Fred himself, and he entirely coincided with my opinion.

'They're mysterious, very mysterious, old fellow,' he said. 'I don't half like the idea of those people you told me about—the hunchback and the other fellow—who are behind them. Yet, on the other hand, Lord Glenelg is a man well known, with a very high reputation when he was in Parliament ten years ago. He was an under-secretary, if I recollect aright.'

'But what is their game, do you think?'

'Their game at Crowland was to find the hidden treasure of the abbey,' he answered, 'and they may probably try the same thing at Threave.'

'That's exactly what we've feared,' chimed in Walter. 'I believe they are in possession of some further fact, of which we know nothing. There's a conspiracy against Allan, too, the meaning of which we at present cannot understand.'

'But why?' I asked, recollecting all the curious events of the past, and remembering my conversation with that strange woman in black who had so ingeniously stolen the Arnoldus.

Wyman shrugged his shoulders, saying:

'It is never any good inquiring into the motives of either man or woman. The cleverest man can never gauge them accurately.'

'Well,' remarked Fred Fenwicke, 'the move in this case is undoubtedly the recovery of the treasure.'

'But the treasure, if it exists, is mine,' I said. 'I purchased the book and deciphered the secret. Therefore I may surely make investigations with profit to myself?'

'You may make investigations, but without profit, I fear, so far as Threave is concerned,' was Fred's calm reply.

'I don't understand you,' I said. 'The book was offered to me at a fair price, and I purchased it. Whatever I found within I may surely use to my own advantage?'

'Observing, of course, the law of treasure-trove,' was my host's remark.

'Of course.'

'Then whatever you find must either go to the Crown or to the lord of the manor.'

'You mean Colonel Maitland?'

'No, I mean Lord Glenelg,' my friend said.

'Why Lord Glenelg?' I demanded quickly.

'Because, according to the *Glasgow Herald* this morning, he has purchased both the island and castle from Colonel Maitland; so whatever is found on that property undoubtedly belongs to him.'

A VISIT TO A WILD-ANIMAL FARM.

By W. B. Robertson.

HAZLEMERE PARK, the Buckinghamshire estate of Mr Robert Leadbetter, is not far from Hughenden, so well known as Lord Beaconsfield's country seat. It stands high and dry seven hundred feet above sea-level, is four miles from a railway, and has to be reached by hilly and winding roads that do not invite the ubiquitous cyclist or travellers of any kind with a choice of routes. The stranger on these roads soon becomes aware that he is a rarity, for groups of faces fill the windows of the few isolated cottages as he passes, and should he chance to glance round when he has passed he will see the owners of the faces in the roadway feasting their eyes upon him till he is lost to view. Rabbits startled by the noise of his approach dart across his path now and then, and if it be autumn he may regale himself on blackberries and hazel-nuts plucked from the hedgerows. These lonely roads make a fitting approach to the only private collection of wild animals where lions have been bred, for this distinction is claimed by Mr Leadbetter as belonging solely to Hazlemere Park.

On the occasion of my visit Mr Leadbetter's collection comprised a full-grown lion and lioness eight and five years old respectively, a lion and lioness nine months old, four lion cubs three months old, a brown bear, a puma, a leopard, a full-grown tiger and tigress, hyænas, wolves, jackals, a pair of white Siberian camels (the male being the largest in captivity), vicuñas, alpacas, llamas, yaks, pigmy buffaloes, zebus (the pigmy cattle of Ceylon), peccaries from Brazil, Syrian sheep, monkeys, and macaws and parrots. In the summer these animals are ranged out in their cages and runs on the lawn in front of the house, and have a cheerful view of the country, the woods, the flowers, the grass, and moving things; in the cold weather they are housed in warm sheds, and they were still in winter quarters owing to the inclement season when I visited them. I have seen many animals in captivity through knowing showmen and animal dealers, and without doubt the best conditioned of them all are Mr Leadbetter's. His lions are so sleek that they look as if they were groomed; and the tigers' stripes are as clean and clear as any in a new picture-book, with a snaky gloss upon them that no picture ever had. Another noticeable feature about these animals is their contentment. They spit fire at the onlooking stranger of course, but they do not pace restlessly before the bars of their dens as if chafing against their confinement. This reign of contentment is broken by one tragic exception.

The exception is the big brown Russian bear. He is the biggest in this country, and has a reach of nine feet. Mr Leadbetter has had him for seven years, and until recently he was as contented as his other companions in captivity. Then he had a mate of whom he was very fond—perhaps too fond. One September morning, the animals being still scattered about the park in their summer cages, the keeper was feeding some buffaloes and zebras when suddenly his attention was arrested by a fearful noise proceeding from the bears' den. Rushing thither, he found its occupants engaged in deadly combat. With a heavy iron bar he vainly sought to separate them. Other keepers, stablemen, and grooms hurried to the scene of conflict with pitchforks, poles, spades, buckets of water, but their combined efforts were unavailing. It was between six and seven in the morning, and there were as yet no fires of sufficient force to heat iron bars, and no boiling water. Mr Leadbetter himself was just getting up when the fight began, and arrived in time to see the male bear tear a strip of living flesh a yard long from his mate's body. The struggle was marked by the most terrible ferocity, the cage being smothered in blood. It lasted half-an-hour, and when the female was dead the male continued to glut his still unsated ire by tearing her carcass to pieces. Now he pines in solitude. His uppermost thought is escape. He has pushed out a brick wall in seeking to effect this, and he has dug through a yard of cement. Perhaps he thinks his mate is waiting for him away down the park, where in his blind, jealous rage he slew her. His discontent, if such it be, has not interfered with his appetite, however, for he eats daily a loaf of bread and thirty dog-biscuits, besides a quantity of carrots and apples. The loss of his mate had quite a different effect upon a leopard that Mr Leadbetter has now stuffed and mounted in his billiard-room. That leopard refused to eat, and actually died of starvation.

The bear's den is one of five in a warm brick building not more than twenty yards from the house, and, in view of his evident determination to be free, is now lined with half-inch steel plates. The five dens adjoin one another like horses' stalls, only they are partitioned off right to the ceiling, and of course barred in front. Between the brick wall and the cage-bars runs a passage or gangway three feet wide. The cages are full of light in the daytime from three large windows in the wall in front of them; in fact, the occupants of any of them can see the sky. Behind the cages, as seen from the gangway, are the sleeping-dens, to which the animals have access by doorways, which are shut by iron slides moving vertically and manipulated by chains that run over pulleys to the front of the cages. Thus, when it is necessary for any one to enter a cage, its occupants are shut in their sleeping-quarters, and *vice versâ* when entrance is desired to their

sleeping-quarters, to which access is afforded at the rear.

Entering the building by its one door, then, we find immediately on the left our restless friend Bruin, whom we have done with, and therefore pass by to find ourselves before a cage containing a male puma and an Indian female leopard. The puma is stretched upon a shelf against the bars with a paw hanging out that one feels tempted to shake, while the leopard on the floor reclines against the side next the bear. The curious feature about these positions, as I afterwards saw when the animals were fed, is that the puma is lying where the leopard always eats her food, and the leopard is lying exactly where the puma always eats his food. Just as members of a family have their own places at table, so these animals have theirs. Some steal away with their joint into the gloom of their sleeping-quarters; others squat alongside the front bars. Whichever way it is, they always occupy the same positions. The leopard sprang up as soon as she saw me, a stranger. She had had bits of strangers before, and so struck out between the bars for a bit of the newest stranger. She did not get a bit this time, however, as this newest stranger had viewed animals of her kind before in other than public zoos and menageries where the public are railed off at a safe distance.

In the next cage is the full-maned African lion Sultan, the sire of two litters cubbed at Hazlemere. Two of the last litter are in the next den with their mother, Victoria, and two with a foster-mother, a collie. Sultan stood boldly, but with an expression almost benign, before us. He didn't even snarl. So little put about was he that actually he gave an idle yawn, opening his cavernous mouth to its fullest extent, and displaying a fine set of teeth that showed what he could do if he had the chance and had a mind to. He certainly had a good chance of devouring his keeper a few days before my visit. The keeper had just put some tools down at the inner end of the gangway and was turning round to go out by the open door at the other end, when, to his horror, he beheld the full form of Sultan between him and the exit, facing him and gazing intently at him. The poor fellow thought his last hour had come. Had he been a stranger, no doubt it would have been his last hour. As it was, he made a feint at the lion with a broom, and that gentleman calmly turned round towards the open door. A new danger now presented itself; for should Sultan get out of the building, there was no limit to the havoc he might work. Quickly, therefore, the keeper got out of the adjacent window, and, shouting an alarm, ran to close the door on the escaped lion. Sultan, however, was taking things very quietly, having a look at his neighbours. He might have gone out, but on the way he had to pass the bear's den, and the display of fury that his appearance evoked here made him pause and finally turn back. On his way he found Victoria at the bars, so he stopped to have a few seconds of affectionate greeting with her; then wheeling round, he entered the open door of his own cage, possibly thinking that it would lead to his mate's caresses, which it does in ordinary times. He was very promptly shut in by the watchers who had been breathlessly regarding him, and who very wisely abstained from interfering with him and exciting him. For it was not merely a case of preventing depredation — that is always easily accomplished where firearms are at hand; it was also a case of getting a highly prized animal restored uninjured to his proper place.

The compartment adjacent to Sultan's is, as already remarked, his frolicsome mate Victoria's. The side-door between these dens is closed just now, and Sultan excluded, because of the cubs. As we stood before Victoria she played like a kitten, and rolled on her back against the bars to allow Mr Leadbetter to tickle her. Indeed, there was quite a laughing expression on her face. The remaining occupants of this building are the Royal Bengal tigers (male and female), full grown. Their den is the inmost from the door. Mr Leadbetter has had the female for only eight months, and then she was imported straight from the jungle. She is very savage, and growled and spat at me all the time I was within range of her vision. She is cruel even to her mate, and has clawed a piece out of his left cheek. Whether the young tigers she is expected to have shortly will modify her ferocity remains to be seen.

In another building were two of Victoria's former litter, now nine months old. Their den was a wild-beast carriage bought from Barnum's show, with a glass front, as was also the hyænas' den in the same building. The cubs became full of play on seeing us, and gambolled about amongst a profusion of straw like puppies. They were bigger and much heavier than mastiffs. We went in beside them, and they hissed at us, but from a safe distance. Up till a month previous to this Mr Leadbetter had their brother roaming about his house. He would lie on the hearth-rug or anywhere else that suited him, and went about with the freedom permitted a pet dog. Now and then he showed little fits of temper, which a smart cut from a whip would correct. At last he took to licking Mrs Leadbetter's mother's arm, an intolerable demonstration of affection from a lion, whose tongue is as rough as a rasp, and he was banished to America.

Our visit to the wolves and jackals drew some interesting remarks from Mr Leadbetter. A bitch-wolf had five pups a few days old, and the dog-wolf separated from her was in the next run. The keeper came along with their food—sheep paunches. The dog wolfed his down, and while we were still there the bitch came out from her lair. Thereupon the dog turned to her and brought up the other paunch entire for her to take through the bars. Wolves are the most affectionate parents Mr Leadbetter knows, being so fond of their young that if

alarmed they swallow their pups, thinking they are thereby putting them in a place of safety, or, at any rate, moved by jealous fear lest another should have them. The hyæna is also apt to swallow pups. Wolves make the finest nests of any animal, plucking the softest hairs from their bodies to line them with. Some of a former litter of wolves Mr Leadbetter had placed with a retriever foster-mother. These when grown up proved to be much more savage than those suckled by the mother herself, which was quite contrary to his expectations.

The food of the carnivora is supplied under contract, and consists of beef, mutton, and horse-flesh. The wolves and jackals have what, I believe, in butchers' parlance is called offal—that is, entrails. The lions have horseflesh every other day; the tigers only two days a week, their stomachs, according to Mr Leadbetter's observations, being more delicate than the lions'. All prefer the beef or mutton to the horseflesh. The quantity per meal is twenty-five pounds for a male, and fifteen pounds for a female. Besides his twenty-five pounds of meat a day, Sultan has every evening a large dish of milk, which he laps with avidity. The others might have the same if they cared for it.

And how came Mr Leadbetter to take up such a strange pursuit? As a schoolboy he kept jackals and hyænas. He is rather partial to jackals still, and until recently used to have one running about the house by day and sleeping in his bedroom by night. This jackal became too mischievous, however. Little tricks such as pulling coal and wood out of the fireplaces were endured, but when he took to wantonly destroying and tearing to pieces boots, cushions, leather-lined chairs, and such-like, then he had to be put away. The monkeys are allowed to run about the place in summer, but not now in the house. They are subject to fits of jealousy that make them fly at the person or animal they imagine to be supplanting them. Once Mr Leadbetter, while a large Indian monkey was perched on his back, turned round to speak to his mother. The monkey was immediately seized with an ungovernable fit of jealousy, sprang at Mrs Leadbetter, and scratched her. The poor thing seemed to be just as swiftly seized with remorse, for it flew out of the house and up to the roof, where it remained four days in misery.

Though the only animals now in the house are parrots and a Scotch and Irish terrier, there are not wanting objects to remind one of the wild-animal world. There are rugs made from the skins of animals that have died in the menagerie—panthers, leopards, bears. The claws on one bear-skin are bent inward in a curious fashion, making it quite impossible for them to be of any use for scratching. This is the skin of a bear that had the freedom of the house, and Mr Leadbetter attributes the peculiar shape of the claws to its having had so much walking on carpets. Then, besides animals' skins, there are in different rooms cases containing the stuffed remains of former members of the menagerie. There is a full-sized white bear and a bear-cub seven days old. There are badgers and there are camels' heads. One looks for a stuffed lion, but there is not one; for the reason that no lion has ever died at Hazlemere. Victoria during the five years of her existence has never even been sick. Mr Leadbetter has sold lions, but never buried them; for a long-maned full-grown one he has had as much as two hundred and eighty pounds, and for cubs eleven months old eighty pounds. These are big prices.

The secret of Mr Leadbetter's success with wild animals is soon discovered. Added to a real love of animals he has a passion for breeding them—a passion that his affluence enables him to gratify. Though still under thirty, he is the breeder of mastiffs and great Danes that have won him more than a hundred cups. It is mainly from him that showmen recruit their supplies of piebald horses. 'Leadbetter's Pedigree Shorthorns' is a hall-mark; even his Yorkshire pigs are famous, and he has been called upon by the British Government to supply his breed to the Boer farmers, which he has undertaken to do with some reluctance, for he is as proud of his pigs as he is of his lions. Hazlemere Park is in a hunting district, and to his other duties Mr Leadbetter has now to add the duties of Master of the old Berkeley Hunt; yet he is so humane that, on my telling him he ought to get rid of that troublesome bear, he replied, 'I'm afraid he wouldn't be treated well.' His sensitiveness to animal suffering is further exemplified by his stopping rook-shooting on his estate. It was a doleful-looking young rook sitting on a fence that turned the conversation. 'I'm afraid he has fallen out of his nest,' said Mr Leadbetter. 'I haven't had them shot for two seasons now, and they say if you don't shoot them they will all go away. I certainly think we have fewer than we used to have.' As Mr Leadbetter doesn't want his estate to be robbed of its rooks, he may thus have to return to the old custom of shooting the young.

SOME REFLECTIONS AND REMINISCENCES OF AN EX-SCHOOLMASTER.

THE old order of schoolmasters is fast giving way to the new. Education is at last being seriously discussed; and so there is a sincere desire that our schoolmasters shall themselves receive an adequate training for their work in life. A man must possess clearly defined and well-regulated qualifications before he can be a doctor, a lawyer, or even a journeyman hatter. But anybody can set up as a private schoolmaster. Hitherto, 'anybody' has taken opportunity of the privilege. Reading, writing, and arithmetic, with a little Latin and less Greek as extras, were at one time considered an ample curriculum for the average school. But we have changed all that. The improvement in elementary education has played havoc with the old order. The Board schools in England have set a new and a higher standard of primary education, and the secondary schools are following suit. The old schoolmaster will soon be no more. The headmaster of one of our big public schools said to the writer that he could no longer find a writing-master. How essential and how important the old writing-master was! Now an advertisement for a writing-master in a public school at a salary of one hundred and fifty pounds, rising to three hundred pounds, brought many applications, but not a single *bona fide* writing-master. They were men who wrote fair hands (though most of them wrote wretchedly—which was curious); but they had no notion of teaching writing. They told their pupils to 'imitate the copy'—that was all.

It is to be regretted that even yet there is too much of this slipshod teaching in some of the secondary schools of England. There is a marked improvement taking place; but the secondary teacher has much to learn. The elementary schoolmaster is told how to teach; the secondary man has few opportunities of obtaining an adequate professional training.

I was once engaged in a secondary school where there was a certificated teacher. Nobody's results were like this man's. He was not perhaps the most cultured man in the school; but his boys made progress. The other masters never equalled his results. He had been taught how to teach. There is no reason why a man of culture should not be able to get as good results as any other man, providing he has had the necessary training.

Comparatively few secondary men give instruction in all subjects equally well. One man likes classics and neglects all else, and so forth. A master in a good secondary school said to me the other day, 'I never bother taking history when that lesson comes round. I let the boys read it and get it up as best they can; but I utilise the time for pushing on backward boys in other subjects.' Now, either history was a thing to be taught in its proper course, or the curriculum of that school was bad. Also, if it was to be taught at all, it ought to be taught systematically and thoroughly. Some men neglect grammar, some geography, in the same way.

In the teaching of modern languages, the caprices and vagaries of some teachers whom I have known were weird in the extreme. Scarcely two agreed as to how a living language should be taught. One stuffed the boys with grammar and an old text-book; another banged the door and said, '*Porte! porte!*' And the pronunciation was more varied and more richly endowed with originality than it is possible to surmise. '*J'ai voo oon vee!*' said the smiling teacher, desiring to say to his boys, '*J'ai vu une ville.*' But what would the poor lads do in after days? They were in as bad a case as the Russian who learned English from a Yorkshire navvy. The regular exodus of hundreds of our secondary teachers to the holiday courses at the universities of Paris, Caen, Grenoble, &c. has done much to mitigate this cacophonous lesson; but French and German as they are *not* spoken is still far too common in our schools. Then, too, note the waste in our modern language teaching. Why should not a boy at the age of fifteen or sixteen be able to speak one if not two modern languages? He should certainly be able to read both with ease. The thing is quite possible if only lessons were properly systematised and studies wisely directed. To teach a boy or girl to think is good; if useful knowledge can be imparted at the same time, so much the better. In many walks of life there are few things so advantageous as a thorough conversational knowledge of some modern language, but that is the very last thing too many schoolmasters think of. If a boy 'passes' some exam. in crammed French they are content. As for English, the less said the better. I heard a most distinguished headmaster say, 'Those kind of things.' Those kind! Too much attention is paid to the intricacies of parsing and analysis, and too little to the intelligent and correct use of the mother-tongue.

The fact of the matter is, sport has played far too great a part in the choice of masters in secondary schools, particularly in private schools. I know of the case of a man, whose name is a familiar word in the world of sport, who did almost as he wished as an assistant master in a private school. He had classes of course, but he taught practically nothing. He was a sportsman. If the Head remonstrated with him regarding school duties, this popular teacher refused to play in school matches, with disastrous results to the school. It was the Head who gave in, and the following week the sporting-teacher beat the opposing team off his own bat. To say the least, that headmaster considered it better to have a good sportsman as an assistant master than a man who taught.

I recall another case, not so flagrant, but showing a sagacity other than educational on the part of the headmaster. This was a most prosperous school; the headmaster was rich beyond the dreams of most teachers. But he engaged a master once who insisted on teaching the boys under his charge! The boys resented it, and one of them was impudent; so this serious master reported the matter to the Head, thinking naturally that he would be backed up. The Head said, 'Mr So-and-so, the parents of X. [the boy] pay me one hundred pounds a year. I can get a new master any day in the week, but not a new boy at one hundred pounds a year. So don't make him uncomfortable.' Concerning some things it is best to say nothing. I merely hazard, how much there is in a point of view!

My own career in private and endowed secondary schools was interesting and generally pleasant. I was only eighteen years of age when I went to my first post, though I looked twenty-three, which was a great advantage. I had been calling other people 'sir,' and now I was appealed to as 'sir.' I am sure I must have blushed amazingly in those early days. It was a high-class private school, which catered also for foreigners, who paid about one hundred pounds a year. We fed superbly, far too well for boys. Porridge, bacon, and strawberries to breakfast in the season—strawberries to boys! I will say the headmaster was a serious teacher, and tried to get the boys on. I was left pretty much alone with the juniors, and if I had chosen to play instead of work there was no one to overlook me. I think my boys got on fairly well; they were nice-looking, well-bred boys, and I never could find it in my heart to punish them. I am soberer now; but then, if a boyish face looked in mine I was undone as a martinet. I enjoyed myself thoroughly, for it was a most agreeable post. I recall as worthy of note the trick of a small boy of ten. Whenever this urchin had neglected his lessons or was in danger of punishment tears oozed from his eyes. 'Please, sir,' he would quiveringly say, 'my mother's dead!' I felt I could not punish a poor motherless lad, and so he scored off me twice with the attitude; but after that my heart got hardened. I heard he had played the trick many times, and so for the sake of his father I punished him when necessary. In recalling that time, I think what was most strange to me was the constant appeal for advice. I was eighteen, please remember. If two boys differed in opinion they came to me. 'Please, sir, wasn't Wellington a better general than Napoleon?' 'Please, sir, don't acorns grow into oak-trees?' 'Please, sir, why have white mice got pink eyes?' &c. I repeat I was eighteen!

Although the post was a pleasant one, I found very little time for private study, and so I left and obtained charge of a small class of boys in a girls' school in Scotland.

I spent there a happy and delightful year. It was a charming place on the coast, and I was most content with the social life. As a schoolmaster, my task was very easy. I had about ten boys in different stages of learning, and my school-life was uneventful.

I stayed a year, and then went to London to a private school. There I was treated strangely. The headmaster had been an elementary schoolmaster, and had started a school of his own. He had about one hundred day boys and two boarders. But I was treated 'a little better than his dog.' I was not allowed to use the front door. I had to go to bed at 10.30. I shared a tiny room for work with the two boarders and the principal's two sons, who were treated as boarders, and my bedroom was a part of theirs. This gentleman's family treated me as a being much beneath them. I was never invited to join the family circle. I sat at a table apart. Scarcely a word was addressed to me at a meal. I was, in actual fact, in the eyes of these worthy people, somebody who occupied a low place in their establishment, and it was deemed expedient to keep me in my place. But I left at the end of the first quarter. There are limits to regulations.

I next went to Brussels, where I was to have an entirely new and strange experience. I knew very little French—that is to say, I could not read it easily, and could speak it not at all. My pronunciation was peculiar. I went on mutual terms to a man who had a 'Commercial Institute.' I was to teach English so many hours per week, and in return I was to have opportunities of learning French and German, and to be lodged and boarded.

At this institute nobody was admitted under the age of sixteen, and we got one or two men who were nearly thirty! They came mostly from Germany to study French and English. Instead of the noisy, sporting boys with laughing faces, whose heads I had banged (all masters do that in their youth!), I was in a little circle of people my own age who did not understand the language I spoke, and *vice versâ*. There were only two boarders at first, and we finally reached the figure of eight! Also, we had about five day-pupils.

After our meals we all smoked—the principal handing cigarettes round, of which he smoked forty a day. Occasionally he provided wine, and now and again champagne. I was twenty-one then, and this new life struck me as a great experience. I had jumped from boys to men.

The principal was a curious man. I discovered afterwards that he was a Jew and a gambler. He was at one time the most genial and generous man one could wish to meet; the next day he stormed and shouted and browbeat everybody in his establishment. Most of his pupils merely came for six months; and as he insisted on payment in advance and a quarter's notice, he managed to make sure that he would not lose a pupil at the end of the first quarter.

Beer was always provided at dinner and supper, and our food was, on the whole, both reasonable and tempting. To me the breakfast was a change. Thick-cut bread on which was spread very little

butter was certainly not to be compared with what I got in my first place, where I had porridge, bacon, and strawberries. Mr X. (our principal) was most tactful. He hypnotised us when he wished. Rather, he was full of suggestions which he made us agree with.

'Beautiful meat,' he would say. 'Now, isn't it? Isn't that a beautiful piece of meat?' And he would wait for his answer. Of course those pointedly addressed had to say 'Yes.' As they ate, too, he would repeat his eulogiums, which fell impartially on vegetables and sweets as on meat. So he had always one card up his sleeve. If anybody complained of the food he was always able to reply, 'But you have constantly said how excellent it was!'

I returned to this same man three years later, and on the whole spent a very pleasant and educational time with him. His alternate fits of generosity and temper were due to his gambling, I believe. He did no teaching himself save an occasional private lesson in German, and his staff was cheap enough! But he played écarté with the passion of a genuine gambler. He was warned off the game in Brussels, and had a notice to leave the country; but as he had been domiciled in Belgium for seventeen years, he was allowed to remain. So he actually went to Ostend for his game of cards! Once, I was told by an eye-witness, he won seventeen games of écarté right off the reel—that is, he defeated seventeen players one after the other, and won his bet, of course, each time. He lost the eighteenth game, and so had to give up his seat; he went to another table where his name was written, and won seven more games before he was defeated. He was a man of ability and resource desiring to live without work, and so he indulged in wild pleasures on some occasions, and descended to an almost petty meanness at other times. One of my colleagues there is now a member of Parliament in the Belgian House of Representatives; and an Englishman who was one of my successors I saw the other day in the British Museum addressing envelopes! He was a university graduate, and had been a Colonial Inspector of Schools, and was one of the most unsophisticated men I ever met.

But the school where I found most human interest was an old endowed one having about one hundred and twenty boarders. Instead of a small family to study and watch, there was this huge gathering of humanity. There was the headmaster — and, incidentally, the headmaster's family; there was the master's common room, shared by six of us; there were the boys—one hundred and twenty of them. In reminiscences of this kind one is too apt to think that what is interesting to one's self is also interesting to others. But I will try to avoid the dreary. Amongst my colleagues that the changes of time gave me, there was the domineering man, the shy man, the obliging man, the impossible man, the sycophant, and one whom I will cite more fully—the French master. He was unique.

To begin with, he was over sixty and nearly blind. He had had a splendid school practice at one time; but the sudden loss of his sight—coupled, I think, with a capricious temper—caused him to give it up. He tried his hand at various businesses, and eventually returned to teaching. His employers did not know the weakness of his sight. If you asked him to pass the pepper he would probably knock over a carafe of water. If he tried to pass you in the street he would collide with somebody else. I heard him once call out, 'Ah, Jones! it's you is it, talking there? I'll punish you presently. Don't fancy I can't see you.' And three or four voices replied, 'Please, sir, Jones is at music.' He was expert, though. 'Well, it's the boy sitting in Jones's place or just near there,' he said.

As it was so difficult for him to see, he tactfully got the French books changed to one that he knew by heart; then, as the boys read their translations, spelling the words one by one, he could correct them with confidence. His success as a teacher was wonderful. His discipline was naturally weak. In general he was very suspicious, which I attributed to his weak sight and his nationality. He left that school at the same time as I did, and I cannot see how he can hope to get another place. His general knowledge was amazing, and his love of the table intense.

Some of the boys here were vastly entertaining; but boys are always that. There was one who was almost uncanny. He was the tiniest boy in the school, aged perhaps nine or ten. His head was narrow in the front and very wide at the back—a wedge-shaped head. His features were small. He was uncontrollable. He would suddenly in the middle of a lesson throw his head on the desk and go fast asleep, to the amusement of the other boys and the perplexity of the master. He would say and do all manner of audacious things; but his temper was terrifying. He threw a slate at me on one occasion; and when the headmaster was once chastising him he jumped away and ran round a table, crying out, 'That'll do. I've had enough!' I caught him once in the playground catching wasps with his bare fingers with as much coolness as an ordinary person displays in catching flies. He told me he gave them to the big spiders in the walls, which ate them. He was expelled at last, and we subsequently learned he had been expelled from two or three schools previously. I often think of that old Frenchman and that small boy: one stricken in his age and the other almost ruined in youth!

My last post as a teacher was in one of our big public schools. There was a different atmosphere from that in other places. The men were staider, older, soberer, and genuine schoolmasters. We had a staff of nearly thirty, so our variety was great. But I saw what I had not seen before. Many of these men were married, with sons in the school or in other schools. Some had seen over twenty years' service in that school, yet I have seen one or two meet the headmaster like shy schoolboys!

THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER AND ESTATES.

By W. M. J. Williams.

THE Duchy of Lancaster and the Duchy of Cornwall may be compared to the Severn and the Wye. The two rivers are found to issue from Plinlimmon and to fall into the Bristol Channel; the duchies issue from the days of Edward III., and they may be traced from age to age down to this day, both following the fortunes and upholding the comfort and dignity of the British Crown. There was a dignity of Cornwall before the duchy, and the dignity corresponding was created for the Black Prince; there was a House of Lancaster long before we find a Duchy of Lancaster, or at any rate the Duchy of Lancaster with which we are concerned here. Throughout the fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth the tenure of the Crown was very uncertain. Jealousies were many; the line which divides king from nobles was not drawn as we know it, clear and definite; the policy of every occupant of the Crown was to unite as many powerful nobles to himself as possible by marriage or grants or both; and when Henry IV. in 1399 became Lancastrian king on the deposition of Richard II., his first care was to arrange for the Lancaster family estates a separate existence from that of the Crown: it was to be personal and not *ex officio* property. From that day to this the Duchy of Lancaster has been an appanage of the Crown; whether it can be regarded as the personal property of our Sovereign is a very different question. The origin of the estate is clear; it was the king's desire to have a family estate maintained apart from the Sovereign's official resources. 'Henry IV. sought to strengthen the usurped throne by the creation of a great family entailed estate, the legal results of which, to some extent, still remain. With this view the Duchy of Lancaster was formed by union of the counties of Leicester, Lancaster, Lincoln, and Derby—that is, by union of the numerous demesnes situate therein, and of all those manorial and judicial jurisdictions which were to secure the ducal house an influence in wider spheres' (Gneist, ii. 83). The king was a duke also; a great territorial magnate as well as a Sovereign.

The Duchy of Lancaster must be distinguished from the Palatinate of Lancaster. The duchy, in the language of Blackstone (vol. iii. p. 78), 'is a thing very distinct from the County Palatine of Lancaster, inasmuch as it includes much territory at a distance from the county palatine, and particularly a very large district surrounded by the city of Westminster.' A county palatine is called a *palatio*, because the ruler had within its limits the same powers (*jura regalia*) as the king in his palace. The Palatinate of Lancaster was created by charter of 25 Edward III., and conferred upon Henry Plantagenet, Earl (and subsequently first Duke) of Lancaster; from him it passed by the marriage of his heiress, Blanche, to John of Gaunt, fourth son of Edward III., who was created Duke of Lancaster. Then Henry IV., the son of John of Gaunt, assumed it to himself and his heirs separate from the Crown. Henry had wrested the Crown from Richard II., but took care that the duchy should not be united with the Crown, as 'he knew,' says Coke, 'he had the Duchy of Lancaster by sure and indefeasible title, but that his title to the Crown was not so assured' (Coke, 4 Inst. 205). When Henry VI. was attainted in the first year of Edward IV. (1461) the duchy was declared forfeited to the Crown, the duchy was incorporated, and the county palatine, which might have lapsed by the attainder, continued and made a parcel of the duchy, the whole being vested in King Edward IV. and his heirs, *Kings of England*, for ever, but under a separate government from the other dominions inherited with the Crown. In the first year of Henry VII. (1485) the duchy lands severed from it by Edward IV. were resumed, and the whole vested in the king and his heirs for ever. The revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster have been vested in the Crown ever since, and it is specially recited in the Act of 19 Geo. III. c. 95 that the king is seised and possessed to himself, his heirs, and successors of the possessions of the Duchy of Lancaster.

This independence of the palatinates it was which caused Burke's outburst in his speech on economical reform: 'First, with regard to the sovereign jurisdictions, I must observe, Sir, that whoever takes a view of this kingdom in a cursory manner will imagine that he beholds a solid, compacted uniform system of monarchy. . . . It is not a monarchy in strictness. But, as in Saxon times this country was an heptarchy, it is now a strange kind of pentarchy. It is divided into five several distinct principalities, besides the supreme. . . . Our Sovereign condescends himself to act not only the principal, but all the subordinate parts of the play. He condescends to dissipate the royal character, and to trifle with those light, subordinate, lacquered sceptres in those hands that sustain the ball representing the world, or which wield the trident that commands the ocean. Cross a brook, and you lose the King of England; but you have some comfort in coming again under His Majesty, though "shorn of his beams" and no more than Prince of Wales. Go to the north, and you find him dwindled to a Duke of Lancaster; turn to the west of that north, and he pops upon you in the humble character of the Earl of Chester. Travel a few miles on, the Earl of Chester disappears, and the king surprises you again as Count Palatine of Lancaster. If you travel beyond Mount Edgecombe you find

him once more in his *incognito*, and he is Duke of Cornwall.'

This eloquent pleasantry was only the foundation in Burke's hands for a passage in which he attacked the government of the duchy in his day, a passage which he closed by saying, that 'the Duchy of Lancaster must have been extinguished if Cromwell, who began to form ideas of aggrandising his House, and raising the several branches of it, had not caused the duchy to be again separated from the commonwealth by an Act of Parliament of those times.'

Something must be added about the powers of the Dukes of Lancaster and others in their palatinates. Stephen says (i. 129) that Bracton expressed their power to be *regalem potestatem in omnibus*. They might pardon treasons, murders, and felonies; they appointed all judges and justices of the peace; all writs and indictments ran in their names, as in other counties in the king's; and all offences were said to be done against their peace, and not, as in other places, *contra pacem domini regis*. In the twenty-seventh year of Henry VIII. the powers of the owners of county palatines were abridged. During the reigns of George IV. and William IV. the jurisdiction of the court of session of the county palatine of Chester was cast into that of the superior courts at Westminster; and by the Judicature Act of 1873 the jurisdiction of the Courts of Common Pleas of Durham and Lancaster was transferred to the High Court of Justice which was set up by that Act. All ordinary writs and all commissions of assize issuing from the King's High Court now run and apply in the county palatine just as in other counties. But this is not so with regard to the commissions of the peace, which still rest with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. There is also a concurrent jurisdiction of the High Court of Chancery and that of the Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor of the duchy in civil affairs. All legal patronage, except the appointment of recorders and grants of Quarter-Sessions, are exercised by the Chancellor of the duchy; and, particularly, all fees of the courts are paid into the fee-fund, and are devoted by royal warrant to purposes of the court, or, in other words, they are a part of the revenue of the duchy.

When we come to inquire into the estate belonging to this duchy, information is not definite and complete, and it is the practice of the several offices to decline to afford any on the most public matters of their duchy, except by order of Parliament. The fiction is kept up that these estates are personal property, whereas the account already given shows clearly that the duchy belongs to the Crown officially, and is inseparable from it. Moreover, we know that during the reign of Queen Victoria it was necessary to pass an Act to enable the Sovereign to hold private property, by which, accordingly, Osborne and Balmoral were held by a very different tenure from Windsor and Buckingham Palace, which are the official residences of the Sovereign. The Duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall are also public property enjoyed by the Sovereign and his heir, and, as we have seen, only Sovereigns and their heirs to the Crown can enjoy them. In quoting Gneist with reference to the formation of the duchy, it was shown that it was formed of demesnes in several counties, and it is interesting to find that as recently as 1873 the *New Domesday Book* tells us that in Lancashire the Duchy of Lancaster held 200 acres worth £627; in Middlesex, 2273 acres worth £4492; in Leicester, 3 acres worth £6, 15s.; in Lincolnshire, 930 acres worth £1480; and in Derby 90 acres bringing in a rent of £65. But it was given officially in 1868 that the estate lay in twenty-two counties of England and Wales. It must be repeated that this notorious return omits London, and consequently some very fine property which belongs to the Duchy of Lancaster is not listed. It is well known to comprise the property on Lancaster Place, Strand, where the duchy office is found, and also property in the Savoy precincts. The Old Savoy Palace was in the hands of John of Gaunt and his family, and it was during his ascendency over the king that in 1381, on the 12th of June, Wat Tyler's insurrection broke from Blackheath into London, one lot marching on Lambeth, while the others went to destroy the Savoy Palace. Finding barrels which they thought held gold, they consigned them to the flames, and the Grand Hall was blown up and the houses destroyed. The buildings were not renewed until the time of Henry VII. and Henry VIII., when the Savoy was made a 'hospital,' whose abuses in time became so great that in Queen Anne's reign it was dissolved and the property taken by the Crown. The rents at that time were estimated at £2497; they must be many times as much now. To-day all that is left of the Savoy is the quaint little church and yard known as the Chapel Royal, Savoy.

The question of the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster is wrapped up with that of the Civil List for the maintenance of the Sovereign. No accounts used to be given of the Sovereign's profit from this source; and it was only since the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837 that regular yearly accounts of the two Duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall have been laid before Parliament. But a Civil List was not known till William of Orange's time; and for all the years until William IV. came to the throne it was burdened with a great many charges which had nothing to do with the personal comfort of the Sovereign and family. When the hereditary revenues due to the Sovereign were recited, the Duchy of Cornwall was found among them, but the Duchy of Lancaster was not, though it was always, evidently, borne in mind that the Sovereign enjoyed an income from that source. There was a doubt in 1830, when William IV. came to the throne, whether his surrender of hereditary revenues included those of the two duchies; but the matter was regarded as settled when the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that was not so, and added, re-

specting the Duchy of Lancaster, that its revenues 'had from a very early period been subject to peculiar regulations totally independent' of the House of Commons. That dictum, probably, would not pass muster now, for it cannot be said that the House of Commons neglects to make inquisition into all matters of the kind. In 1865–66 a Treasury Committee sat to consider the advisability of amalgamating the office and staff of the Duchy of Lancaster with that of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. No report was published; but the conclusion was in the negative, on account of the woods and forests having been surrendered to Parliament, while the duchy remained settled on the Crown. It was also said that the expense of managing the office of woods was greater than that of the duchy, calculated on the percentage of the gross revenue. That might be allowed to pass as a reason, or something instead of a good reason; but it is probable the reason which decided against a joint management, which ought to be economical, was the desire to maintain the independence of the Duchy of Lancaster.

By 1 and 2 Vict. c. 101, it was directed that an annual account of the income and expenditure of the revenues of the Duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster should be submitted to both Houses of Parliament by the officers of the Treasury within one month after the first sitting of Parliament for the year. Since that day the secrecy with which these estates were managed has been done away with in great part, but by no means wholly. At the accession of Queen Victoria the revenues—the net revenues—of the Duchy of Lancaster seem to have been about £10,000 a year, and £5000 was the share paid to the Queen in that year. In 1839 they became £12,000, and remained about £12,000 to £15,000 up to 1853; in 1855 they reached £20,000; in 1865 they were £26,000, though they had reached £37,000 in 1863; in 1875 they had become £41,000, in 1885 £45,000, in 1886–88 £50,000 each year; and in 1901, the year in which Queen Victoria died, her executors received £61,000. These were the sums paid over to the Sovereign yearly after a liberal allowance had been provided for upkeep of the estate. An estate which multiplies sixfold in value during one reign must be an interesting one, and particularly gratifying to the Sovereign.

Before me are two abstracts of the account of the income and capital of the Duchy of Lancaster, and it is interesting to observe how all the figures have grown during the thirty-three years from 1868 to 1901. The gross revenue in 1868 was £47,563; in 1901 it was £101,771. The capital account at the former date showed receipts of £5039 cash and £38,776 stock, leaving a balance of £38,776 capital. The balance of capital in 1901 was only £16,319. Her Majesty received £28,500 in 1868, her executors £61,000 in 1901; so that the net income has been growing at an average rate of £1000 a year since 1868.

The sources of this fine income are interesting to note. Old sources, such as the sale of wood and the £803 from the Consolidated Fund in lieu of prisage and butlerage of wine, are fixed or small sums compared with other items. The two items which fructify more and more are rents and profits of courts, which were £29,770 in 1868, and became £55,116 in 1901, and royalties and reservations of dues, and rents of mines and quarries, which have swollen from £7477 to £33,867. The developments of commerce and consequent business in Lancashire courts during the past thirty-five years have been enormous, with the above result in the growth of the fee-fund payable to the revenues of the duchy; and on the properties belonging to it there have also been developments which have enlarged the royalties nearly fivefold. These facts only point to the normal condition of things on all estates along which the tide of modern life has swept, rolling in a large revenue. On the expenditure side of the account all due economy seems to be observed. In 1868 the management and charities cost about £14,000, and they do not reach that now; while the cash at bankers in 1901 was over £11,000 on the current annual account. There is a compensation when an estate is managed as though it were a private one.

A sketch such as this, which does not profess to be more than that, is perhaps sufficient to satisfy the curiosity of a few readers respecting the property which provides a substantial part of the income sustaining the Royal Family. It does more; it enables us to show the good work done in some of the public departments which do not come under the purview of the people in ordinary ways. More still, there are some reasons for thinking that the King himself, following in this the fine example of his father, who pulled the affairs of the Duchy of Cornwall into order and prosperity, knows how, by ways which are not prominent but which are effective, to stimulate others to take a high view of the duties and responsibilities pertaining to such a domain as this; and if as a consequence he now receives a large revenue therefrom, why, the nation of a certainty should rejoice in that.

WERE I.

Were I a nightingale, the whole night long
I'd weave round you a silver web of song:
Were I a lark, from dawn till dusk I'd break
The silence of the skies for your sweet sake.

Were I a rose, I'd find a voice to cry,
'O pluck me for your breast,' as you pass by;
A lily—I would slip down from my stem
To press a kiss upon your garment's hem.
Were I a river hurrying to the sea,
I'd pause to whisper, 'Come, O come with me!'
Were I the sea—ah me! well may I sigh,
Since you are *you*, and I am *only I!*

M. Hedderwick Browne.

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TRAVEL AND MISADVENTURE IN ITALY.

By the Editor.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

IN that famous autobiography written by himself, and more recently edited by John Murray (1897), Edward Gibbon tells us that one evening in October 1764, as he sat musing in the Church of Santa Maria in Ara-Cœli, amidst the ruins of the Capitol, whilst the bare-footed friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, the idea of writing the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* first started in his mind. Later in the same narrative, Gibbon says that 'the traveller in Italy should be endowed with a vigour of mind and body which can seize every mode of conveyance, and support with a careless smile every hardship of the road, the weather, or the inn.'

Needless to say, the conditions which existed in those days are somewhat improved, although this change is really of very recent origin, dating no farther back than the emancipation of Italy in 1870. Since then, the ancient *vetturino* or diligence, so well described by Mr A. Innes Shand in his recent work *Old-Time Travel*, has given place to a railway system traversing the country in every direction. The Mont Cenis tunnel on the west, and the St Gothard tunnel in Swiss territory on the east, have greatly improved and shortened the journey to Rome and other important towns. In spite, however, of these undoubted facilities, and granting that we are first-class passengers able to pay the additional cost of *wagon lit* trains and other modern luxuries, railway travelling in Italy is still, for the uninitiated, full of difficulties and often desperately uncomfortable, as we shall later on endeavour to show.

The tourist desiring to visit Italy has a choice of two routes. He may travel by Dover, Calais, and Paris to Genoa, reaching Rome *viâ* Modane, the Mont Cenis tunnel, and Turin. This is no doubt the shortest direct route to Rome; but to our mind a more pleasant and varied journey is that by Folkestone and Boulogne, through German and Swiss territory to Lucerne, and from thence by the St Gothard tunnel to Milan, which is no very great distance across the Italian frontier. One or two objections which might be taken to this route are that the distance is somewhat longer, the railway fare as far as Rome rather more, the difficulties with luggage greater, and that the frontier bristles with Custom-houses. This latter annoyance undoubtedly exists in an exaggerated form, and we need hardly say that to convey heavy luggage and retain any control over it during a long journey would be well-nigh impossible. Should the tourist's destination be Milan, he must register his heavy baggage *all the way*, when it is subject to examination at Chiasso, on the Italian frontier, and nowhere else. Before, during, and after this examination the railway authorities become responsible for the luggage until it arrives at its final destination, and deliver it up upon production of the receipt issued in London. Our own baggage consisted of ordinary trunks and one portmanteau, five in all, the charge for registration from London to Milan by rail and sea being five shillings and ninepence.

Having decided to travel direct to Milan, and by preference visit Florence before our arrival in Rome, we left London one afternoon, arriving at Boulogne late the same evening, after a very stormy sea journey. It is here that the first Custom-house examination takes place. We had obtained seats in the restaurant-carriage and beds in the *wagon lit* on the train from Boulogne to Lucerne, *viâ* Basel, and eventually got away about nine o'clock, some two hours late. At five o'clock the following morning every one was aroused by the Custom-house officers who visit the train at Petit Croix during its short journey through German territory, and two hours later, on arrival at Basel, the Custom-house had again to be faced before passengers, who change carriages here, were allowed to enter the Swiss train for Lucerne and Milan. If the traveller is so

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fortunate on arrival at Basel as to catch the express and restaurant train, which is advertised and timed to run in connection with that from Boulogne, he is safe to obtain comparative comfort and breakfast, and to arrive at Milan at three o'clock the same afternoon. In our case, being two hours late, the express train did not wait, and our only resource was to remain at Lucerne, or go on with the slow train timed to reach Milan at 7 P.M. On this train there is no restaurant-carriage, and there being no long stoppage at Basel or Lucerne, any prospect of food and refreshment seemed very far off. The only consolation offered by the Swiss railway officials was that time for lunch would be allowed at a place called Göschenen, where we were due about 2 P.M. Most fortunately before leaving Basel a movable coffee-stall appeared, and still more fortunately halted in front of our carriage, from which we procured the welcome coffee and rolls.

This was at 7.30 A.M., and on arrival at Lucerne two hours later we were able, during a wait of five minutes, to purchase some sandwiches and a bottle of white wine, sufficient to sustain us until a late hour in the afternoon. Göschenen Station, a few miles from the north entrance to the St Gothard tunnel, is a regular stopping-place for the Swiss trains, and here is one of the best-managed restaurants on the Continent. Everything is beautifully cooked, extremely moderate in price, and ready to serve up at a moment's notice. They supply here a delicious red wine, at one franc per large bottle, infinitely superior and better than similar wines supplied in Italian hotels at five times the price.

The journey through Switzerland is very varied and interesting, and the Swiss railway carriages most comfortable and far superior to the same class of accommodation provided in Italy and France. Everything goes well and is full of interest until one arrives at Chiasso, on the Italian frontier, where another Custom-house examination, the worst of all, has to be submitted to. We had, however, been warned that Italian Customs authorities were very strict, and were therefore prepared for much trouble and delay. At Chiasso every one was ordered to leave the train, and, carrying our hand-baggage, we followed a stream of passengers all making their way towards the Custom-house. Inside this building were many officials in gorgeous uniform, to one of whom we presently addressed ourselves, and had our small baggage passed without any difficulty. We knew, however, that the heavy luggage had travelled by the same train, that it must enter the Custom-house now, and if not identified and passed by ourselves there was little or no chance of our finding it on arrival at Milan. By this time the Chiasso Custom-house was filled with an ever-increasing and angry crowd, but as yet there was no sign of luggage, and the crowd, talking in half-a-dozen languages, became more than ever impatient. An angry French tourist remarked to us, '*Il n'y a aucun ordre ni même de système ici*,' with which remark we could not but agree. Believing, however, that the train which had taken us so far would not probably leave for Milan minus passengers and luggage, we sat down as far from the crowd as possible to await the course of events. It took the Italian railway porters just three-quarters of an hour to convey the large luggage, no very great quantity, from the train to the Custom-house, and after some little trouble we were able to identify our own belongings, all of which were passed, by the same gorgeous official, without the necessity of opening any one of them. Having succeeded so far, the idea naturally occurred to our party of returning to the train; but such a happy relief was still very far off. On our arriving at the exit from the Custom-house, another official glanced at our hand-baggage, already examined, and again asked if we had any tobacco or cigars. Answering in the negative, we were permitted to go outside, only to find ourselves in a small railed-off space, exposed to cold and draught and without seats. On the other side of this barricade the station was carefully guarded and surrounded by a body of troops, whilst the train, for some unexplained reason, had left the station. Some half-hour later our condition of quarantine came to an end. The chains forming the barricade were removed; the troops, under their officers, marched off; and weary passengers were permitted to rejoin the train, which by this time had reappeared. This Custom-house examination occupied probably two hours from first to last, and the question that naturally arises is, Why do the Italian authorities, for no apparent reason or benefit to themselves, impose so much unnecessary discomfort upon travellers? Another question which occurs to the writer is, How can it ever pay? So far as we were able to observe, only very slight examination was made of the luggage belonging to passengers entering Italy, and the amount recovered from dutiable articles must on this occasion have been infinitesimal. How, then, can the constant upkeep of so many officials on special duty, the price of so many gorgeous uniforms, and the drafting of a considerable body of soldiery to Chiasso Station ever recoup the Italian Government? This is one of the unsolved mysteries which constantly confront the tourist and man of business travelling outside his own country.

Milan is a pleasant town, very un-Italian in character, with places of interest which can be exhausted in two or three days. Visitors would do well to stay at the Hotel Metropole, which is central, close to the Duomo or Cathedral, very moderate in its prices, and without any of the bad habits common to certain other Continental hotels of which we shall speak later on. The German *concierge* belonging to this hotel is a pearl beyond all price, who gave us much useful information and saved us an infinity of trouble and expense. At the Metropole we obtained, and at a much lower price, better Italian wine than we found in any other Italian hotel, and the advice of

the head-waiter on this point was really of some value.

Let us here digress to say something about the wines of Italy, which are as a rule excellent, very pure, and very moderate in price. At the same time, those native wines supplied in what are termed the first-class hotels are almost invariably very dear and very bad. There can be no possible excuse for this, except a determination to fleece the foreign visitor; and it is an outstanding disgrace to many of the best hotels in Florence and Rome that at any humble *osteria* (inn) outside the city walls better wine is supplied at one franc the *fiaschetta* (large bottle) than can be obtained for five times the price at these fashionable hostelries. The national wine, Chianti, is of a claret character, very light and of delicious flavour when good. It is grown at its best in Piedmont, and a very good quality from this district is obtainable at the Hotel Metropole, Milan, at one and a half francs per bottle. The same wine is supplied on the restaurant-train between Milan and Florence at one franc per bottle. There are many other Italian wines, red and white; but our preference is for Chianti, which is lighter than most other varieties, and best suited to the climate. French wines are enormously dear in Italy, champagne of a very ordinary quality being unprocurable at less than fourteen francs per bottle. What the cost would be, even if obtainable, for classed champagnes of any specially good year we are not prepared to say. The price of Scotch whisky in Italian hotels is from twelve to fourteen francs per bottle, usually the larger sum. This high price cannot be on account of the duty, as excellent imported whisky may be bought in Rome at five francs per bottle.

The journey from Milan to Florence is performed in one day, that from Florence to Rome taking seven hours. As this article is not descriptive, but rather intended as a guide to travellers proposing to cover the same route as ourselves, we shall say nothing of the beauties and charm of Florence, but content ourselves with recommending the Hotel Paoli, situated on the Lung Arno, the best situation in Florence. The Paoli is comfortable, moderate in its charges, and with good cookery. The late proprietor, Signor Paoli, was in his day a well-known courier on the Continent, who thoroughly understood the requirements of English and Scotch tourists. Having acquired a competency, he settled down at the Paoli, which, since his death, has been equally well managed by his surviving children. Florence contains several excellent *pensions*, with moderate charges, such as the Lucchesi, also on the Lung Arno; but to those who want an hotel where our own way of living is understood we would say, go to the Paoli.

Leaving Florence at 12.30 P.M., the traveller reaches Rome in time for dinner at 7.30 or 8 o'clock—that is to say, if he travels by the *rapide* on Tuesday or Friday only. This will, however, entail an additional railway fare of twenty-one and a half francs over and above the price of his ordinary first-class ticket; and here, as a further digression, let us deal briefly with some of the peculiarities of Italian railway travel. We ourselves had taken circular tickets entitling us to journey as far south as Naples and as far east as Venice, returning north from Milan by same route, or striking off to Paris, and reaching London by Calais and Dover. The charge for this return ticket, entitling one to break the journey anywhere, was twenty-five pounds—not at all an unreasonable price; but Messrs Cook, with all their knowledge of Continental ways and desire to lessen the difficulties of travellers, cannot anticipate the smaller incidental expenses of railway travel, which mount up to an astonishing extent. To begin with, the universal charge for a sleeping-berth on any train in France or Italy is twenty-one and a half francs (equal to eighteen shillings and fourpence of English money), and the same for what is termed a *salon lit*, whereas with us the usual charge for a berth in the sleeping-carriage between Edinburgh and London is seven shillings and sixpence. Then, again, the same additional price, twenty-one and a half francs, is charged for the privilege of travelling by the express trains; and, worst of all, not an ounce of luggage is permissible beyond what can be carried by hand and placed inside the carriage. We have already mentioned that the charge for our five pieces of luggage from London to Milan (two days and a night by sea and rail) was five shillings and ninepence. For the same luggage from Milan to Florence (one day) the cost was twenty francs; from Florence to Rome, twenty-one francs; from Rome to Venice (about eighteen hours), thirty-six francs; and from Venice to Lucerne (about the same distance), forty-five francs. From Lucerne to Paris (one day) the charge was three francs.

One of the worst and greatest drawbacks to railway travel in Italy is the want of accommodation on many of the trains, and strangely enough this applies to a greater extent on long-distance trains than on those made up for short journeys. We have no hesitation in saying that for any party of four or five persons wishing to travel, let us say from Rome to Naples (six hours), and desiring to sit together, it is necessary to arrive at the station at least three-quarters of an hour before the time at which the train is advertised to start. Even then, we say without exaggeration that the thing is no certainty. The use of a smoking-carriage with any degree of comfort is almost an impossibility. One may arrive alone, in reasonable time for the train, only to find that the very few first-class smoking-compartments have long ago been filled with ladies and children, or more probably invalids. We speak as a first-class passenger only, and so far as we have observed, the second-class accommodation on Italian trains can still less be recommended. The overcrowding and discomfort here are stretched to their utmost limits, whilst the third-class carriage may be dismissed in a few words. This conveyance, in

the form of a cattle-truck, is open to all the winds that blow, and appears to be used chiefly for the transport of troops. The only sitting accommodation consists of a series of benches fitted crosswise at intervals of from two to three feet, whilst on the outside is indicated in large lettering the number of men which the authorities are permitted to stow away—all very similar to our own railway trucks, upon any one of which we may read the printed regulation as to weight of goods or number of animals which it is safe for this form of vehicle to carry.

We have several times asked Italian friends why the public continues to submit to this system of discomfort and overcharge, and are told that the question is frequently ventilated in the Italian press, but the companies take no notice. The State railways desire to exact the highest possible rates, giving in return no more in the way of comfort and efficiency than is absolutely necessary, whilst the small private railway companies are earning from 20 to 25 per cent. dividends, and are content to look the other way so long as the tourist puts up with the best he can get, and no drastic action is taken by the Italian public.

Sleeping-carriages on the Italian trains are less comfortable than our own, and, although provided with lavatory accommodation, very often have neither water, towels, nor soap. This we found to be the case on the night train from Rome to Florence, besides which the *wagon lit* attendant reeked with garlic to such an extent as actually to taint the atmosphere from one end of the corridor to the other. We have had experience of negro attendants on American trains during hot weather, but have no hesitation in saying that our then feeling of disgust was mild as compared to that which we felt when compelled on this occasion to approach the individual in question. The railway station at Rome, the chief city of Italy, is miserably provided with lavatory accommodation, there being but one small room provided with basins of old-fashioned type, for the use of which, with towel and soap, half a franc is charged. The restaurant is fairly comfortable and moderate in its charges; but neither waiters nor clerks understand one word of English, and this in spite of the enormous number of English-speaking tourists yearly passing through Rome. The clerk at the payment-desk of the restaurant knew some French, by which we were able to make our wants known; but this was the only official we could discover in the station of Rome able to converse in anything but his native tongue. We had been told that French went a long way in Italy, and certainly it does in many places, but is of little use in railway stations or anywhere outside the big towns. Messrs Cook's representative fortunately found us out when leaving Rome, and made our departure as comfortable and inexpensive as circumstances would permit.

The Italian railway porter is the most rapacious and extortionate in the world, holding out his hand unblushingly to ask for more when already rewarded far beyond his deserts. Baedeker in his *Guide to Northern Italy* tells us that porters (*facchini*) who convey luggage to and from the railway carriage are entitled to from five centimes to twenty centimes per package by tariff, and that this tariff should be strictly adhered to. We never remember having given so little as this, yet cannot recall any one occasion when our porter was satisfied with his fare. We have more than once endeavoured to find out from Messrs Cook's representatives, hotel *concierges*, and others what is actually the legal fare payable to a railway porter according to size and weight of luggage; but the information of these persons is as vague as that of Herr Baedeker. This never-ending clamour for tips is not confined to Italy, but exists to an equal degree in France (it is *much* less apparent in Switzerland). During our journey home from Basel to Paris in a first-class corridor carriage, it was necessary to descend at Petit Croix on German territory, and pass through the Custom-house. The guard who travelled with this particular carriage all the way, helped two of the ladies of our party to alight, lifted down two Gladstone bags, and afterwards turned to us, holding out his hand. We offered him silver equivalent to half a franc, but this he declined, saying his charge was one franc. This particular guard got nothing, and we were tempted on arrival at Paris to tell his story at length in the *cahier des réclamations*, or book of complaints, a volume which every French station-master dreads, but is bound to produce on demand. Time, however, was precious, and possibly some of our readers may have a similar experience, and deal with their own case as we should have dealt with ours.

One characteristic of Italian railway stations, no matter how small, is the number of gendarmes (armed police) frequenting these places. We were never able to find out what actually were the duties of these gentlemen, who are dressed in an elaborate uniform, cocked hat, and long thick cloak, which last they seem to wear in the hottest weather. Certainly on no occasion do they ever condescend to handle luggage, or to help any unfortunate passenger stranded in their midst or unable to find a seat in the already overcrowded train. The stationmaster may anathematise, and hurry from one carriage to another, vainly endeavouring to find seats where no seats exist, and at last, much against his will, attaching another carriage to the train. Anxious passengers and perspiring porters may follow the said stationmaster from one end of the train to another; but amidst all this turmoil and irritation and unnecessary trial to the travelling public, the two inevitable gendarmes stand quiescent, wrapped in their dignity, and cloaks, looking at us with an indulgent smile, but making no suggestion and taking no active part in the strife which they must so often witness.

(To be continued.)

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXXIII.—WILL THE SUN SHINE?

FRED took from his study table the *Glasgow Herald* of that morning, and there, sure enough, was a paragraph stating that the Earl of Glenelg had purchased the historic Castle of Threave, together with the island, from the laird, Colonel Maitland. The Gordons had been connected with the property since the seventeenth century, it was stated; hence the purchase by the Earl.

'Curiously enough,' observed Fred Fenwicke, 'Maitland's solicitors are my own: Burton, Brooks, and Co., of Union Street, Glasgow. From them I could get to hear the actual situation.'

'Wire them in the morning, and ask if the property is really sold. The papers often get hold of news of that sort prematurely,' I said, clutching eagerly at the last straw, for our enemies had certainly forestalled us by this purchase, which, if actually effected, would upset all our plans. If Lord Glenelg had paid for the property, then the Borgia emeralds could never be ours.

Fred said he would wire, and at noon that day Wyman and I were in the express travelling towards Euston.

For some days yet it was impossible to follow the old monk's directions for the discovery of the spot at Threave; therefore, with the prospect of the Crowland treasure being revealed, we eagerly on the following day went to the British Museum and were closeted with the professor.

'I had no idea that this most interesting document existed,' he said as he sat at his table and unfolded to our gaze a dark old parchment, whereon was a large but rather roughly drawn plan, very similar in style to those in The Closed Book.

'You will see here,' he said, pointing to an inscription in a small Gothic hand underneath, 'that it was prepared by Richard Fosdyke the celebrated architect, at the order of John Welles, the last abbot. From the difference in the drawing on the north side, it was apparently intended to make certain additions to the monastery buildings; but having compared it with the ground plan of the present ruins, I have found that the abbey was dissolved before the work was carried out.'

'It is the exact position of the fish-ponds that we are very desirous of ascertaining,' I said. 'What is your opinion?'

'There can be but one. They are here,' and he pointed to two squares drawn at some distance apart to the north-east of the abbey church, and in an exactly opposite direction to the written record of old Godfrey. 'This square of buildings enclosed the cloister court,' the expert went on, 'and here, you see, is the chapter-house, the refectory, and the mausoleum, all of which have now disappeared.'

Then he took out a plan of the present ruins, and we compared the two carefully, being surprised at the wide ramifications of the original abbey and the extent of the outbuildings.

I inquired if it were possible to have a tracing of it, when our friend the professor took from a drawer a large sheet of tracing-paper upon which he had already had a copy made. This he gave to me, expressing pleasure that he had been of any service to us in our investigations.

'I am myself intensely interested in the work you have undertaken,' he said. 'If you really hold Godfrey Lovel's Arnoldus, then you may, after all, be successful in discovering both the abbey treasures and the Borgia emeralds.'

'That is exactly what we are trying to do, but unfortunately we are not alone in it.'

'You mean that the Italian hunchback has discovered something?'

'Why, has he been here since my last visit?'

'He was here all day yesterday. He has in his possession some curious plan or other.'

The more I thought of Judith the more utter was my bewilderment, the more intense my affection. Yet to Walter I could say nothing. He had already told me bluntly what he thought of her, although refusing to assign any reason.

My companion suggested that we should go that very evening to Crowland, place the plan before our good friend Mr Mason, and commence investigations in an open and straightforward manner. This course we adopted, and arranged to leave for Peterborough by the Leeds express at 5.45.

At five o'clock the Captain returned from a visit to a sick friend in the 'Albany,' but scarcely had he entered when the electric bell rang, and Thompson handed me a telegram. The message was from Fred Fenwicke, and ran:

'Come back by mail to-night without fail. Go on to Castle-Douglas, and put up at "Douglas Arms." Will meet you there to-morrow morning.'

At ten o'clock on the following morning we were back again in Scotland, breakfasting in a cosy room in that old-fashioned hotel the 'Douglas Arms' at Castle-Douglas, and anxiously awaiting Fred Fenwicke.

We had spent a comfortable if rather warm night in the sleeping-car from Euston, and both of us being constant travellers, neither felt the fatigue of the long railway journey. The urgency of Fred's message caused us the greatest anxiety, and as we sat there together our eyes were watching the window for his arrival.

Outside, the long, broad street, the principal thoroughfare of the town, was already filled with

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the August sunshine, the roadway almost as white as those glaring roads of Italy, the sky almost as blue as it was in my once-loved Tuscany.

We had engaged that room for ourselves, for there seemed to be a party of London holiday-makers staying in the hotel—at least so we judged them to be by the gorgeous tweeds of the men and the tourist kit of the women. Loud laughter rang in the corridors of the quiet, eminently respectable place, and before the door was a coach upon which the party were slowly settling themselves for a drive through the beautiful Glenkens.

At last, just as the coach drove away, and the old post-house settled down to its normal quiet, Fred Fenwicke opened the door and closed it quickly after him.

'I'm glad you fellows have come,' he said in quick excitement. 'There's something strange going on here. Yesterday I was cycling through here, and while passing down the road along Carlingwark Loch, the same road by which you drove the other day, I overtook Lady Judith. She was walking slowly, talking with an old hunchback.'

'A hunchback!' I cried. 'Then it must be Graniani.'

'He was Italian, that's all I know. I didn't wait to acknowledge her, because the fact struck me as very curious, and that it would be best if she were unaware that I had discovered her. So I ran on here, and on inquiry found that the lady, who had given the name of Miss Fletcher, had arrived on the previous day, and that the old Italian, who had signed his name in the visitors' book so badly that it could not be read, had arrived that morning.'

'And they are both here! I wonder why?' I asked, amazed.

'Well, I suppose their visit has some connection with the search they intend to make over at Threave,' Fred said. 'At any rate, I thought it best that you should be on the spot and watch what was happening.'

'But the sale of the island?'

'Brooks wired me yesterday that the contract is signed, but the money is not yet paid over. The sale is to be completed on the 16th of September.'

'Ah! one day before the date fixed by old Godfrey! I fear, then, our chance is lost.'

'Why?' asked Walter Wyman. 'You forget the fact that the calendar has been altered since the record was written.'

'By Jove!' I cried eagerly; 'that had quite slipped my memory. I don't recollect off-hand how many days were deducted.'

'I looked it up at my rooms yesterday,' the Captain said. 'It seems that Pope Gregory XIII. in 1582 decreed that ten days should be omitted, and October 5th was reckoned as the 15th. But this was not universal till 1751, when a Bill was passed for regulating the commencement of the year, and for correcting the calendar. By that Bill eleven days were omitted after 2nd September, so that the ensuing day was the 14th.'

'In that case, then, September 17th of Godfrey Lovel's day is really our September 5th! Why, man alive! that's the day after to-morrow!'

'Exactly,' Wyman remarked. 'We ought to be at Threave at 3.30 the day after to-morrow and take our observations by the sun.'

'But suppose it's a wet day?' suggested Fred, always practical.

'Ah! suppose it is,' I echoed. 'Then all our chance may melt away from us.'

Half-an-hour later, while the Major and the Captain strolled along to have a chat with Mr Batten at the office of the British Linen Company, of which he was manager, I excused myself and remained behind.

Scarcely had they gone when Graniani passed the window with Selby, both well dressed and presenting a prosperous appearance. They were speaking in Italian, in order, I suppose, that those who overheard should not understand their conversation. But I knew from the hunchback's gesticulations that he was excited by some untoward event.

Judith was undoubtedly alone; therefore I rang for the waiter and sent him with my card to 'Miss Fletcher.'

Five minutes later she entered the room half-timidly, as though fearful of detection. Her hand trembled, her face was pale, and I saw that she was in a highly nervous condition.

'What brings you here, Mr Kennedy?' she gasped.

'I am here to be near you, Lady Judith,' I answered, holding her small white hand. 'You are still in distress. How may I help you?'

'How can you help me?' she echoed. 'By leaving here at once. If you remain you will imperil your life. Ah! you don't know the terrible risk you are running.'

'But why are you here?' I demanded. 'I believed you were in Edinburgh.'

'I am not here of my own free-will,' she said slowly. 'It is because I am compelled.'

'Compelled! By whom?'

'By your enemies. Ah! heed me—do heed me, and get away from here at once.'

'Why may I not remain as your protector?' I demurred.

'Because I need none; for me there is no protection;' and she trembled as she stood before me.

'Where is your father?'

'I don't know,' she responded. 'Some strange events have happened since we met last.'

'But you still trust me, dearest?' I cried passionately, bending until my lips touched hers lightly. They were cold, and her features seemed like marble.

'Yes,' she murmured. 'I now trust you, Allan. My only fear is for your safety, not for mine. Recollect that we are dealing with people who are desperate—who will stick at nothing in order to gain their own sinister ends.'

The thought of that weird sign in Bloomsbury crossed my mind, and I fell to wondering.

'If you reciprocate my love, dearest, it is all that I desire in life,' I said quietly, in deepest earnestness. 'You are in peril, you have told me, and I am your protector. You tell me nothing, because a silence is imposed upon you.'

'Ah, Allan! I dare not tell you. If I did, you—even you—would hate me; in years to come you would detest my memory. With me life is now short; but even though surrounded by a thousand perils and pitfalls, I am nevertheless happy because I know that I shall die loved by one upright and honest man.'

'Die!' I echoed. 'Why do you always speak of death being imminent? This is a mere morbid foreboding. You should rid yourself of it, for it surely isn't good for you.'

'Ah!' she sighed bitterly, 'you do not know, Allan, or you would not think so.' Then, a moment later, she turned to me and implored me to leave Castle-Douglas and return to London.

This I refused to do. I did not tell her the real reason I was there, but attributed it to the fact that I desired to assist and protect her. I said nothing of the presence of Graniani or Selby, for even now I was not quite convinced whether she were playing me false.

Wyman's warning was still fresh within my memory, and that woman Bardi's assertions were also very strong. If Judith were really my friend, if she really loved me as I hoped, why was she not a little more plain and straightforward? It was this fact that still held me in a turmoil of suspicion. My passion for her increased, but my position seemed somehow very insecure.

That a deep and impenetrable mystery surrounded her was apparent; but she seemed determined upon increasing it instead of giving me some clue to its elucidation, however slight.

I suggested that we should walk out of the town and talk, but at first she refused. She evidently feared that those two men might encounter her in my company, although to me she pleaded a headache. The whole affair was so queer and unconventional that I myself became more bewildered.

At length, however, I induced her to go for a stroll, allowing her to choose the way. She evidently knew the direction in which the hunchback and his companion had gone, for she took the road that led across the town and around the end of the beautiful loch towards Whitepark, where we presently struck a quiet, unfrequented path, whereon we strolled slowly in the shadow of the trees.

Since we had last met she and her father had been in Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, and she had left him two days ago at the County Hotel in Carlisle. He had told her that he was leaving for London that night, and had instructed her to go on to Castle-Douglas and await a letter from him. She was still waiting for it. That was the reason she was there.

She made no mention of the two men also there, beyond her remark about my enemies being desperate ones.

For fully a couple of hours we wandered, heedless of where our footsteps led us, for she seemed thoroughly to enjoy that bright, fresh land of hills, streams, and lochs. In those sweet moments of peaceful bliss beside my love I forgot all my suspicion, all the mystery, all the desperate efforts that I was making to combat those who intended to filch from me the secret that was mine.

Many were our exchanges of affection as we lingered in that leafy glen, where deep below a rippling burn fell in small cascades with sweet, refreshing music. I saw that she wished to tell me everything, but was compelled to silence because of some unutterable secret.

She no longer drew back her hand when I raised it reverently to my lips; she no longer refused to allow me to imprint a fervent caress upon her lips. No, I knew she loved me, she trusted me, but that she feared for my personal safety.

Yet she would tell me nothing, nothing, *nothing*.

At last she expressed a wish to return, and with lingering footsteps we went towards the pointed spires of the town that lay beside the loch beneath our feet. Sweet were her words, sweet indeed was her personality, and sweet her almost child-like affection.

We parted at the entrance to the town, so as not to be seen together; and although I groaned beneath that weight of anxiety and uncertainty, I verily trod on air on my way back to the 'Douglas Arms.'

Wyman and Fred had not returned; therefore I went along to Mr Batten's, where I found them being entertained to luncheon, and took my seat in the vacant place at table. Our host was, I fear, puzzled at the reason of our sudden decision to spend a few days in his town, yet we told him nothing, fearing to arouse local interest in our search.

At three o'clock we went back to the 'Douglas Arms;' but judge of our dismay when the 'boots' informed us that 'Miss Fletcher' had left the hotel hurriedly, in company with 'the hunchback and another gentleman,' and had departed by the half-past two o'clock train—the express for Carlisle and the south.

'Well, that's a strange move,' remarked Walter when he heard of it. 'I suppose Lady Judith got to know we were here, and cleared out rather than run the risk of meeting us.'

'Yes,' said Fred reflectively. 'Very curious. I wonder what their game really is? You've forestalled them over the investigations at Crowland without a doubt; but I fear they are just a trifle too ingenious for us at Threave. I've ascertained at Grierson the ironmonger's that the hunchback, with another man, gave orders for several new picks and spades to be sent to Kelton Mains, that farm

through which we pass to get to Threave. They were sent there to-day.'

'Well,' I laughed, 'they may be useful to us the day after to-morrow if they are not claimed. My belief is that those men never anticipated that we would follow them so closely.'

'But the ordering of the tools proves one very important thing—namely, that they are, after all, alive to the fact that the calendar has changed, and that the 17th of September of old days is now the 5th.

'By Jove!' I cried; 'yes, so it does. We may all meet there at half-past three on the day after to-morrow; and,' I added determinedly, 'it will be an awkward meeting—for somebody.'

'But will the sun shine?' queried Walter Wyman, gazing moodily out into the empty street. 'That's the question.'

FROM LOSS TO GAIN.

THE ROMANCE OF THE RUBBISH-HEAP.

MUCH of the success which has attended manufacturing industry is due not merely to the care and skill with which the primary processes are carried out, but to the attention which is paid to economy in details. Many things which were once deemed waste in manufacture and thrown away as rubbish are now recovered and turned to profitable account. There have been several great instances of this important development; but it is in recent years that it has been carried out in such remarkable variety of detail. The history of British industry is a romance, and some of its brightest chapters are those which tell the story of ingenuity applied to the profitable employment of waste materials or by-products which were hitherto deemed valueless. The discovery by Sir Titus Salt of means to work into useful fabrics what had been contemptuously called 'superannuated horsehair' laid the foundation of a great industry and a model town, which, though it has passed through many vicissitudes, is still doing well. Mr Lister, now Lord Masham, seeing a mass of waste silk, was inspired to devise means to use it profitably, and though he lost a large fortune before success came to him, he succeeded in the end, and the great mills at Manningham, near Bradford, have for years past, as the result of this discovery, given employment to several thousands of people.

Once the so-called refuse of gas-works was allowed to float away in an iridescent film on the surface of the streams, but gradually a wiser policy prevailed, the valuable matter was recovered, and many gas-works now obtain from the sale of their by-products nearly enough money to purchase the coal they require to convert into gas. It is an old story now that from these products we have obtained an immense number of valuable drugs and medicines and a bewildering array of dye-stuffs of every hue which have been of the greatest service to the textile and other industries. Another old story is that of the employment of the gases generated in the blast-furnaces in the ironfields to drive the internal-combustion engines which threaten in time to displace the older steam-engines; but the modern applications of this idea have gone far beyond the limits which engineers of earlier times deemed it prudent to draw. It has been estimated that the waste gases from a modern blast-furnace are capable of developing ten thousand horse-power utilised in suitable gas-engines. In this connection it has been pointed out that though the Niagara Falls Power Company develops from its turbines some seventy thousand horse-power, engines driven by the waste gases from three modern blast-furnaces would be able to pump back all the water they use. The difficulty in the way of utilising these gases for power is that they are heavily charged with tar and other substances, and it is necessary to construct what are called 'scrubbers' to wash and cleanse the gases before they pass into the engine-chambers where they are consumed. If they were used as they come from the furnace the valves would soon be clogged up. Fortunately these matters have a definite value when recovered, so that it pays to erect the plant for the treatment, and in many cases this has been done, and the gas used for power, though not on the grand scale indicated. But gas-engines are now built specially for this purpose, and at the Düsseldorf Exhibition several monster engines of the kind were shown capable of raising one thousand and one thousand two hundred horse-power with the gases from the blast-furnace which were formerly allowed to pass uselessly away with all their valuable accessories.

Another process of recovery which has been brought to the aid of the ironmaster enables him to turn to good account the phosphorus which was once deemed his enemy. It is easily removed, and has added to the profits of steel-making by forming a valuable manure. The combination of the Saniter process with the basic steel process yields a compound phosphate of lime which is now in great demand as a fertiliser. There are other materials left by the processes of iron-making and steel-conversion which have been proved valuable. The furnace slag which is piled up in hideous heaps in the iron districts is valuable for the manufacture of bricks and mortar, but still more for the making of glass-wool. The thought that slag can be converted into a soft and flossy material which may actually be woven into a kind of fabric may seem romantic rather than practical; but at this day the slag as it comes seething from the furnace is exposed to the action

of jets of steam, which change it into the material described. It might also be profitable to use up the old slag and transform it into glass-wool, because this stuff is of considerable value as a packing, and, being a non-conductor, is used for covering heated surfaces. The old metal which is cast away in ironyards is also of value, and a German firm found it profitable some time ago to acquire rights over disused ironyards in the Cleveland district, and to ship the castaway metal lying there to Germany. The value of rubbish is also illustrated by the recent discovery at Woolwich. Contractors had been paying three shillings and fourpence a ton for the ashes from the brassfoundry and rolling-mill; but inquiries made showed that the so-called rubbish was really heavily charged with brass, and the next contracts for the refuse were made at the rates of five pounds seventeen shillings and sixpence and six pounds two shillings and sixpence per ton.

The peat-moss which is found in vast quantities in some parts of the country has been used to some extent as litter, and also as a surgical dressing, for it is naturally antiseptic. But though well fitted for fuel, and a fuel especially valuable in some manufacturing processes, it has never yet been converted on a commercial basis with success because of the difficulty of expelling the moisture from the prepared briquettes. Therefore the great masses of peat have been virtually waste material because of the inability to turn them to profitable account; but an electrical process has recently been introduced which seems likely to be successful, and if that be so an immense quantity of valuable fuel at a low cost will be placed at the disposal of the public. Coal-dust which accumulates at the pits in large quantities is also mixed with combustible ingredients which bind it together, and is sold as briquettes. The patent fuel made from the valuable South Wales coal-dust is sent all over the world, and is valuable for maritime work because it has great steam-raising power and does not deteriorate on exposure to the weather as coal does.

Sawdust may appear to be merely refuse to be got rid of in the easiest way; but it is not. It is distinctly valuable. Some kinds of sawdust are used for the production of oxalic acid; others are made into materials for floorcloth, linoleum, and coarse brown paper; and, mixed with blood, sawdust is converted into imitation ebony. In most sawmills and woodworks in this country the sawdust and shavings are carried to the furnaces to be burnt up, but in Canada its value is appreciated most highly, because it is distilled and turned into a good illuminating gas, and from one thousand pounds of the sawdust there are also obtained one hundred and sixty pounds of charcoal, one hundred and eighty pounds of acids, and one hundred and sixty-two pounds of tar, and other valuable products.

Nothing need be wasted nowadays. Old clothes are not merely useful for paper-making, but they are converted into shoddy cloth, torn up into tiny fragments in a machine called a 'devil,' and worked up again with a little fresh wool. Machines were invented to recover the naphtha used to bring rubber to a state of solution, though the decline in the price of naphtha has rendered this process less important; for it is, of course, only profitable to recover such products when the outlay leaves a margin under the cost of the commodity in the market. In this way, it is pointed out, the prohibitive cost of carriage prevents the fullest use of liquor from dye-works and calico-printing works. The palm-oil so largely used in the tinning-bath in the tinplate-mills of South Wales was once allowed to go to waste, but a better use has now been found for it. In the same way many useful fats are recovered from the materials in sewers. Lanoline is a valuable emollient recovered from the fat in sheep's wool. In washing the fleeces in the wool-manufacturing districts a large part of these natural fats is carried away, and it has been calculated that if the saponifiable fats were recovered from the streams and drains there would be enough to make soap for all England. In soap-making, glycerine and materials from which wax candles are made are recovered; even greasy cotton-waste from the engine-room and workshop is treated for the recovery of the oil, and is also burnt to produce lampblack which is made into printing-ink. Vaseline was at one time the merest mud of petroleum refuse; and margarine, which, when properly prepared, is a cheap and wholesome food, enables a large part of the fat of oxen to be used up profitably. Medicaments such as pepsin and pancreatin are prepared from the organs of pigs and sheep; the tan-yard gives the odorous scrapings of hides to the size-maker, and the hoofs to the makers of gelatine, while the hair is converted into mock skins with which toy animals are made, and the very parings of the sole leather are utilised by the makers of cheap boots. Grain from the brewers' vats and the slices of the sugar-beet from which the saccharine matter has been expressed are useful foods for cattle. To such a pitch is the utilisation of waste carried that factories which use soap in large quantities are sometimes provided with appliances to recover the grease from the suds which are cast away. The pith of the corn-stalk is made into cellulose, which is turned to many purposes; and the seeds and husks of the cotton-plant, which were at one time a nuisance, now yield in the one case an oil in universal use, and in the other are pulped for the manufacture of cellulose and paper. Even the foulest refuse of great cities is not absolutely lost, for some of it is burned in destructors which yield electric light and power; the slaughter-house and fish-market offal yields fats; the clinker from the destructors makes fine mortar; the grosser refuse is converted into scores of thousands of tons of manure which sells freely at three pounds a ton; and with the refuse from its streets and ashpits Manchester has reclaimed and made fertile some three thousand acres of barren peat-moss near by the city.

But perhaps the most remarkable application of

these economies is found in the meat industry. It is said that the American meat-packer would suffer a loss if the meat were the only produce of the animal; his profits come from the by-products. Everything in an animal but the gastric juice is used nowadays. The hides, of course, go to the tanners; and not a bone is wasted. The leg-bones are made into handles for tooth-brushes and knives, chessmen, pipe-mouthpieces, and buttons; some bones are boiled, the fat and gelatine are extracted, and the refuse is ground to be used up in billiard-balls or prepared for manure. Neat's-foot oil is taken from the feet, and the hoofs are also made into buttons, fertilisers, and even cyanide of potassium. Buttons, combs, and brush-handles are made from the horns; every part not used for food is boiled for the fat and gelatine; the albumen is prepared from the blood, and used in calico-printing and the refining of sugar; the blood itself is congealed for buttons, and used for fertilisers and in making extract of beef. All the fat is saved and chopped up in specially constructed machines, and then boiled in vats. The fatty matters are subject to pressure and the valuable stearine is obtained in cakes, and the oleo is sent away in barrels to be made into imitation butter.

It is a remarkable story, but this is merely its outline. It might be continued for many chapters, for every year some new device is thought of to recover that which was once wasted. Indeed, it is hardly too much to say that in the competition of the present day many industries are made profitable by scraping up and turning to good use that garbage and refuse which our less-hampered fathers cast away heedlessly as unworthy of account.

HER EXCELLENCE.

PART II.

PRESENTLY, amid much ceremony, he was ushered into the Presence. He saw her sitting upon a veritable throne of cushions playing with a bowl of jewels. She was a diminutive person with piercing black eyes and vividly painted cheeks. Indeed, the contrast between the unnatural colour of her cheeks and the almost deathly pallor of the rest of her face was most pronounced. Her Excellence had long since bidden adieu to all suggestion of youth, and yet she fought strenuously for a dying cause. Great, powerful, and commanding most things as she did, there was yet one thing which defied her and her legions. She the wonderful, the remarkable, the almost immortal, grew old like the meanest of her slaves. And one day she would die, and in spite of her pretensions to divine origin she knew it, and it gave her some cause to quarrel with destiny.

Hué entered making the kow-tow, but even as he did so he saw that a woman with a sinister pair of eyes was whispering in the ear of Her Excellence. For a moment only had he seen those eyes, yet he remembered. As he knelt there with bowed head he thought of Foi-Min and the possible antagonism of this enthroned vizen, and his heart grew faint. What had she of the sinister eyes been telling?

'Arise, Excellency,' commanded the voice from the throne.

Slowly he regained an upright position, though not without many bowings in transit. Then he ventured a clearer gaze upon the strange bundle of humanity before him.

'Your Excellence has too greatly condescended towards your undeserving slave.'

'It is I who feel intense gratification in having my poor apartments honoured by so distinguished a presence.' She let the glittering gems slip through her jewelled fingers, and they fell with a rattle into the highly ornamented jade bowl.

This gracious reply nonplussed him somewhat. What was this tone, and what did it portend? Was this smooth-spoken creature the masterful termagant who silenced princes and ministers with a frown? Her smile, too, was winning and gracious, for like all strong natures she could please greatly as she could greatly terrify. Yet, knowing her, Hué could not help comparing her insinuating tone with the soft, smooth hiss of the snake before it strikes.

He looked again and she was smiling still, her fingers dipping in and out among the gems. It is true the action of smiling deepened the wrinkles about her mouth; but to the faithful the smiles of royalty must always be divine.

There was no one before him but Her Excellence and the woman with the sinister eyes, a person of, perhaps, Her Majesty's own age. Of the numerous individuals who had thronged the chamber not one was now to be seen; but whether they had withdrawn behind the curtains or still grouped themselves in the entrance he could not say, and to see he would have to turn his back on the divinity before him. The thought was one utterly beyond his conception. Yet he wondered—wondered where the delight of his soul had gone, and if his unpardonable indiscretion would cause her suffering.

'Your Excellency will be seated,' she said graciously.

'Majesty!'

'Nay, nay, let us for one moment forget our intolerable greatness.'

He obeyed without further demur, though even as he sat, and even as he gazed at her and heard her speak, he scarcely dared to credit his senses.

Presently she said, 'No doubt you have wondered why I sent for you?'

'Majesty,' he answered gravely, 'I have scarcely dared to think.'

'Is thought, then, such a presumption?'

'Even so, where Her Excellence is concerned.'

She sighed, letting a handful of gems drop back one by one.

'And yet Her Excellence is only a woman. Think of it, my friend, a woman like other women. Yet unlike other women, too, insomuch that she is cursed with an insupportable destiny.'

'Your Excellence was born so near the gods!'

'Must you also flatter?'

'Would one presume to flatter the stars?'

'There the courtier speaks. I should prefer to hear the man.'

'If the man dared?'

'The man who dares is the man who wins. Always bear that in mind, my friend, even though destiny should throw you into the path of an empress or a washerwoman. They are both women; from head to heel they are women, and what is joy to the one can hardly be pain to the other. It is the man who wins and the man who rules. Heaven, it is something to be a man—and strong!' She grasped the jewels so fiercely that some of them bruised her palm.

'And yet, if I might suggest'——

'I know, I know. And yet even I, you see, am a woman, and have no shame in admitting my woman's weakness.'

She smiled even more graciously than before. Indeed, she took no pains to conceal the fact that she was in one of her most amiable moods, which caused him infinite speculation. She seemed, what he scarcely dared hope to find her, a singularly charming woman; and but for the presence of her of the sinister eyes he felt as though he might almost have met this terrible empress on a footing of near equality. But those awful eyes were riveted upon his face with an intensity which forbade oblivion. They burnt up all of geniality that was in his nature; they resolved him into a being of more or less contemptible proportions. It was no use assuming a pose with those burning eyes laying bare the inmost recesses of his mind.

'But these are dreams,' observed Her Excellence, as though suddenly arousing herself from thought.

'The dreams of the wise are the whisperings of the gods,' he answered.

She smiled approval. 'And we who are not wise, what shall we call our dreams?'

'I think the gods themselves would not suggest so much.'

She clapped her little jewelled hands, her eyes shining with unaffected delight.

'At least I am justified of my wisdom in believing your Excellency to be of a superior mould. The State badly needs such men as you. Will you serve it?'

'With my last breath.'

'Then you shall take service with me.'

Hué feared something of this nature, and his face showed it. She frowned a little, then smiled.

'You do not wish it?'

'Majesty, to hear is to obey.'

'Nay,' she answered sharply, 'I do not wish to be obeyed. This is not a command. It is a request—a favour. I would have you with me, near me always. I would listen to your counsel, hear your words of wisdom. Am I, then, such a terrible mistress? Did I ever forget a friend—or an enemy?'

'Majesty, perhaps you have forgotten that I serve the Emperor?'

'Why do all the best people serve that fool? I can make thee great, Hué; I can do much for thee. There is no one—no, not even the Emperor—who can do so much.'

Her voice was soft, insinuating; her eyes languid and lustrous. Now, if ever, she was dangerous, and now would it need an effort on his part of that wisdom of which she had boasted. Though with deep intensity he detested the proposal, he dared not show it by so much as a flicker of the eyelid. The gods are jealous gods, and when they stoop it is not to be spurned by the earth-born.

'Majesty,' he said, 'it will be my delight to serve you if my august master, the Emperor'——

'There is no doubt of the Emperor,' she answered, with a smile. 'It is I who speak; therefore you are mine. Come one step nearer.'

She pointed to the step at her feet, and with some diffidence he arose and reseated himself in that dangerously familiar position. Then she turned nodding and smiling to the woman of the sinister eyes, who instantly clapped her hands. Almost immediately the curtain at the other end of the chamber was drawn aside, and Foi-Min approached bearing two tiny cups of tea on a highly polished tray.

With singular stolidity she advanced, and on her knees tendered the platter to her mistress, whose eyes, encountering the bowed head of the girl, suddenly grew hard and cold. Her mouth tightened, her nostrils dilated, then the corners of her lips curled contemptuously.

Hué, in receiving his offering, had the greatest inclination to spring to his feet and bow; but of the folly of this a moment's reflection warned him. So he took the cup gently, murmuring his thanks in a low tone, and trying his hardest to look into Foi-Min's eyes. But she kept them rigidly fixed upon the floor, and when he returned the cup to the tray he thought it shook a little.

Having performed her duty, somewhat perfunctorily it must be confessed, Foi-Min bowed low and began to back from the royal presence; but ere she had retreated many steps Her Excellence called to her to halt.

The girl stood trembling inwardly, yet preserving an admirable exterior calm.

'I have news for you, child,' she said.

'Yes, Excellence.'

'You have been a dutiful servant, and those who serve me well are never forgotten. Fong-Meng has spoken again.'

The girl's breast rose suddenly; her lips parted in protest; but no sound came from them. Mutely she bowed her head.

'Fong-Meng,' continued Her Excellence, addressing Hué with a singularly inscrutable smile, 'has condescended to be pleased with the appearance of my handmaiden.—He will make thee an illustrious husband, child.'

'Majesty!' The cry broke from Foi-Min's lips, a protest, a supplication.

'I understand. The honour overwhelms you. It is a great alliance.' She smiled affably; but beneath knitted brows the little black eyes were gleaming maliciously.

Foi-Min fell on her knees and bowed her head in the dust.

'May I not serve your Excellence always?'

'That would not be kind of me, my child. You have served me well, and I wish to reward you greatly.'

'But not as the wife of Fong-Meng, O Excellence, I beseech you!'

'What now! You are ungrateful. I have said Fong-Meng.—My own chamberlain,' she said, turning with a smile to Hué. 'We grow fastidious in these modern days.'

Hué wanted to speak; yet speaking, he knew, would give offence. Love of the girl and awe of her mistress distracted him. He knew Fong-Meng, a hoary, attenuated wretch with a face like a squirrel and a reputation of which no one would willingly rob him. In an ordinary way the mating of this girl with such a man would be an abomination; in the present circumstances it was nothing less than an intolerable offence. A fierce protest bubbled to his lips, but he repressed it. He and she were alike in the grasp of this terrible creature. Her suspicions or her enmity once aroused, all would be lost. There was but one law in Peking, one law throughout the whole of the Middle Kingdom, and it was held in the dainty jewelled fingers of this appalling woman.

'Yet it can hardly be denied, Excellence, that the modern idea is prevailing.'

Hué wondered he dared venture so far, knowing how she detested all that was not medieval. Yet for the sake of that small, frail figure that knelt trembling before the tyrant, he knew himself capable of perpetrating even a greater folly.

'The modern idea!' she said, and something like a flash of passion leapt from her eyes. 'It does not exist, except in words, and those we are banishing from the Middle Kingdom.'

'And yet, Excellence, it is here; even as the sun is with us, even as the stars and the winds.'

Her mouth hardened; her eyes narrowed. For a moment he thought she was about to hurl in his face the jewels, bowl and all, and his spirit rose with the near approach of danger. But such was evidently not her intention. The hard lines of her mouth curled contemptuously, gradually wreathing themselves into a sardonic smile.

'And yet I thought thee wise.'

Was it a challenge or a sentence? He preferred to accept it as the former.

'Is it wise to see or to avoid seeing?'

She laughed, looking at him with eyes that scared.

'You shall teach me wisdom, my good Hué, but in its proper place and season.—You need not kneel there, girl. I have given my promise to Fong-Meng.'

But the girl, still on her hands and knees, crawled piteously towards the throne.

'Majesty, have mercy!'

The vixen half-rose, her eyes flashing ominously.

'Go! or I will have you beaten.'

Foi-Min contracted her delicate shoulders as though she already felt the cane upon them, and a low wailing sound escaped her. Hué bounded to his feet and boldly confronted the torturer.

'Majesty, give me this woman and I will serve thee faithfully.'

A look of annoyance darkened the painted face, but almost immediately it was superseded by a dark, inscrutable smile.

'And why, O wise one, should I give her to you?'

'Because I love her.'

'So you love her!' Her eyes glittered vindictively. 'That is a double misfortune, my friend, an overwhelming catastrophe. It is a pity that I have promised her to the illustrious Fong-Meng.'

'Never!' cried the girl, turning a white and desperate face upon the Empress.

'I have said it,' slowly answered the implacable one.—'And as for you, my good Hué, I still offer you the chance of playing the wise man. Think twice.'

'My master shall answer for me,' he cried defiantly.

'Fool, I am your master!'

He did not reply, but he bowed with grave dignity, and then turned and took Foi-Min by the hand.

'Come,' he said, and without casting another look upon the pallid, furious face of Her Excellence, he dragged the half-dazed girl from the Presence.

'Quick,' he whispered; 'lead me out of this.'

'Whither?'

'The Son of Heaven will protect us.'

For a moment or two she stood like one who had suddenly grown incapable of thought or action. But the noise of hurrying feet in an adjacent chamber awoke her.

'This way,' she gasped.

She was a small-footed woman, and, in her endeavour to run, stumbled. Had he not caught her she would have fallen headlong to the floor. This was a predicament, something he had not anticipated. But already the noise of pursuers

drew near; not a moment was to be lost. Without a word he stooped, caught her up in his arms as though she were a child, and dashed along the way he had come. He passed through the room where the Creature had left him, and out through the door at the opposite end. That individual, aroused by the unusual clamour, came forward to see what was the matter, and in so doing effectually barred all egress. But Hué had neither breath nor time to parley. He loosened one arm and swung his fist into the Thing's face, and it fell howling to the floor. Hué sprang over the writhing body and dashed on.

He knew where he was now, and presently he found himself in the gardens of the palace. There he put down his palpitating burden and rested for a moment. He listened. There was no sound of pursuers. What did it mean? Why did Her Excellence not call the guard? Again he listened, and still no sound. Was she so sure of them eventually that their flight did not disturb her greatly?

'My soul,' he whispered, 'is it possible for us to pass the guard?'

'Impossible. No one passes at this hour.'

'Yet we must pass. Come!'

He led her slowly towards the gate, and presently they saw the sentry leaning against a post. Bidding her stand still in the shadow of a clump of shrubbery, he stole towards the unsuspecting soldier. There was a thud, a half-uttered groan, and the noise of a body falling. Presently Hué reappeared holding out his hand. Without molestation they passed through, and made for the outer gate of the Forbidden City.

From that moment the blackness of night swallowed up the Grand Secretary Hué and the maiden who had been known as Foi-Min.

(THE END.)

SEA-SICKNESS, AND HOW TO AVOID IT.

By EUSTACE REYNOLDS-BALL, F.R.G.S.

THAT sea-sickness is a malady to which most of us succumb sooner or later, from the seasoned globe-trotter to the modest tripper whose experience of foreign travel is limited to an occasional run to Paris, Boulogne, or Ostend, or 'a week at lovely Lucerne for five guineas,' is a fact which is none the less disquieting because it is so obvious.

Sea-sickness, like toothache, headache, and, in short, all minor ills to which flesh is heir, is one of those maladies which arouse very little sympathy from non-sufferers. Indeed, it is its humorous aspect which would seem to appeal chiefly to the friends of the victim. But, all the same, no other minor ailment has such a demoralising effect upon the sufferer, vividly summed up in the well-known description, attributed to every famous humourist from Sydney Smith to Mark Twain: 'In the first hour you are afraid you will die, and in the second hour you are afraid you won't.'

Unfortunately one is more subject to this distressing malady in short holiday trips in comparatively small steamers than in large ocean liners. No doubt there are palliatives, but there is, of course, no infallible cure for *mal-de-mer*, *pace* the proprietors of various much-advertised quack nostrums and panaceas. Indeed, the only absolute cure for sea-sickness is a negative one, and that is the proverbial remedy of *Punch*: 'Don't go to sea.'

Of all the popular remedies, Yanatas—a preparation which goes direct to the seat of the trouble by allaying the irritation of the pneumogastric nerve, acting through the brain upon the stomach—is the most likely to be efficacious. It is certainly a useful palliative, and has indeed proved remarkably successful in many obstinate cases.

Those peculiarly subject to sea-sickness should live very simply for a few days before starting on a voyage, and take a mild aperient. Of course, for short trips it would be absurd to go through a regular course of preliminary preventive treatment. But in the case of long voyages it is certainly advisable to undergo some kind of treatment analogous to that undertaken by those who are about to enter upon a course of training for rowing or athletic sports. For instance, those of a full habit of body should be sparing in the matter of rich diet for two or three days before starting.

Effusion of blood to the brain and disturbance of the digestive system are no doubt the chief causes of sea-sickness; and certainly those of weak digestion are particularly susceptible to its attacks.

Then it is undeniable that most people on board ship eat too much and take too little exercise. The over-indulgence in the rich and sometimes greasy dishes at the elaborate meals on the big ocean liners—where even at breakfast there are more courses than most passengers are accustomed to at dinner at home—is a bad preparation for a severe attack of *mal-de-mer*. Naturally, during the attack the victims are not inclined to eat at all. Consequently it is not surprising that this *alternation of repletion and starvation* plays havoc with the digestive organs; and, of course, with these organs thus overstrained the passenger is considerably handicapped in a serious bout of sea-sickness.

For severe attacks there are many medical remedies which would probably be efficacious. For instance, applying a mustard-plaster leaf to the stomach and a hot-water bottle to the feet will allay the nausea and vomiting.

A simple and pleasanter remedy is a dose of three

or four drops of chloroform on a lump of sugar, or a dose of fifteen grains of bromide of soda and five grains of antipyrin in half a wine-glassful of water. Some medical men recommend cocaine tablets (consisting of one-twentieth of a grain) every hour or so till the nausea is arrested, while some pin their faith to chlorobrom, a compound of chloralamide and bromide of potassium originally prescribed by the late Professor Charteris of Glasgow.

Another and less stringent remedy is bicarbonate of soda, which can be bought at any chemist's. Enough to cover a sixpenny-piece, mixed with any liquid, is a sufficient dose.

But it cannot be too much insisted on that no drugs should be taken except as a last resource and with a doctor's sanction. Their indiscriminate use is exceedingly dangerous.

In obstinate cases it will often be found that wearing an ice-belt will minimise the feeling of nausea, or, if ice be not obtainable, the application of a cold compress along the spine is nearly as effective. Even tightening the belt round the waist affords some measure of relief.

As for the traveller's home-made remedies for *mal-de-mer*, they are as the sands of the sea for number, ranging from drinking a glass of hot milk to prevent straining on an empty stomach, to the consumption of a couple of apples. Some travellers implicitly believe in the quaint treatment of keeping one eye shut while the gaze of the other is steadily fixed on the sea!

There is, indeed, a certain amount of unconscious humour latent in the various kindly-meant suggestions of friends to victims (*in posse* or *in esse*) of *mal-de-mer*. The abstainer is urged to drink dry champagne, the man with a defective dental apparatus is advised to diet himself exclusively on ship's biscuit, while a sufferer from gout and rheumatism will be informed that the only safe remedy is to trot continuously up and down the promenade-deck, and a dyspeptic person will be gravely told that the one preventive diet is pork-chops with cheese to follow!

No doubt what are popularly called 'nerves' have much to do with sea-sickness. There seems some ground for this view, for certainly when a vessel is thought to be really in danger, sea-sick passengers seem automatically cured.

Then many cases are known of imagination alone inducing sea-sickness. We have all heard of the nervous passenger who, on the eve of a rough crossing, was actually ill while the steamer was lying motionless by the quayside, the passenger being under the impression that the vessel had started. Another familiar argument in support of this view is that babies in arms, who are naturally unable to appreciate their environment, are not nearly so subject to sea-sickness as adults.

As to beverages, stout, in spite of its popularity, is perhaps the worst of all. Iced dry champagne is about the most suitable, though it is more useful in the depressing and exhausting stages of a long attack than at the beginning. It should, in short, be regarded as a palliative rather than a preventive.

A favourite specific with captains of Atlantic liners is what is popularly known as a prairie oyster. This consists of a dessert-spoonful of vinegar, the yolk of an egg, a teaspoonful of Worcester sauce, and a dash of brandy, beaten up in a wine-glass. Some add a little cayenne pepper to the mixture.

For short Channel passages, such as the crossing from Dover to Calais or from Folkstone to Boulogne, the common-sense advice of seasoned travellers is to avoid all nostrums, but stay on deck and if possible keep moving about. If the sea is too rough for this, a recumbent or semi-recumbent position in a deck-chair placed amidships is far preferable to going below. The stuffy atmosphere of the saloon, plus the obtrusive indications that others have succumbed, are only too likely to induce the sickness.

Even the worst sufferers can console themselves by remembering that in the case of ordinary healthy persons there are, I believe, hardly any authentic records of a sea-sickness *per se* proving fatal; the fatal cases one occasionally reads of in the papers are usually those of invalids who have collapsed from exhaustion induced by continuous vomiting aggravated by the inability to take or retain nourishment. Very rarely does one hear of death being caused by the breaking of a blood-vessel due to the excessive vomiting. In the exceedingly rare instances of death from sea-sickness in the case of presumably sound lives, it will generally be found that the victim suffered from a weak heart, which could not withstand the shock to the system caused by continued attacks of vomiting.

Animals, as is well known, are often victims of *mal-de-mer*, horses particularly being very bad sailors. These four-footed sufferers are best treated with half a bucketful of hot water to which a pint of whisky or three or four ounces of quinine has been added.

Attempts have often been made to prevent sea-sickness by mechanical appliances and by specially constructed vessels, but none have proved successful. The most familiar example was the *Calais-Douvres*—a twin ship, or rather a vessel with a double hull. This ship was actually running on the Calais-Dover passage up till a few years ago, but it cannot be said to have effected much in the way of preventing sea-sickness.

A still more ambitious attempt was the *Castalia*, which made a few voyages between Dover and Calais some twenty or thirty years ago. The principle in theory was sound enough. The idea was to minimise the pitching and rolling by having a saloon suspended like a hammock.

The travelling public did not take to this peculiar vessel, and even its inventors were fain to admit that if it mitigated the rolling, the pitching was as bad as ever. Besides, the ship steered badly, drew a great deal of water, and, finally, the swinging mechanism occasionally stuck. But perhaps the most chimerical scheme of all was that of a German

inventor, in a paper read a few months ago before the Society of Naval Architects, who proposed to fit an enormous fly-wheel weighing several tons to passenger-steamers, the 'gyroscopic effect' of which would, it was claimed, keep the vessel steady in rough weather. But though the scheme appeared plausible on paper, the invention was never given a trial at sea.

'LITTLE MONKEY.'

THE dear old garden on a hot summer's day, the French window open, and opposite the window across the lawn the broad path where three could walk abreast, and deep flower-borders with roses and lilies on each side.

This was the sunny walk, and the path was burning to the feet during the hot, dry summers we had a few years ago. On one's left, at the end of the lawn, a tall hedge in which trees here and there occurred, their branches mingling with hawthorn and wild-roses. This was the shady walk running parallel with the other.

The hedge was full of interest to me and to many others. A chaffinch and his wife staked their all in it, and were my delight. I came to know them by one day carelessly throwing a little canary-seed on the step of the French window. The male was quickly there picking up the seeds and calling to his lady; she came rather shyly at first, but afterwards both came every day with confidence, he always first, and constant in his cries until she came.

They almost seemed to show me their nest in the hedge, and we three looked for the hatching-out. All went well, and the mother was again flying about helping to feed; but one day Mrs Minx, the cat, came into the house with a little bird in her mouth. It was a hen chaffinch. Could it be the mother? So I threw canary-seed; and he, the father, came gaily on to the step calling again and again to his love.

He was a widower. He called her for a day or two, and attended alone to his family, and then I did not see him for a little while, until one morning there came his well-known *chink, chink*. I looked on the step and saw him there, and that he had found another lady, a spinster; and she did as many another spinster before her: she finished rearing his little ones and afterwards had her own, coming in for the old nest and all that pertained thereto.

A word or two about Mrs Minx, for she was a most worthy and delightful person, and had her experiences in the hedge. She had been taught not to take birds, and she very rarely forgot herself in the way I have described.

When she was fourteen years old, I found her one day laid out on the path of the shady walk with the appearance of utter collapse. Her mouth was slightly open. I stroked her and asked how it all came about. She got up and put her nose just inside the hedge. There lay a rabbit nearly as large as herself.

'Oh, Mrs Minx! what have you done?' She looked affectionately at me, but was full length on the path again as she watched me disentangle her prize and draw it out beside her; she sniffed the rabbit and appeared to give it to me. I carried them both in, and gave Mrs Minx some milk. The rabbit being young and plump, we had it in a pie, Mrs Minx enjoying a good share.

And she had another experience.

As I came down first to breakfast one morning, a very terrible smell greeted me instead of the sweet air and flowers of a country-room. I rang the bell, and when the maid came I said, 'How is it there is such a fearful smell in this room?' She assured me she had swept it all over, and had left the room, she knew, perfectly sweet.

I observed Mrs Minx sitting very primly on her haunches, her whiskers drawn tightly back to her cheeks, and as she licked her lips a shudder ran through her. I put this and that together, and found under the sofa the stench and a stoat. She had killed it by biting the back of its neck, and the maid remembered seeing her engaged with something in the hedge.

For many, many years Mrs Minx gave us two sets of kittens a year. Two were, as a rule, kept; and as I look back it seems a wonderful thing how we found situations for them, for we were very particular where they went. The mother was famed far and wide as a ratter; still, we had difficulty in placing them. One, I remember, entered the service of a hairdresser in the town; this we did not like, feeling that she would miss the garden and the freedom of the country. Then, again, one became the right-hand cat to a bishop; we gave her to a curate, but there was that in the kitten which raised her high. One trembles to think of the influence she may have had for ill, as I have seen members of my own family supine when Mrs Minx was resting on their knees, and this kit was as seductive and beautiful as the mother.

There are cat-haters; but I surely think they are ignorant of many points in cats, and do not give them credit for the intelligence they have. Mrs Minx at one time saw me in a state of exhaustion after a long journey. My painful and repeated fainting-attacks made her most unhappy; she rubbed against me, jumped on my lap, and put her face to mine, mewing with sympathy. Still I kept distressingly ill. All at once a thought struck her; she rushed from the room, hurried downstairs, and was up again with a most certain cure, for in my lap she put a plump kitten. Not staying to see the effect, she in all haste fetched the other, then placed her-

self about a yard in front of me, intently watching; and I, being really on the mend, laughed a little and held out my hand to her. The kind creature's delight was unbounded.

A friend, a little chap in a military jacket and pair of tartan trousers, paid a visit to me once a week. Every Monday morning the drive-gate flew open, and in company with an Italian and an organ he came to me. I never knew his name, and never called him by one—the 'Little Monkey' was how the maid announced him; but he was only received by me on the front-door mat, and at the very first I stopped the grinding of the organ, holding up my hand and shaking my head at the ever-polite Italian. As far as I remember, he never spoke one word of English or any other language; his smiles and bows were constant. I always looked most seriously at him, scrutinising his face for signs of cruelty, and decided it was not a cruel one, and that he was only a lazy creature making a tiny animal earn the living.

For two summer months the brisk little figure on the man's shoulder came to the door. The moment he saw me he leapt down; and I, kneeling on one knee and forming a seat for him with the other, presented him with a saucer of warm milk. Very gravely and carefully he supported it with both hands, dipping his little muzzle to the saucer and sucking up the milk—not all at once: there were breathing spells; and he would turn his head, looking up at me with his quick eyes.

When he was drinking and I looked down on his carefully brushed head and military back, with his arms extended, he was so like a miniature soldier that I think a blush used to come to me, and most certainly a smile.

The refreshment over, he stood on my knee clasping one of my fingers firmly with his always cool hand; with the other he played with my brooch. He would put his teeth to the bright buttons on my dress, biting them gently; he was never unduly free, and regarded me with some awe, and, as the Mondays went on, I think with affection.

But the Mondays passing by made the summer pass by; chilly, rainy autumn came, and 'Little Monkey' ceased his visits for a time. Then one day, looking up at the sound of the swinging gate, I saw the man and organ, but at first not my friend. Yes, sheltered in the Italian's breast, with eager face looked out 'Little Monkey;' and the man, cheerful as ever, opened his coat as I stood at the door, but the little creature did not leap to me. His master placed him on the mat, and I saw a terrible change had come; all Mondays would soon be over. Taking my skirt, he climbed feebly to my knee and seated himself, his soldier-shoulders heaving with his panting breath. I called for his saucer of milk, and as we waited he nestled closer and put both hands up the sleeve of my dress. He had his saucer of milk by the dining-room fire, but he did not take much, just bending to it now and again; and at last I felt I must give him back to the man. I was overcome with sadness by his clinging to me and by his pathetic looks.

The man stood grinning.

'He is ill,' I said. He made no answer. 'What is the matter with the poor little monkey?' Some sort of noise came from between his gleaming teeth. Anger seized me. 'He is dying,' I cried. Then I looked at the man, and more anger surged up in me; and as I cast about desperately that I might in some way reach his understanding, the words of an old Italian song I had heard came to me. With frenzied agitation I called, '*Ah! che la morte.*'

The effect of these inspired words, of the meaning of which I was ignorant, greatly startled me. All animation left his face; he put out trembling hands and seized the monkey. Casting him hastily in his coat, he flung the organ on his back and ran across to the gate, leaving it widely swinging. Gone!

A stillness came on me as I stood on the mat, grief, and also remorse that I had been, perhaps, unjust to the Italian. Did he not, after all, love the monkey? And his smiles, were they not because his little charge was better to-day than he had been? Hope was in him that he might yet be well, and to bring him to me was his first impulse. Yes, yes, I was the one in the wrong.

When 'Little Monkey' passed away, then the man would mourn, would seek some sweet burial-place, perhaps would say, 'What do I care for the beautiful flowers, what for the sunny sky, while there, across the field in the deep shade of the fir-trees, his still body lies?'

Yet again my mind changed; these words did not seem likely. Now I pictured a little public-house, and there was a smell of beer.

FULFILMENT.

Before the quick'ning of the grass,
When violets blow,
And to and fro
O'er folded buds the bleak winds pass,
A thrush upon the elm-tree near
Sings with reassuring sweetness,
'Soon will end this incompleteness,
When June is here! When June is here!'

Then over sodden garden-beds
Drip summer leaves,
While 'neath the eaves
The roses droop their pale-pink heads,
And hushed are drowsy insect-hums,
Wood-pigeons coo, despite the rain,
'The sun will brightly shine again
When August comes! When August comes!'

Across the fields so lately gold
Creep mists that chill,
And gray and still
Calm twilight comes ere day is old.
Briefly the western crimson burns;
Then sounds the robin's plaintive chant,
'What fair things Mother Earth will grant
When Spring returns! When Spring returns!'

GWENDOLINE JOHNES.

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TRAVEL AND MISADVENTURE IN ITALY.

BY THE EDITOR.

PART II.

WE have now arrived at Rome, as a recent writer tells us a modern continental city, stripped of all that charm of venerable antiquity which existed in papal days. Mr Innes Shand in his recent work, *Old-Time Travel*, gives a graphic picture of Rome under Pope Pius IX., when side by side with ruins of the Republic and the Empire were medieval villas, lichen-covered walls enclosing vast garden spaces, and mouldering fountains with still more dilapidated statuary. What was once Papal Rome certainly no longer exists; but, on the other hand, narrow and filthy alleys have given place to handsome villa residences and streets. The Ludovisi Gardens have disappeared; but on their site has sprung up what is now the most healthy residential district of the town. To the visitor making a lengthy stay in Rome we would at once recommend one of these hotels in the Via Ludovisi, which is close to the Pincian Hill with its terraces, and the beautiful Borghese Villa and Gardens, both open to the public. The Hotel Savoy, on the Via Ludovisi, we found comfortable, well managed, and very moderate in its charges. We speak on behalf of those possessing moderate means, or who are unwilling to pay those very high prices ruling in many other Roman hotels, especially those in the near neighbourhood of the railway station. Signor Lengyel, proprietor of the Savoy, speaks many languages, and may be relied upon to do everything in his power towards assisting a stranger to Rome, and making his visit as pleasant and free from difficulties as possible.

Those recent changes in Rome so much lamented by Mr Augustus J. C. Hare and others, do not, we confess, strike us with the same sense of loss, and a little experience has taught us that nearly everything of historical interest and value is still there, if sometimes under new surroundings. It is these same surroundings that rather appear to us as sometimes incongruous. For example, in close proximity to the Roman Forum and alongside the Casa di Rienzi and Theatre of Marcellus is a vast new building used for the manufacture of macaroni, whilst the site of what was once the Circus Maximus is now divided between a railway depôt for trucks, with engine-houses, and a cemetery used by the Jews. Within a very few yards of this spot is the Palatine Hill on which stand what were once the palaces of the Cæsars. In spite, however, of so much incongruity, old Rome, or what is left of it after the destruction by the Romans themselves in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is still very much to the front, and infinitely better cared for than heretofore. This not so much perhaps for unselfish reasons, and the benefit of the antiquary and the savant, as on account of the large revenue derived from the exhibition of these ruins by the Italian Government.

So much building and excavation have brought to light a vast quantity of antiquities, the best of which have gone to enrich the museums, whilst others have found their way into the hands of private collectors and dealers. So numerous have been recent discoveries of a less important kind, that the necessity for forging and manufacturing antiques in marble, stone, and bronze has ceased for the time being. Possessing some little knowledge ourselves, we were less struck by the quantity of palpable forgeries than with the number of genuine articles for sale—offered, however, at fabulous prices. The method of doing business employed by the Italian antiquary is very repugnant to one who is accustomed to British ways and customs, and the following incident may serve as an example of what, in a greater or lesser degree according to the length of purse or credulity of the purchaser, takes place every day.

Whilst loitering one morning close to the Forum, we observed inside the workshop of a dealer in antiques a beautiful female head in marble which had once formed part of a statue belonging to the third or fourth century. The price asked was six

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hundred francs (twenty-four pounds); and upon our suggesting one hundred francs as more reasonable, the dealer smiled, and we went away, leaving our name and address. The following day the head was brought to us at the price of one hundred and twenty francs. We believe that, for the collector of moderate means who is not too ambitious, Rome is still a happy hunting-ground for antiques of a kind. We do not say that valuable gems, rare medals, and early bronzes are now found in such quantities and purchasable at the prices which ruled forty years ago; but we personally have no doubt that such things may yet be found, and purchased at reasonable prices, by those who have leisure to make a systematic search among the smaller shops and in the less-frequented districts of the city. We also believe that for any one with leisure and some little knowledge of the language, intelligent inquiry among the peasantry, and even at some of the smaller monasteries outside the city walls, would be well repaid by results. We were ourselves singularly fortunate on one occasion in this latter form of inquiry, but are bound to secrecy. The prior of the monastery is our very good friend, the Italian Government is strict, so the history of this interesting transaction must remain untold.

To those in search of marbles to ornament gardens and terraces at home, it is still possible to obtain statuary, dilapidated no doubt, but often beautiful, and capable of much restoration. These marble busts and carved pillars are not always what the Italians term *antico*, but may yet be fifteenth or sixteenth century work, with the appearance of much greater antiquity. We discovered several beautiful small examples of this kind in shops away from the fashionable districts of the town, and were able to buy all we desired at prices varying from two up to fifteen francs. In no case did we give higher prices, nor do we remember that in any case less than forty francs was asked!

A striking and picturesque feature of street life in Rome is the great number of young men we meet who are candidates for the priesthood; of every order, Franciscans, Dominicans, Benedictines, and Jesuits, they may be seen in hundreds. Especially is this so on Sunday, when in orderly ranks they parade the terraces on the Pincian Hill, or assemble in the Piazza del Popolo, or play football in the Borghese Gardens. One is tempted to ask how employment can afterwards be found for such a numerous body of clergy, many of whom look delicate and ill-fitted for simple fare and hard work. The Church in Italy as a profession must be greatly overcrowded, and it is not to be supposed that more than a small proportion of these noviciates have, in order to qualify themselves for work elsewhere, taken up seriously the study of modern languages. The classical and scientific curriculum necessary for every student in holy orders is sufficiently severe in itself, without the additional strain of a course of languages only to be acquired, in our opinion, by a lengthened residence in a foreign country. In what manner, therefore, and where, is this coming generation of new clergy to find employment? As a business man, the question puzzles us; but may be quite easy of explanation by those better informed.

As already mentioned, the Pincio at Rome is famous for its terraces, which overlook the Piazza di Spagna, and indeed the whole city. Before the great heat of the day, and whilst roadways and paths were still cool, clean, and newly watered, we often spent an early morning hour on one of these terraces, beside the ancient obelisk that once adorned the gardens of Sallust. Beneath is the garden of the Hotel de Russie, with numerous orange and lemon trees in full fruit; whilst above us is the luxuriant overhanging foliage from the gardens of the Monastery and Church of Santissima Trinità da Monti. To waste an hour amidst such surroundings, smoking a contemplative pipe and idly watching the crowds who assemble in the piazza below, with the many-coloured costumes of the fruit and flower sellers grouped in their accustomed place near Bernini's fountain, and on the broad marble steps leading from our own terrace to the lower town, is to obtain a view of Italian real life found nowhere else. We look back upon these idle hours as more delightful and profitable than many others spent in dingy shops or amidst the ruins of Rome's former greatness.

We shall dismiss in a very few words a visit to Naples, where we would advise the tourist not to believe all that is said about the supposed insanitary state of the lower town. If staying for a few days only, it might be well to choose an hotel conveniently situated for the shops, museums, and railway station. Those hotels situated on the higher ground are no doubt excellent, but too far away and inconvenient for many to whom time is of importance. We put up at the Hotel Santa Lucia, on the quay of the same name, and close to the water. This is an excellent hotel, and we would certainly return to it on a second visit. The railway station at Naples is a very long distance from any of the hotels, and the short-distance trains to places close to the town are very inconveniently arranged. The distance from Naples to Pompeii by rail is fourteen miles, and there are two trains per diem, the journey occupying rather more than one hour each way. At Pompeii railway station there is little or no accommodation for the increasing number of tourists who visit the place.

Returning to Rome, the journey right through to Venice by Florence and Bologna is tolerably fast, but very tiresome and fatiguing. This is an experience which we would never attempt a second time. We had secured sleeping accommodation on the night train from Rome, and were due at Venice the following day before two o'clock. Arriving two hours late, we went direct by gondola to the Hotel Danieli, conveniently situated on the Mole, and close to the San Marco and the Palace of the Doges. Venice contains many hotels, of which the Danieli and the Grand (under the same management) are

looked upon as among the best. The Danieli is comfortable, and would be more so were it possible for the ordinary individual to obtain bedroom accommodation to the front. With the exception, however, of two sitting-rooms on the ground-floor, every front room in this hotel is let as a bed and sitting room combined, no doubt at prices only within reach of the American tourist. We were informed that 80 per cent. of the visitors to this hotel and the Grand were Americans. At the Danieli we found the cookery fairly good, but its wines, so far as our experience goes, are very inferior and more expensive than those of any hotel we have stayed at in Italy. Here the charge for a bottle of the poorest and cheapest quality of Chianti is five francs. Should it be our good fortune to return to Venice, we shall put up at the Hotel d'Italie-Bauer, much patronised by Germans, who like everything to be good and moderate in price. We dined in the restaurant of this hotel, where we discovered a friend in the head-waiter, and sat down to one of the best dinners to be obtained in Italy. The wines here are excellent and extremely reasonable in price.

Before finally dismissing the subject of hotels, let us say a word of warning against a practice unfortunately too common, and calculated largely to increase the visitor's expenses when the bill comes to be paid. We refer to the custom in many Italian hotels of closing the *table-d'hôte* dining-room at 8 P.M. This would almost appear in many places to be prearranged so that the traveller arriving, say, at Milan by afternoon train from Venice, due at 7.40, is just in time, after a drive to the hotel and a wash, to miss the ordinary dinner, for which the charge is usually five francs, and is compelled to have recourse to the *à la carte* room or restaurant. Here he probably finds a limited choice of dishes, all uncooked, the prices of which vie with those of the most fashionable London hotels. In addition to this he has to pay for what is termed a *couvert*, or permission to use the restaurant, usually two francs each person (we paid this ourselves), and has a tedious wait until special and expensive dishes are prepared for him. At the end of the repast, even though living in the hotel, the waiter brings the bill and demands immediate payment. Although, as already said, common to many hotels, the Palace Hotel at Milan railway-station is a particular sinner in this respect. One might reasonably expect that in a station hotel, dependent in a great measure on those who, like ourselves, were merely passing through or staying for not more than one or two days, some provision or arrangement would exist to accommodate travellers on arrival; but this is not so. After a six hours' journey from Venice, we returned to Milan on our way north. Wishing to break the journey for one night only, we did not go down town to our friends at the Metropole, but put up at the Palace Hotel, arriving a few minutes before eight o'clock. We could see that *table-d'hôte* was still going on; but, although some twenty others had arrived with ourselves, none of us was permitted to join in this repast. Instead, we were all shown into the restaurant, and after waiting perhaps half-an-hour my own party of five was served with a small portion of fish, a cutlet each, and an ordinary sweet omelette. For this modest repast, washed down with two bottles of lager beer, the charge was close upon thirty-five francs, payment on the spot. All who arrived with ourselves had the same experience, which is probably of daily occurrence, to the great satisfaction and profit of the hotel proprietors. At this hotel the charge for a *small* bottle of Vienna or lager beer is two francs!

We need hardly mention, in conclusion, that the system of vails or 'tips' exists to an extraordinary extent in Italian hotels. No matter what the hour may be, and even although the *déjeuner* or *table-d'hôte* is in full swing, if the visitor is departing the fact is made known, and every servant in the hotel manages to be in the front hall in eager expectation of sharing in the spoils. All this is very unpleasant for hotel guests, and hotel managers are much to blame in allowing the system to continue. We are afraid that rich American tourists are responsible for a great deal of this nuisance, which, we are glad to see, is not permitted in the best Swiss hotels, especially the Schweizerhof, Lucerne, where a printed notice on the subject is prominently placed.

Leaving hotels and returning to railways, a change for the better is at once apparent on entering Swiss territory. Swiss railway carriages are the most comfortable on the Continent, and the authorities do not insist upon those vexatious Custom-house delays, as at Chiasso Station, in which their Italian neighbours seem to delight; on the contrary, a reasonable examination of luggage takes place on the train, and after Chiasso is left far behind. Traversing the same route as before, we arrive in due course at Lucerne, and find rooms at the Schweizerhof, one of the best and most comfortable hotels on the Continent. The Schweizerhof is in every way excellent, thoroughly well managed, and most reasonable in its charges. Our only regret is that time did not permit us to enjoy longer the hospitality of its owners, the brothers Hauser, who do so much to ensure the comfort of their guests.

We have already said something of our experience during the journey from Lucerne to Basel and from Basel to Paris, the only drawback being that at Basel we must leave the comfort of the Swiss railways for the less agreeable conveyance provided by the French Government. Even here we are glad to notice some improvement since our last tour in France four years ago, although there is still a want of sufficient accommodation on the through trains. This is more especially the case on the fast-train service from Paris to Calais, Dover, and London, and the rapacity of the French railway porters, and even higher officials, at Parisian railway stations is quite equal to that of their brethren in Italy. We have many times crossed the Channel, and do not remember experiencing a rougher passage than on this return journey; but

all things come to an end, and at last, after a very tiring day, we find ourselves in London, comfortably settled at that hotel where we are already well known, and something more than the mere number figured on our bedroom door.

With all its drawbacks, small annoyances, and weary system of railway travel, Italy is always delightful; and, as Mr Harry Quilter tells us, 'once she has you in her toils you will want to go back and back.' We look forward ourselves to the time when we shall return for a much longer stay in the Eternal City; but being just now at home, let us first confirm the wise remark of Dr Johnson, who has said that a tour abroad only makes us appreciate the more the many comforts enjoyed in our own country.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXXIV.—THE RED BULL OF THE BORGIAS.

THE fifth day of September—the day upon which the sun would lead us to the discovery of the buried casket—dawned gray and overcast.

The instant I awoke I rushed to my window and looked out upon a sunless scene. Dark rain-clouds were everywhere, and my heart sank within me at the prospect of a wet and dismal day. The previous day we had spent in making careful inquiries in the neighbourhood regarding the reappearance of our enemies, who, we expected, might try and take us by surprise. The only fact we could fathom was that Grierson the ironmonger had sent the tools to Kelton Mains, and had been paid for them by a money-order posted in Dumfries; but the farmer at Kelton knew nothing of them, it seemed, but had received them expecting some one sent by the laird to call for them. We had written a line to Sammy Waldron at Crailloch overnight, and expected him to cycle over during the morning. He would, of course, be excited over what was occurring, for he knew nothing except that Fred, his host, was away on some mysterious errand.

When I came down rain was falling, and the grayness of the morning was certainly mirrored in the faces of all three of us.

'Rain before seven, shine before eleven,' remarked Walter, trying to cheer us; but we ate our meal almost in silence until Sammy, hot and covered with mud, burst in upon us.

'What, in the name of fortune, does all this mean?' he cried, surprised to find Walter and myself. 'I thought you two fellows had returned to town. The whole house is on tenter-hooks regarding Fred's whereabouts. I got your note at 7.30, and slipped away without any breakfast, and without a word to any one except Connie.'

'Look here, Sammy!' exclaimed Fred; 'we're going this afternoon to do a bit of secret digging—after a buried treasure.'

'Buried treasure!' he echoed, and he burst out laughing. 'Sounds well, at any rate. I'm always open to receive a bit of treasure from any source.'

'Well, we want you to help us to dig. It is believed to be over at Threave.'

'What! the old ruin we went to the other day?' Sammy exclaimed. 'Better buy a new pair of oars, old chap, if you don't want the whole crowd of us shipwrecked.'

The suggestion was a good one; and, although the weather was so much against it, Sammy presently went forth, purchased a pair of heavy second-hand oars, and stowed them away in the bottom of a light wagonette which we had hired at the hotel to take us to Kelton later in the day.

Sammy was just as excited as we were, and entered as keenly into the spirit of the thing. Like Fred, he never did anything by halves. He was a man with muscles like iron, and possessed the courage of a lion, as was proved by the many tight corners he had been in during the Indian frontier wars of the past fifteen years or so. As a shot Sammy Waldron was only equalled by his host, Fred Fenwicke; but, while the latter's form showed best among the grouse, Sammy was pre-eminently a hunter of big game, and sent presents of bears and tigers to his friends instead of pheasants and grouse.

The morning wore on. A long council of war was held, but the rain did not abate.

Not, indeed, until we sat down to luncheon at twelve did the weather clear, upon which our spirits rose again. At half-past one the clouds broke and the sun came forth fitfully. Then all four of us, eager to investigate, and not knowing what difficulties were before us, mounted into the wagonette and drove out along the winding road to Kelton Mains.

On descending a surprise awaited us, for when we asked for the tools sent there from Grierson's, the farmer told us that three gentlemen, one a deformed man, had arrived there the day before, claimed the picks and spades, and had crossed to the island and been occupied in digging until it was dark.

The trio of investigators might still be on the island for aught we knew.

This was certainly disconcerting, and we walked through the fields to the water's edge full of expectancy. We, however, found the old boat moored in its usual place, which showed that the party had returned to shore. Therefore we embarked, eager to take observations and follow the directions laid down, even if we were not that day able to make investigation.

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Sammy took one oar and I the other, and very soon the keel ran into the mud-bank of the island, and the gray, dismal old castle, with its 'hanging-stone,' towered above us. In an instant all four of us sprang ashore, the boat was moored, and we started off in the direction of the great ruin. Fortunately the sun was now shining brightly, and there, sure enough, lay the long, straight shadow across the wet grass in our direction.

I looked at my watch and found it was a quarter-past three. In fifteen minutes we should be able to follow accurately the directions.

Suddenly, to our dismay, we saw, as we approached the point where the shadow ended, that a great hole had been dug in the immediate vicinity. We rushed forward with one accord, and in an instant the truth was plain—investigations had already been made!

The hole was a deep one, disclosing a flight of spiral stone steps which led to a subterranean chamber, the dungeon, perhaps, of some building long since effaced. At any rate, it showed that the excavators had hit upon some underground construction, the nature of which we knew not. The tools had been left there unheeded, as though the trio had departed hurriedly.

'That's curious!' Wyman cried to me. 'Read old Godfrey's instructions aloud to us.'

I took out of my pocket a book in which I had made a note of the exact wording, and read to my companions as follows:

'DIRECTIONS FOR RECOVERING THE CASKET.

'Go unto the castle at 3.30, when the sun shines, on September 17th, and follow the shadow of the east angle of the keep, forty-three paces from the inner edge of the moat.'

Sammy then measured the paces, and found they were, as specified, forty-three.

I again glanced at my watch. It was just half-past three.

'Then, with the face turned straight towards Bengairn, walk fifty-six paces,' I said, reading from the record.

Sammy took his bearings, and was starting off when I heard a footstep on the grass behind me, and, turning suddenly, found myself face to face with the man Selby, who, until that moment, had evidently been hiding in the ruins, watching us.

'By what right are you here?' he demanded.

'By the same right as yourself,' was my response. 'What right have you to challenge us?'

By the man's dark, smooth face I saw he meant mischief.

'I have been left in charge of this property by its owner,' the man declared. 'You have no right to land here without his permission; therefore I order you to return to the shore.'

'Ho! ho!' cried Sammy, 'those are fine words, to be sure. I fancy you'd better remain quiet, or we shall have to be very unkind to you.'

'What do you mean?' the big fellow cried in a bullying tone.

'I mean that we aren't going to be interrupted by you,' was Sammy's cool rejoinder. 'If your friends have gone away and left you alone, like Robinson Crusoe, on this island, it isn't our concern. The laird of this place is still Colonel Maitland, and you have no authority here whatever.'

'I forbid you to take any observations,' Selby shouted, his fists clenched as though he would attack us. 'And as for that man there,' he cried, pointing to me, 'he'd best get away before my friends return.'

'Now that's enough,' cried Sammy. 'We don't want any threats;' and before Selby was aware of his intention, the other had seized him by the wrists and was calling to us to secure him with the cord I had carried from the boat. He cursed and struggled violently, but in the hands of the four of us he was quickly bound and rendered powerless, much to his chagrin. He commenced shouting, whereupon I took out my handkerchief and gagged him tightly with it. Then, on his refusing to walk, we all four carried him into the roofless castle and there bound him to a big iron ring that we found in one of the walls.

It was the only way. The fellow intended mischief, for we found in his pocket a loaded revolver. Having relieved him of that, we left him there, secured in a spot where he could not observe our movements.

Without loss of time we returned to the place we had marked, and the athletic Sammy, laughing over Selby's utter defeat, set his face towards the distant mountain of Bengairn and walked fifty-six paces, all three of us walking beside him to check his measurements.

'Seek there,' I read from my notes, 'for my lady Lucrezia's treasure is hidden at a place no man knoweth.' Then, omitting several sentences, I came to the words: 'Item: How to discover the place at Threave: First find a piece of ruined wall of great stones, one bearing a circle cut upon it as large as a man's hand. Then, measuring five paces towards the barbican, find'—— And there the record broke off.

'Look!' cried Fred, pointing to a small piece of ruined wall about a foot high cropping up out of the tangled weeds and nettles. 'Those are evidently the stones, and yet you'd never notice it unless it were pointed out.'

We all four rushed to the spot he indicated, and on tearing the weeds away, there, sure enough, we discovered that one of the large moss-grown moor-stones bore a circle cut upon it about the size of one's palm.

'Five paces towards the barbican!' cried Walter. 'One—two—three—four—five! Here you are!' and he stamped heavily upon the grass. 'Why,' he exclaimed, 'it's hollow!'

We all stamped, and sure enough there was a cavity beneath.

With Fred I rushed off to the hole dug by our

enemies, and obtaining their tools, brought them back. Although the record in The Closed Book was carried no further, it was evident that some opening lay underneath where we stood.

As the excavation made by our enemies was three hundred yards away, in an opposite direction, we concluded that they had only deciphered the first portion of the directions, and not that final or unfinished sentence in the record, a page of which was missing.

Without further ado, however, we seized pick and spade, and commenced to open the ground at the spot where it sounded hollow. At a depth of about two and a half feet, through stone and rubbish, we came upon a big flat slab, like a paving-stone.

Was it possible that the historic emeralds of Lucrezia Borgia were actually hidden beneath? Our excitement knew no bounds, especially so as Selby had loosened his gag, and we could hear him shouting and cursing in the distance. We had, however, no fear of his shouts attracting attention, for the spot was far too lonely, and his voice would not reach the river-bank, so broad was the stream.

With a keen will we all worked, digging out the earth from around the slab until at last I drove the end of a pick beneath it, and, using that instrument as a lever, succeeded in raising the huge flat stone sufficiently to allow the insertion of a crowbar. Then, all bending together, we raised it up, disclosing a deep, dark, cavernous hole which emitted the damp, earthy smell of the grave.

'Who'll go down with me?' asked Fred.

'I'll go presently,' volunteered Sammy, 'when the place has had a bit of an airing. There's foul air there, I expect. Perhaps it's a well.'

Fortunately we had provided ourselves with two hurricane-lanterns, and one of these I lit and lowered into the hole by a string. It remained alight, showing us, first, that the air was not foul; and, secondly, that the place was not a well, but a small stone chamber, the floor of which was covered with broken rubbish, and the walls black with damp and slime—not at all an inviting place to descend into.

Fred was the first to let himself down, and, taking the lantern, he disappeared.

'I say,' he cried a minute later, 'it isn't a chamber. It's a kind of low tunnel—a subterranean passage!'

The announcement caused us even increased excitement; and while Sammy and I let ourselves down to join Fred, we arranged that Walter, armed with Selby's revolver, should remain on the surface and so guard against any trickery on the part of the man who was our prisoner. It would, we knew, be easy enough to trap us like rats while we were down there.

'Wait till we come back, Walter,' I cried, and then, with my lamp, followed my two companions into the narrow burrow, which ran down a steep incline in a southerly direction. Fred went first; but so dark and so blocked was the way in parts by fallen stones that our progress was very slow. We remembered that in such places of secret communication there were often pitfalls for the unwary; hence the caution we exercised.

We had pursued our way for, as far as we could judge, nearly a quarter of a mile, Sammy and Fred joking all the while, when the passage gave a sudden turn and commenced to ascend. This alteration in its direction struck me as curious, because up to that moment we had walked in an absolutely straight line. But as I turned aside to follow my friends, a small touch of colour on the wall attracted my attention; and, halting, I held up my lamp to examine it.

It was a crude drawing of a bull, outlined roughly in paint that had once been scarlet, but which was now nearly brown, owing to the action of time and damp.

'Look!' I cried, almost beside myself with excitement. 'Look! The red bull of the Borgias! The casket is concealed here!'

THE SWORD-MAKERS OF JAPAN.

THE sword-makers of Toledo and Damascus have been reputed to be the world's most famous artisans in this industry; but in Japan the swordsmiths turn out weapons whose blades are fully as keen and as hard, and composed of metal of as fine quality as those of the old swordsmiths. Furthermore, the Japanese sword is supposed to be sanctified by the god who is the patron of this industry. In fact, the making of the sword is, to a great extent, a religious ceremony, and all of the operations are performed by hand.

The first step, of course, is to forge the steel. This is done in a hut specially built for the purpose, containing the bellows, the anvil, and the hammers used by the chief swordsmith and his assistants. Upon the walls are placed what the Japanese call *kakémonas*, representing the god of the sword-makers and the chief goddess of the Shintos. The walls are also decorated with wisps of straw and zigzag-shaped pieces of white paper charms, which are intended to keep off evil spirits. Great care is also taken to prevent any woman or girl from setting foot in the building, for the reason that women are supposed to be attended by demons who would injure the quality of the swords.

The chief instruments in making swords are two large sledge-hammers weighing twelve pounds each, and a smaller one, weighing two pounds, which is

used by the chief swordsmith. Before work at a forge is begun, prayer is offered up to the patron-god. Prayer having been finished, the work begins. The metal used in sword-making is Japanese steel, made by melting iron-ore in a charcoal furnace and dropping it into cold water. The carbon derived from the charcoal causes the formation of steel. It comes in lumps which average about one and a half pound apiece, and about fifteen of them are required to make a sword-blade weighing when finished, without sheath or mountings, from one and a half to two pounds.

The reason why such a quantity of the metal is required is because every ounce of it is carefully examined for defects, and should there be any which is considered inferior it is rejected. It is inspected by heating each lump of the steel to a high temperature, then plunging it into cold water and breaking it into fragments, every one of which is examined. If the maker notes that the edge of a piece glistens or is of uneven colour, it is immediately condemned.

After a sufficient number of small pieces of good quality have been accumulated, another of the original lumps of steel is heated and beaten out into a flat slab. This slab, while red-hot, is creased in two parallel straight lines by beating the edge of a hatchet into the flat surface of the slab with a hammer. The slab of steel is then rendered brittle, and broken along these creases, forming a rectangular slab of steel some two and a half or three inches wide. Upon it are piled a number of the small fractured bits of steel. When enough has been piled up to make a heap about two or three inches high, the whole is first sprinkled with straw-ashes, and then a mixture of earth and water is poured over it, serving to cake the small bits of steel together and keep them in position.

In this form the metal is again placed in the furnace, and then withdrawn, sprinkled with ashes of the straw, and pounded with sledge-hammers until the whole forms an ingot about six inches in length, one and a half inch in width, and an inch in thickness. At last a part of the material for the sword has been forged; but it must be again heated until it will bend upon itself, when the big and little hammers pound the halves together into another solid mass. This is repeated over twenty times before the metal is sufficiently kneaded to suit the smith. Three ingots of this kind are required to make the sword, and are welded and beaten into a rough semblance of the sword-blade by the heavy hammers.

It is then taken in hand by the chief swordsmith, who with his small hammer, and aided by his assistants, gradually beats this mass of steel into the shape of the sword-blade. It is a process requiring great manual dexterity acquired only by long practice, and the result is wonderfully accurate when one considers that nothing is used but hammer and anvil. When the finishing touches are being given to the blade the work is done entirely by the chief swordsmith, who dips his hammer into cold water while the fashioning of the sword is going on. The use of water serves to cleanse the surface of the steel of dirt, and causes a thin layer of oxidised or burned steel to scale off, thus ensuring a thoroughly clean surface to the sword when beaten into shape.

The sword is then completely fashioned by the use of files and an instrument resembling a carpenter's drawing-knife. The next process, that of hardening, is peculiar to the Japanese sword, and is looked upon as the most important part of its manufacture, while the person who does the hardening is regarded as the maker of the sword, it being his name which is inscribed upon the hilt. His spirit, his character, his individuality, are supposed to enter into the blade which he hardens, and the blade is good accordingly.

The blade is covered over to the thickness of about one-eighth of an inch with a rather thick paste made by mixing a certain kind of fireclay with water. The edge and point of the sword are then scraped clean and re-covered with a much thinner layer of clay containing proportionally more water than the clay which has been already put on. All openings into the forge are closed so as to exclude the light, for darkness is necessary in order to determine the proper temperature of the blade to be hardened. Prayer having been offered up, the chief smith takes the clay-covered blade, pushes it gently into the furnace, and moves it slowly to and fro in the blazing charcoal until the whole blade is uniformly heated from end to end. The test which determines the proper degree of temperature is when the entire blade attains that degree of redness which is seen when one looks at the bright sky with the eyelids closed. With a shout of exultation, the smith plunges the red blade into water of a temperature of one hundred degrees, and moves it to and fro until all sizzling ceases. The sword now goes into the hands of the professional polisher and sharpener of swords, which is a separate branch of work.

The last step taken before it is ready for use is to have it blessed or sanctified by the sword-god. When the polishing is completed the weapon is placed in front of the *kakémona* suspended on the wall, with an offering of sake, rice, and sweetmeats, while the swordsmith and his assistants take their prayer-scrolls and make the final offerings to the deity to bless it. During the ceremonies their friends of the male sex are invited to examine the weapon, and also to partake of their hospitality. Then every one departs, as the sword must be left alone with the *kakémona* all night in order that his influence may enter into the blade.

While the Japanese weapon is undoubtedly equal in quality to the blades of Toledo and Damascus, it has but little elasticity, and cannot be bent double like the famous products of the old Spanish swordsmiths. It will retain its edge, however, a remarkably long time even when put to rough usage, and will cut through substances which the ordinary steel blade would scarcely dent.

JUDY, AN UGLY DUCKLING.

By KATHARINE TYNAN.

JUDY O'SULLIVAN was the one dark child among Rory O'Sullivan's fair children. She had a beautiful carriage, a small dark head, dark eyes and somewhat stormy, and an air of breeding and refinement which was derived no doubt from some O'Sullivan of the great days long ago. The O'Sullivans had become peasant farmers themselves in these latter days, after generations of marriage with peasant farmers. But the homely blood had somehow given place in Judy to the good old blood. Little Judy from her earliest childhood looked like the child of gentlefolk. Now that she was grown up she was a lady.

She had a way of putting on garments, in no wise different from those of her sisters, that lent them a grace and propriety which were not in the things themselves.

The odd thing was that in the family Judy passed for the ugly one. Her sisters were flaxen-haired, rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed, ample-bosomed girls, who were the beauties of the countryside. They were good-natured girls, and Judy provoked no animosities, so they had never told her in so many words that she was ugly; but Judy felt that they thought it all the same.

Sometime in Judy's childhood an old peasant woman, with the cruel outspokenness of her class, had hurled at her the epithet 'yellow.' It remained in her mind with extraordinary persistence. For some odd reason the ideal of beauty in an Irish peasant's mind is a fair, highly coloured person. Among themselves the people often wondered how Rory O'Sullivan's Judy came to be 'so yellow and poor-looking' among his handsome family. But then, of course, the man himself was nothing to look at.

The fact of her ugliness became to Judy something to be accepted as the will of God.

She had a little room in the roof, very poorly furnished, but a solitude she loved. Her sisters preferred to be together in a large dormitory-like room where they talked half the night and had quarrels at times over the use of the looking-glass.

It was like that oddity Judy to prefer the old loft above, where the naked thatch showed through the rafters and the eaves of it came so far down over the little window that the place was in a perpetual twilight.

Judy had no desire at all to look in the glass nor for a better light. The bit of looking-glass which hung from a rafter, and which was green and seamed and had lost half the quicksilver, gave Judy such a reflection of herself that she was not at all anxious to see it again. She was a tender, impressionable creature, and she had accepted the standards of the people about her.

She heard her sisters talk of their lovers and arrange arrogantly at what age they would marry, with a detachment from all such things which gave her the lonely sorrow that looked out of her stormy eyes.

Not that she would think of her sisters' lovers. The bare idea of having one of those smart young farmers, with bright-blue neckties to match their eyes and badly made black clothes in which they went courting and visiting—clothes in which their honest good looks of every day entirely disappeared—as a lover turned Judy faint with horror.

But there was something else—something which the others knew nothing at all about—the love Judy had read of in the few books the house contained, which had disappeared unmissed because no one was interested in them, and lay hidden away in holes in the thatch and behind the big rafters. And there were beautiful, gallant, gracious persons, knights and heroes, in the world, the very thought of whom made Judy thrill. Even if she was ugly Judy, and 'yellow as a kite's claw,' as the old woman had said long ago, she was free to dream her dreams; although if one of those fine fellows had come in sight Judy would have run into a mouse-hole to escape his glances.

Rory O'Sullivan was a fairly prosperous farmer; the family had traditions and belongings that had come down to them from better days. The house—a long, low, thatched farmhouse on the hillside—the garden behind full of old-fashioned flowers, and having fancifully shaped box-borders; the summer-house; the sundial; the seats cut in the privet hedge; the kitchen-garden with the fruit-trees all mixed up with hollyhocks and sunflowers in the vegetable beds, were more charming than their owner supposed.

The house within was full of good old-fashioned furniture, and possessed some beautiful china, silver, pewter, and Sheffield plate. When they had company to dinner, the O'Sullivans ate off willow-pattern plates with a little gold in the design, which Sir Murty O'Sullivan at the Castle, if he had been at the Castle, need not have disdained.

Sir Murty was a sort of kinsman of the family at Clogher Farm. Not that they would ever have insisted on it even if Sir Murty was at home, which he had not been for years. The O'Sullivans at the farm, if they had become peasants in the passage of the years, had as much pride, in a manner, as Sir Murty himself.

They all valued the heirlooms which had come down to them. Indeed, it would be safe to say that any one of them would rather have starved

than have parted with the china, the candlesticks, the potato-rings, the pewter dishes, which were a warrant of 'great ould respectability.'

Judy took her share with her sisters in polishing and cleaning the house and the things it contained. She liked to handle the beautiful old things and make them look their best. She never minded sweeping or dusting or making the beds. But there were certain things she could not endure to do. One was to wash greasy dishes. And she did such things with an air of melancholy resignation that made her sisters laugh and nod at each other behind her back. However, they were good-natured girls, and gave her the tasks she liked rather than those she loathed.

But there was one person in the house, and that the *de facto* ruler of it, their grandmother, Rory O'Sullivan's mother, who thought such mortification of the flesh good for Judy.

You had only to look at old Mrs O'Sullivan, or her son Rory for the matter of that, to see where Judy got her looks.

The yellow hair and rosy cheeks had come into the family with Mary Flavin, the children's mother, upon whom her mother-in-law had looked with silent haughtiness all the days she lived.

Old Mrs O'Sullivan had the dark skin, the dark eyes, the erect carriage of Judy; in her case Judy's delicate aquiline nose had become a pronounced hook. She had Judy's white, even, small teeth, unspoilt by age.

Her son was the image of her; and they were all three plainly like the picture of Sir Florence O'Sullivan, a far-away chieftain of the family, which hung above the mantelshelf in the dim little parlour.

Mrs O'Sullivan had been a cousin of her husband, and also an O'Sullivan. She was an austerely pious, proud, ascetic old woman, from whom Mary Flavin's children, with the only exception of Judy, were worlds removed.

She had never been harsh with the children, as might have been supposed. Indeed, there was something fine and noble about her which made her tolerant of ways so far removed from her own. She fasted all the days of Lent, despite her age and the relaxations of fasting which were permitted, and openly mourned the good old days when none drank even a glass of water before twelve o'clock for all the forty days. But she did not forbid her grandchildren the laxity that was lawful in these latter, less robust days.

Indeed, oddly enough, her austere side was turned to Judy, whom in her secret heart she loved and was proud of for her unlikeness to the others. It was to Judy she preached the doctrines of self-denial and renunciation, knowing the seed would fall on good ground. It was Judy she would have as pious as herself, rousing her in the mornings while the others slept for those long pilgrimages to the daily mass, which, winter or summer, the indomitable old woman never missed. If Judy had the greasy dishes to wash or some other task which was a mortification to the flesh, it was by her grandmother's will.

'Don't turn the child into a nun,' Judy's father said to her one day. He had the same secret, undemonstrative affection for Judy as his mother had. 'Don't make her into a nun.'

The old woman looked at him sharply.

'And why shouldn't I make her into a nun, Rory O'Sullivan?' she asked. 'Where is the man among those she'd be likely to marry fit for a husband for her? If she was in the convent she'd be among ladies like herself. If she married as her sisters will do it would break her heart.'

Be sure old Mrs O'Sullivan knew nothing of those books hidden away in the thatch and the rafters. The ragged Shakespeare, which was one of Judy's dearest treasures, would have been an abomination in her sight. Judy's library consisted of only half-a-dozen or so volumes in all; but it included a commonly bound Keats as well as the Shakespeare, and three or four yellow-backed novels which would have seemed to the old lady only fuel for the fire. Anyhow, they helped to feed Judy's passionate heart and stimulate her wondering curiosity about the world outside her own mountain district, even if they were not quite on the same level as the Shakespeare and the Keats. Much more indiscriminate reading would have done Judy no harm. She was of the age and the disposition to suck pure romance out of what she read as the bee sucks honey. There were passages in her beloved Shakespeare which she looked away from with a vague fear; but they were not the things she wanted, and they had no place in her thoughts of him that were all delight.

'Judy will never have a sweetheart,' said her sisters when the young men began coming after themselves.

Judy would never go with them to their dances and merry-making. Once she had gone by her grandmother's desire. She had been a 'wall-flower' all the evening, and had suffered tortures between the conviction of her own hideousness, the feeling that every one was looking at her with contemptuous pity for her forlornness, and the fear that any one might ask her to dance.

Nobody did except her host, for her scared shyness did not invite the young men, who looked for something gayer and more encouraging. The host was a stout, bald, elderly man; and he was somewhat puzzled to account for the look of terrified entreaty in her eyes, which meant that she could not bear to dance with him, yet was woefully afraid of giving offence. Being a good-natured man, he had a kind intuition of her miserable shyness, and did the best thing he could for her by taking her away from the dancers and putting her under the wing of his wife, who was happy with her gossips in a room away from the dancers, and who would let her be quiet.

After that awful occasion she took her courage in

both hands and pleaded with her grandmother to send her to no more parties.

'I'm so ugly, gran,' she said. 'And no one wants me; I'm not like the other girls.'

'Very well,' the old lady answered. 'You can stay at home. As for being ugly, handsome is as handsome does. Maybe you'll be no worse off than your sisters in the days that are coming.'

Judy hardly noticed the dark saying in her relief at her immunity from future gaieties.

She looked at her grandmother as though she had just granted her her life; and the rapture in her expression made her strikingly beautiful for the moment.

'Oh, dear gran!' she breathed in a sort of ecstasy, 'I'll do anything you like. I'll wash the dishes, or clean out the saucepans, or anything, so long as I needn't dress myself up and go where people will look at me.'

Presently it was borne in on Judy that she, even she, had found an admirer. He was a big young farmer with red hair and bold blue eyes, and a row of large white teeth showing under his heavy moustache.

There was no doubt he was romantically in love with Judy; and romance on the part of the male was rare enough in those parts to be remarkable.

Her sisters looked on with mingled amazement and contempt. His infatuation was obvious to every one, even to old Mrs O'Sullivan, who watched Judy with a curious anxiety for a little while, and then apparently was reassured.

For Judy detested her unhappy lover, and would have gone anywhere in the world to escape from him.

'Don't let him come,' she said to her grandmother in a panic-stricken way. 'I can't bear the way he looks at me. And'—the blush flamed in her cheek—'he is either an *omadhaun* or he was mocking at me, for he said I was beautiful.'

'The eye makes its own beauty,' said the relentless old grandmother. 'Still, perhaps he was mocking at you.'

'Why can't he go after Bride or Nora or Eily?' cried poor Judy in a paroxysm of tears. 'They'd like him, and he might call them beautiful and not mock at them.'

'Ay; they'd be more in his line. I dare say he'll find that out presently. Boys in these parts don't expect the girls to be unwilling. They expect them to do the big half of the courting.'

However, it took a good deal of persuasion to make Edmond Sheehan believe his suit unwelcome. He haunted Clogher Farm of evenings, and was not unwelcome to Rory O'Sullivan, who did not share all his mother's prejudices, and was inclined to think that Judy might do worse. In his heart he was frightened by his mother's speech about the convent. He did not want Judy to be a nun. She was his favourite child, although he said nothing about it. Perhaps a doctor or a lawyer might be more in Judy's way. Still, they were scarce, and Judy hadn't a taking way with the boys; it would be a pity if the little girl set herself up against one so well-to-do and so fond of her.

In those days Judy clung to her grandmother for support, with an instinctive feeling that her father was, if not exactly against her, still not wholly with her. She had a secret knowledge, which had grown with her growth, of her grandmother's great heart of love towards her. Now she flung herself upon it.

'Don't let father make me marry him!' she entreated. There are summary ways of marriage in those regions. 'For as sure as I stood up before the priest with him I'd drop down dead.'

'Tut-tut, child!' said the grandmother, secretly delighted; 'what nonsense have you about dropping down dead? Still, you needn't have him against your will. He'll grow tired in time.'

But although Judy felt her grandmother to be a tower of strength, her shuddering aversion for the unwelcome and ardent lover was none the less. When he came in to smoke a pipe of evenings with her father all her fluttering efforts at escape were balked. 'Sit where you are, Judy,' her father would say with a hand on her arm. She would feel hypnotised by Edmond Sheehan's eyes upon her, and the glitter of his large white teeth under his moustache.

It was a subject for intense amusement with her sisters, while for poor Judy their sport meant something deadly.

She took to being out of the way when he arrived; and when her father had insisted on routing her out of her little room in the roof and she was no longer safe there, she kept out of doors as long as the light lasted.

It was midsummer now, and the light lasted a long time. She was always near the house—the grandmother made sure of that; and if she did come in draggled by the dews, Judy did not know what it was to take cold.

She would appear at the very last moment. The O'Sullivans kept early hours and were early astir. It fretted Rory O'Sullivan, this perversity of his girl; but he was under the thumb of his old mother, and she would not let him interfere.

'Judy's delicate stuff,' she said—'not like other girls, for whom the old ways are best. I'd take no nonsense from the others. I won't have Judy's match made. She takes him willingly or not at all.'

A short field away from the farmhouse was the old Abbey, in which so many chiefs and heroes and saints of the O'Sullivans were laid to rest. It was only a gable-end now, and a few tall stones; but the last baronet, Sir Tim, had fenced it about so that the cattle should not wander there.

Out of his pride and ancestral piety Rory O'Sullivan had gone a step further. He kept the place clean of the long, encumbering grass and in a decent kind of order.

Bride or Eily or Nora would never have dared go near the old Abbey in twilight unless they had had

a stout swain with them; and then the visit would have been an opportunity for coquetries not to be missed.

With Judy, on the contrary, it was a favourite place. She was not at all afraid to sit there on a flat tombstone and think over the glories of the race to which she belonged.

There was a great thorn-tree in the middle of what had been the chancel. Its flowering had been late that year, and the place, that dewy evening of June, was full of its heavy perfume. The sky was green and lemon-yellow, with faint touches of rose. The evening star glittered in a wash of palest green.

Suddenly Judy came out of her dreams to find that she was not alone. She looked up and saw a young man gazing at her. He had a delicate profile, which was outlined against the west, and a closely cropped, dark head. When he spoke it was in a musical voice that made Judy's heart stop for a second and then go on in wild pulsations. So might Romeo, Mercutio, Orlando, Antonio, and all their gallant fellows have spoken. He had swept off his hat as he spoke to her, and stood bareheaded.

'Forgive me,' he said. 'I hope I did not startle you.'

'Oh no,' she answered. 'I am often here. I am not at all afraid.'

Her large, lustrous eyes looked up at him. She was wearing a pink cotton frock, and her black head was bare.

'I might be like one of those old poets,' he thought to himself, 'and have come upon Rosaleen Dhu, the "Little Black Rose," in the twilight.'

'Few young ladies,' he said aloud, 'would be as brave as you.'

'You are thinking of the ghosts,' she answered. 'But, sure, I'm not afraid of them. Aren't they my own people?'

'Then you must be an O'Sullivan,' he said. 'And they are my people too.'

'I didn't know we had cousins in this part of the country,' said Judy.

'Neither had you till last night. I came home to the Castle last night, and nearly frightened Mrs Mahon out of her wits. I ought to have announced my coming; but I came on impulse. I thought I was very well satisfied with my mother's country'—the late Lady O'Sullivan had been a Roman lady—'but the other part of me told, and I got homesick. And so you are my cousin?'

Judy stirred uneasily.

'My father is Rory O'Sullivan of the Clogher Farm. We come from Sir Florence, who was destroyed in the Desmond rebellion.'

'While my ancestor flattered the virgin queen and received his kinsman's estates. You have prouder memories than I, my cousin. Now, I am hungry for relatives. Will you not take me home and introduce me? I suppose I must be your father's landlord, by the way.'

'You are,' said Judy, having an uneasy thought that she ought to say 'sir;' only somehow her lips would not frame the word. However, after a little pause she added 'Sir Murty.'

'Will you not take me home?' he said again, smiling.

'To be sure, Sir Murty,' replied Judy; and she had a cold fear that Edmond Sheehan might be there, and might stare at her before this fine gentleman with his infatuation written in his face.

However, Edmond Sheehan was not there. He had come and gone, offended at last by Judy's repeated absences. When she came over the newly cut meadow, holding her pink skirt from the dew with one hand, carrying her small head like a queen, while the fine new cousin walked beside her and stared at her profile, the unlucky swain was already riding up to his farmhouse door with his horse in a lather of sweat from the hard riding.

Rory O'Sullivan was sitting by the kitchen fire smoking his pipe; opposite to him sat the old mother knitting. The walls were snow-white and the tiled floor newly ochred. The good old china and the pewter dishes stood on a dresser black with age and polished till it shone. The girls sat about the table, their golden heads reflecting the lamplight, talking and making their pretty fal-lals. There was a great coke-fire in the big open grate, and a tangle of friendly dogs lay stretched before it. The half-door was open to the western sky, and the stackyard full of fragrant hay.

The picture pleased the new-comer, who had a fastidious taste of his own. Nothing could be more dignified than the way in which Rory O'Sullivan stood up and took Sir Murty's outstretched hand, and introduced him to his old mother and fluttered girls, and finally gave him a chair beside himself.

He stayed late. They found many things to talk of; and Judy listened like one in a dream, while the other girls were shy and silent, and the old grandmother looked on placidly, proud and pleased.

Sometimes Judy looked up half-expecting to see the face of the peasant lover, with its prominent blue eyes and white teeth, and saw instead the slender, elegant figure, the dark handsome head, bowed towards her father in a gracious deference. Once or twice she caught his eyes fixed on her, where she sat dreaming in the firelight, and thinking how sometimes realities were more beautiful than dreams.

He shared their supper with enjoyment.

'I may come again?' he said, as Rory O'Sullivan went with him to the gate. 'I have so many threads to pick up, so much to learn. I am going to stay at home now.'

'We shall be glad to see you, sir,' said Rory; and then he added gravely, 'You'll be getting acquainted with the quality. Your father's son will be welcome to them. He was a great sportsman and a kind landlord, was Sir Tim.'

'Oh yes, I shall pick up the threads in time,' said Sir Murty lightly. 'I think it was a very happy omen to come upon people of my own blood the first day I have been at home.'

Rory coughed. 'Sir Tim, Lord rest him! didn't call us cousins, Sir Murty, although he respected us for the sake of our name. The old ways are good, Sir Murty.'

'The world has gone on since my father's time. I don't mind saying that I envy you, Mr O'Sullivan. I'd rather have had Sir Florence for my ancestor than Sir Daniel.'

Rory O'Sullivan flushed with gratified pride.

'It's handsome of you to say so, sir,' he said. 'And of course you're kindly welcome whenever you come.'

Sir Murty took the permission in its widest sense. He took to dropping in almost every evening, and sitting on till it was time for the family to retire, and going away lingeringly after sharing their supper.

About this time the old grandmother gave up painting the delights of a conventual life to Judy's ears. Yet there were times again when she would suggest that they mustn't be getting too fond of Sir Murty, for of course he'd be marrying in time—there wasn't a lady in the country would say 'No' to him; and it wasn't likely Lady O'Sullivan would sit down in the farmhouse kitchen, although gentlemen could do such things. These remarks, although apparently humble, were uttered in the proudest manner.

A shadow seemed to fall upon Judy's world when they were made. Everything had been different since Sir Murty had come home and had claimed them as his kin. Even her sisters held their heads higher, as though the O'Sullivan blood stirred in them. The ready flirtatious ways with all manner of men which had always offended Judy gave way to something more dignified. Judy had seen her grandmother look at them in a startled way over her glasses, as though their characters were developing unexpectedly.

One late afternoon Judy had gone out to milk Sheila, her own black Kerry cow, who would give the milk to no one but her, and was a wicked little thing with any other milker. She found her in a grassy lane, and having brought the pail and the stool, sat down to the milking. While she milked she sang. Sheila was pleased at the singing, and turned her beautiful eyes gratefully to Judy as the song proceeded.

Presently Judy drew the last drops, set Sheila free, and stood up—to find Sir Murty standing by, watching her with a smile of pleasure on his face.

'Will you give me a drink of milk, Cousin Judy?' he asked. 'It smells so sweet. And your head against Sheila's side was black and sleek as her coat.'

'I would give you the milk with pleasure, Sir Murty,' she answered; 'but how are you to drink it? You cannot drink it from the pail.'

'If you will lift some in your hands, I will drink from them.'

She looked up and met his glance, then looked down again as though she were afraid. Without a word she plunged her two hands in the milk, and lifted them while he drank. When he had done he caught the sweet-smelling fingers in his own and lifted them to his lips.

'You are very beautiful, Cousin Judy,' he said.

A wave of colour flowed over her face, and she raised hurt, indignant eyes to his.

'I never thought that you would make a mock of me, Sir Murty,' she said.

He stared at her in stupefaction. 'Make a mock of you, my beautiful darling!' he cried. 'Why, good heavens! how should I do that?'

'I have always been the ugly one,' said Judy steadily, although the colour was ebbing and flowing from her face. 'That was why gran used to think I should be happiest at the convent, because God regards the soul and not the face. No one ever looked at me when my sisters were by; only one, and he was an *omadhaun*, and I hated him. He called me beautiful, and I thought at first he mocked me. But it was only that he was an *omadhaun*.'

'Poor devil!' said Sir Murty, with a tribute of humorous pity to his rejected rival. 'All the same, confound his cheek! Well then, Judy, I am an *omadhaun* too, or you *are* beautiful. Look in my eyes and you shall see how beautiful you are.'

'Oh no, no!' said Judy. 'I know I am ugly; and that is why I never look in a glass or in a pool. I know I am ugly and—and—yellow.'

She brought out the word, that had been like a sore in her memory all these years, with pain and difficulty, almost as though she must make him, in face of his surprising folly, see her as other people did.

'Well, then, we shall muffle all the looking-glasses at the Castle,' he said, 'and you shall see yourself only in my eyes and in my heart, where you will always be beautiful.'

And so the two branches of the O'Sullivans again became one; and everybody was pleased except poor Edmond Sheehan and perhaps some swains of Judy's sisters, for there was a sifting, and only the more worthy were left, and they married the worthiest.

But perhaps the happiest person the marriage made, beyond the contracting parties, was old Mrs O'Sullivan.

AN OLD EDITION OF IZAAK WALTON.

By CHARLES LOCKE EASTLAKE,
Late Keeper and Secretary of the National Gallery, Author of *Hints on Household Taste*, *History of the Gothic Revival in England*, &c.

AN Englishman who lived three centuries ago left to posterity a little work on angling. Although no adept in the art myself, and being well aware that if I wished to study it I might consult a dozen modern authorities with more advantage to that end, I find a charm in this old volume which no technical experience could enhance. It occupies a place upon a favourite shelf in my library, and many a time have I turned over its leaves with pleasure.

A quaint and sombre-looking book it is, with heavy antique binding and red-edged leaves. Inside the cover is an inscription, written in a good, bold hand by a kinsman of mine when blotting-paper was apparently unused, for pounce still glistens on the venerable autograph. Then follows the frontispiece, one of a series of illustrations carefully etched by Ryland from the design of Samuel Wale. The dedication, 'To Edward Popham of Littlecot, in the county of Wilts, Esq.,' is dated from Twickenham in the year 1760; but the original edition of *The Compleat Angler* was published, of course, a century earlier, during the lifetime of the author whose name I have taken for my text.

Master Izaak Walton was born at Stafford in the month of August 1593—no unimportant year in British history. Queen Bess, finding her revenues seriously diminished by the Spanish war, had summoned Parliament to obtain supplies, and when the assembly was convened, began to menace it. Wentworth, who defied her threats and openly endeavoured to secure the entailment of succession to the crown, had just been committed to the Tower. Raleigh was manœuvring to be restored to royal favour. Across the Channel, Henri IV., who had been Protestant and Catholic by turns as served his interests best, was then changing his religion for the third time, and re-embraced the faith of Rome to save his crown.

Such were the events which passed while little Izaak crowed upon his mother's knee and entered on a life of ninety years. And few—perhaps none—who ever reached that venerable age have witnessed times of such stirring interest. Let lovers of the angler's sport respect the memory of Walton, the devotee of fly and rod. For my own part, I pay homage to our old philosopher and nonagenarian who lived while the throne of England was occupied in turn by four successive monarchs, and saw it vacant, too, when destiny required; over whose head two revolutions broke with good and harm perhaps in each; who heard the story of the 'Papist Plot,' in which one Guido Fawkes had figured, as latest news from London, and yet became no bigot; who learnt by the fate of Essex and of Raleigh the vanity of trust in princes; who saw the great and all-wise author of the *Novum Organum* sink into the hopeless ignominy of a corrupted judge; who twice beheld the great struggle between king and people; wept at the doom of misguided Charles, and listened as the steeple-bells rang out their loudest peal to celebrate his graceless son's return; who watched the great Protector with an iron hand maintain the international honour of distracted England; who talked, maybe, with heroes from the battlefields of Edgehill, Marston Moor, and Naseby; lived to see Titus Oates detected in his villainy; deplored the profligacy of Whitehall, and only died a few years before the last royal Stuart left its walls for ever.

In days like these the angler might indeed be said, metaphorically, to fish in troubled waters. But rustic life afforded still a field for study and enjoyment. There were wooded glades, hillsides, and meadow-land in which the landscape-painter could pursue his calling. George Herbert at his Bemerton parsonage devoted his pious verse to praises of his God and Church; and honest Izaak, with his trusty rod, found many a quiet nook to muse and angle in. The Civil War had left some streams at least unstained with blood, and by their banks our good Master Walton wandered to watch for trout and gudgeon.

Is it not pleasant to think of the old man, while thrones were being shaken and dynasties upset, while faction-fight waged strong and fiercely, while Courts were thronged with licentious revellers, and England's blood was wasted in a thankless cause—is it not pleasant, I say, to picture Izaak Walton lying by some riverside near which the village children have come to gather lilies and lady-smocks, culverkeys and cowslips, on a fine May morning, while fish leap up from the stream below to snap at gnat and hackle?

The field flowers, says he, as he describes the scene, 'so perfumed the air that I thought that very meadow like that field in Sicily of which Diodorus speaks, where the perfumes arising from the place make all dogs that hunt in it to fall off and to lose their hottest scent. I say as I thus sat joying in my own happy condition and pitying this poor rich man that owned this and many other pleasant groves and meadows about me, I did thankfully remember what my Saviour said, that the meek possess the earth, or rather they enjoy what the others possess and enjoy not; for anglers and meek, quiet-spirited men are free from those high, those restless thoughts which corrode the sweets of life, and they, and they only, can say, as the poet happily expressed it:

Hail, blest estate of lowliness!
Happy enjoyments of such minds
As, rich in self-contentedness,
Can, like the reeds in roughest winds,
By yielding, make the blow but small
At which proud oaks and cedars fall.'

In these sentiments is embodied a philosophy which every practical moralist must approve. Could Bacon have proclaimed a greater truth, or Laud have preached a better sermon? The words above mentioned are put into Venator's mouth; but no one can doubt that it is the author himself who is speaking.

Very little is known of Walton's family or early life. Modern writers have sometimes confounded him with Dr Brian Walton the learned Orientalist, who lived about the same time, and who first attained celebrity by publishing the Polyglot Bible in 1657. The Doctor was, however, a native of York, and Izaak Walton does not seem to have claimed any relationship with him. Nor, indeed, have Izaak's biographers thrown much light upon his parentage. Izaak's Walton's origin was probably a humble one, for the first tradition we have concerning him is that he followed the occupation of a wholesale linen-draper or 'Hamburgh merchant' in London, and at the outset of his career could only afford to share a shop with a brother-tradesman. In his marriage license of 1626 he is, however, styled an 'ironmonger.'

A deed formerly in the possession of Sir John Hawkins expressly describes Walton's residence to have been on the north side of Fleet Street, in a house two doors west of the end of Chancery Lane, said to have been the oldest building in Fleet Street, being erected in the reign of King Edward VI. for an elegant mansion at a time when there were no shops in that part of the City. It was long distinguished by the sign of 'The Harrow.' Queen Elizabeth, on a visit to Sir Thomas Gresham, 23rd of January 1570, was complimented by the descent of several terrestrial cherubs from the top of this house, who from thence, by a contrivance of the students in the Temple, flew down and presented Her Majesty with a crown of laurels and gold, together with some verses. Report says the Queen's Highness was much pleased therewith. This house was pulled down in May 1799 to widen the entrance into Chancery Lane.

In 1634 we find that Walton, who no doubt had managed his business with characteristic prudence, was enabled to occupy a house of his own in Chancery Lane, a few doors from his old residence. His wife Rachel, to whom he had then been married about eight years, died, according to the church register of St Dunstan's, on August 25, 1640. She was daughter of William Floyd or Floud, by Susannah, daughter of Thomas Cranmer, a great-nephew of the archbishop.

It was while living in this parish, of which Mr Donne was then vicar, that Walton became acquainted with that celebrated Dean of St Paul's whose satires have been rescued from obscurity by the genius of Pope. It was the author of *The Dunciad* who turned into terse, euphonious rhyme the mass of laboured metaphor and uncouth language in which Donne had buried the essence of his wit.

The Dean left behind him a collection of his sermons, eighty in number, which were published in 1640 in a folio volume, and to which was appended a Memoir by Izaak Walton. To its author the biography must have been a pleasing task. In St Dunstan's Church the honest merchant had often listened to those homilies with delight, and old St Paul's Cathedral, which had just been given over to Inigo Jones for repair, echoed long afterwards with the same discourses.

This biography, the earliest of Walton's literary efforts, appears to have attracted much notice at the time, and many of the most eminent men of the day agreed in praising it. While Walton continued in London and during the intervals of business he contrived to find time for his favourite pursuit. By the banks of the Lea, of the Thames, and of that canal which brought water from Chadwell to London for the first time in 1613, he liked to stroll with his beloved rod and honest friends Nat and R. Roe, to whose memory he pays a touching tribute in his preface to a fifth edition of *The Compleat Angler*, which the great success of that work induced him to publish at the advanced age of eighty-three:

'They are gone,' says the old man, alluding to his former companions and fellow-fishermen—'they are gone, and with them most of my pleasant hours, *even as a shadow that passeth away and returns not.*' There is something eminently pathetic in the application of this sacred simile—the evidence of a friendship the remembrance of which death, and the lapse of half-a-century, could not efface.

In 1643, and at the ripe age of fifty, Walton, having by this time acquired what was considered even in those days but a moderate competency, retired from business to a small estate not far from the town of Stafford. It is not unlikely that the death of his first wife, by whose help he had been enabled to carry on his business, may have influenced him in taking this step. By her he had had two children, both of whom were baptised under the name of Henry, and both of whom it had been his lot to follow to an early grave. He married, secondly, about 1646, Anne, the half-sister of Thomas Ken, afterwards the deprived Bishop of Bath and Wells.

Anne Walton died in 1662. A simple tablet in the Lady Chapel of Worcester Cathedral records the estimation in which her husband held her. Eleven years before her death he had edited the *Reliquiæ Wottoniæ; or a Collection of Lives, Letters, and Poems, with Characters of sundry Personages and other incomparable Pieces of Language and Art by the curious pencil of the ever-memorable Sir Henry Wotton, Knt., late Provost of Eton College.* Lady Wotton, relict of the last Lord Wotton, and her three daughters, to whom Walton dedicated this

collection, communicated to him many original letters written by their illustrious relative whose Life was appended to the dedication. Three other biographies—namely, of Hooker (published in 1665), of George Herbert (in 1670), and of Dr Robert Sanderson (in 1678)—bear witness to Izaak Walton's praiseworthy industry during his retirement. It is in the last-mentioned work, when alluding to the return to England of the Scotch Covenanters at the invitation of the Presbyterian party, that Walton says:

'This I saw and suffered by it; but when I look back upon the ruine of families, the bloodshed, the decay of common honesty, and how the former piety and plain-dealing of this now sinful nation is turned into cruelty and cunning; when I consider this I praise God that He prevented me being of that party which helped to bring in this Covenant and those sad confusions which followed it.'

'He persevered,' says Zouch in his Memoir, 'in the most inviolable attachment to the Royal cause, and in many of his writings pathetically laments the afflictions of his Sovereign and the wretched condition of his beloved country.'

Walton's other works are *The Compleat Angler*, the first edition of which appeared in 1653; a treatise on *Love and Truth*, in which he states his reasons for attachment to the Church; and he edited, with a preface, a poem entitled *Thealma and Clearchus* by John Chalkhill.

It would be difficult to ascribe to any particular quality or characteristic the popularity which *The Compleat Angler* has attained. Better instructions have been given for the art of fishing, far deeper researches have been made in natural history, and abler comments passed on the social and religious aspect of country-life in volumes no bigger than Walton's. Yet the fame of his book will probably survive that of hundreds which have been devoted respectively to one or another of these subjects. It is perhaps owing to the happy combination of them in a form agreeable to the general reader, rather than to the excellence with which each is treated, that this work has been so long read with pleasure. But it is due to Walton to say that independently of the interest which any associations with his eventful life must command, and apart from the charm of simplicity which the quaint English of his time presents, there is much that is sound and attractive in the style of the author himself, who has well earned the reputation of being, what the *alias* of his title-page suggests, not only a *Complete Angler* but a *Contemplative Man*.

The plan of the book is simple enough. The first chapter introduces us to a conference between an angler, a hunter, and a falconer, each commending his own sport; and the dialogue which ensues between them, only interrupted by Piscator's short essays on the different species of fish or the best means of catching and cooking them, is continued to the end of the volume. Each spokesman has, however, much to say on the beauties of nature, the advantages of a country life, and its innocent pursuits, quoting when occasion requires from classic and other authors. In the opening discussion on the merit of their respective sports, it is needless to say that Piscator gets the upper hand. But before this success is achieved no pains are spared on either side to ensure an amicable victory. Some of the arguments adduced in favour of hawking, hunting, and angling are, indeed, likely to provoke a smile from the modern reader.

When Piscator begins to talk we know that it is Walton himself who addresses us; and though his apology for angling is hardly more profound than that of his companions, he brings some pleasant information to bear upon the subject, relates strange anecdotes of the finny tribe, tells us what celebrated men have fished, and records with unaffected pleasure the fact that the compiler of the Church of England Catechism was a noted angler. Indeed, good Izaak seems always pleased in finding the remotest connection between ecclesiastical matters and his harmless recreation. A spirit of deep reverence for the Church and her doctrines seems to breathe through all his writings, and we may feel sure that if his early lot had not compelled him to enter trade he would have preferred a clerical life to any other. No one can read his Life of George Herbert without feeling the great respect which he entertained not only for the rector at Bemerton but for the communion to which he belonged. The charming lines which he repeats from his favourite author, beginning:

> Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
> The bridal of the earth and sky,
> The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,
> For thou must die,

are familiar to all who have read *The Compleat Angler*. Nor are Herbert's the only verses quoted in this volume. Phineas Fletcher (described as 'an excellent divine' and an experienced angler), Edward Waller (another knight of the rod), Frank Davison and Sir Henry Wotton, Harvey (who imitated Herbert), Michael Drayton, and 'J. Davors, Esq.' (also a fisherman), are among poets of the time whom our triumvirate delight to honour. And when the three friends are on their way to the little inn which goes by the name of 'Trout-Hall,' and meet Maudlin and her good mother, the milkmaid at their request begins to warble Kit Marlowe's rural ditty, 'Come, live with me and be my love.' After which the milkmaid's mother gives the appropriate answer:

> If all the world and love were young,
> And truth in every shepherd's tongue.

At the inn, when supper has been discussed, young Coridon the shepherd, who 'plaied so purely on his oaten pipe,' after the company have turned to the fire and drunk 'the other cup to wet their whistles,' diverts them with a fresh song; and later on they all retire to rest, on sheets smelling of sweet lavender, until sunrise.

It is a pleasant picture, that cozy comfort of a roadside inn in the seventeenth century: the hardy sportsmen drawing round the fire, the shepherd trolling out a merry lay, the buxom hostess with a civil word for every one, and the ale-cup passing round from hand to hand. There are no such establishments in these days. We have huge hotels fitted up like palaces, with gorgeous saloons to dine in, and costly plate to eat from, where every one is expected to pay for his board about three times as much as it would cost him at home; and we have wretched railway taverns with mean accommodation and villainous *cuisine*, where no one would stay for a night unless absolutely obliged to do so. But the old-fashioned country inn, with its cheery host and wholesome fare, has passed away.

Walton's book abounds in little records of these friendly meetings, gossipings, and walks through rural districts, materials for which he had no doubt collected from his own experience. The dialogues are enlivened by numerous quotations from various authors, ancient and modern, with whose works the Fleet Street mercer found time to grow familiar. Pliny, Martial, Aristotle, Varro, Bacon, Ben Jonson, Gesner, and Montaigne are the most notable of a host of writers whose opinions are cited by the diligent old fisherman.

It was the original publication of *The Compleat Angler* which first led to the author's acquaintance with Charles Cotton, who long afterwards, but during Walton's lifetime, brought out a fifth edition of the book, considerably enlarged by himself. Cotton, whose name is known as an author as well as an angler, had built for himself a little fishing-house on the picturesque banks of the Dove, near his family estate in Staffordshire. In this delightful spot Walton usually spent the spring season, 'carrying with him,' says Zouch, 'the best and choicest of all earthly blessings, a contemplative mind, a cheerful disposition, and an active and healthful body.' His friendship with Cotton only ended with his life, and to the last they speak of each other in terms of the warmest affection; Cotton calling him his 'father,' after the manner of that time, and paying the greatest deference to his opinions.

It was during the great frost of 1683 that Izaak Walton, after a long and well-spent life, succumbed at length to the infirmities of age at a season when physiologists tell us the old have most cause to fear. He died at Winchester on the 15th day of December, in the prebendal house of Dr William Hawkins, his son-in-law, whom he seems to have loved with almost paternal affection.

His will, which he drew up some months before his death, is remarkable for being prefaced by a statement of his religious opinions, which he thought fit to make, it appears, lest false constructions should be put upon 'his very long and very true friendship with some of the Roman Church.' He declares his belief to be 'in all points of faith as the Church of England now (in 1683) professeth.' He bequeaths to his son-in-law, Dr Hawkins, a house and shop near Paternoster Row; to his son Izaak the lease of Norrington Farms, &c.; and after making some other smaller bequests, and leaving rings to numerous friends and relations, he goes on to request that his burial may be near the place of his death and 'free from any ostentation or charge.'

In accordance with this request, Walton was interred in Prior Silksteed's Chapel within Winchester Cathedral. On a stone over his grave may still be traced the words of a humble rhyme which once passed for his epitaph. The portrait, of which a mezzotint engraving appears in Zouch's Life, was painted by Jacob Huysman, and is now in the National Portrait Gallery. His biographer describes the countenance as indicative of 'mild complacency, forbearance, mature consideration, calm activity, peace, sound understanding, power of thought, discerning attention, and secretly active friendship. Happy in his unblemished integrity, happy in the approbation and esteem of others, he enwraps himself in his own virtue. The exultation of a good conscience eminently shines forth in the looks of this venerable person.'

The Compleat Angler concludes with a charming passage, part of which I venture to quote by way of epilogue to this little sketch. It is our old friend Venator who is speaking. He has become a convert to the angler's faith, and regretfully takes leave of his companion whose society and discourse he has found so agreeable.

'And now,' says he, 'I wish for some somniferous potion that might force me to sleep away the intermitted time which will pass with me as tediously as it does with men in sorrow; nevertheless, I will make it as short as I can by my hopes and wishes. And, my good master, I will not forget the doctrine which you told me Socrates taught his scholars, that they should not think to be honoured so much for being philosophers as to honour philosophy by their virtuous lives. You advised me to the like concerning angling, and I will endeavour to do so, and to live like those many worthy men of which you made mention in the former part of your discourse.

'This is my firm resolution, and as a pious man advised his friend that to beget mortification he should frequent churches and view monuments and charnel-houses, and then and there consider how many dead bones Time had piled up at the gates of Death, so when I would beget content and increase confidence in the power and wisdom and providence of Almighty God, I will walk the meadows by some gliding stream and there contemplate the lilies that take no care, and those very many other little living creatures that are not only created, but fed—man knows not how—by the goodness of the God of Nature, and therefore trust in Him. This is my purpose; and so "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord."'

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SIXTH SERIES.

A MESSAGE FORGOTTEN.

By Arthur H. Henderson.

PART I.

NOW, this story concerns two men, a torpedo-boat, and the inability of organised Governments to control their servants. Besides which, since hatred comes into the tale, it follows that love and a girl were also concerned. Given as motive the rivalry for a wilfully charming little lady, as actors two naval men of traditionally hostile nations, as scene the Far East in the convulsions of war, and there is present every material for the development of events more likely to be sensational than commonplace.

It is a fond delusion with many worthy people that in these days of telegraphs and newspapers nothing of importance remains unknown to the world. However, it is not so. A veil of silence is drawn with discreetness over many strange stories lest international complications should result in a raising of the income-tax and in undue disturbance to the serenity of Government departments. Behind this curtain of oblivion the chiefs of a great service are able to administer to the indiscretions of juniors the severest of private official rebukes, while refraining from public dismissal. This was once a good thing for Commander John Carlton, R.N.

You will rarely meet a man in the service who knows him but who admits readily enough that he is a fine seaman and a first-rate comrade aboard ship. Yet sometimes a mark of reserve falls on the speaker at the mention of his name. 'Good chap, Carlton,' he will say heartily. 'Got in a bit of a mess, though, once with some tin-kettle torpedo-boat out in China in '95. Admiralty weren't pleased. Knows more about torpedo business than most fellows. How? Well, there's a story—can't say if it's true; but hadn't you better ask him yourself if you want to know?' And ten to one your informant will stop abruptly, suggest a drink, and you will be left to speculate on the professional reticence of the Navy.

Beatrice Warrener never foresaw that a flirtation begun in Kensington would have consequences in Wei-hai-wei Bay. That is the worst of a flirtation—its end can never be foretold. It may turn into downright love, and love can die out quietly; but if hatred is born of it, such hatred never dies. It may remain dormant for long, but can still burst furiously into flame on a given opportunity. Then there are consequences.

Quiet men are often too desperately in earnest in their wooing, and the girl does not always understand. Beatrice did not manage things well. She liked Jack Carlton, but then she had liked other men also in much the same way. She underrated the strength of his love-making, and she enjoyed life vastly, and was in no hurry to forfeit her freedom for the sake of one man and a ring. Attendant cavaliers were very useful; but the great pity was that so many of them would not be content with mere friendship. So some grew tired of waiting, some took offence and were lost sight of, and some married other homelier girls. Then an aunt remarked pointedly that no nice maiden ever had to refuse numbers of men, and Beatrice cried. Jack Carlton was very good to her indeed, but so was Captain Poulaski, the naval attaché from the Russian embassy. To have to decide between them at all was an effort she felt she ought not to be called upon by the Fates to make.

Jack was my best pal, and Beatrice was my cousin. She was twenty-four, and the one girl on all the earth he loved. The night he told her this he came on to my rooms at the 'Albany,' and his face was white with a misery that made me wriggle uneasily in my chair. His eyes were dull like the eyes of a man who has looked into dark places and received a shock from some vision of despair. Two Englishmen cannot with freedom discuss a woman, for whom they both care, without a strong foundation of friendship.

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'She has refused me; says she does not want to marry at all,' he commenced without preamble.

I considered the girl something worse than a perfect idiot, and I said so. At any other moment he would have resented my remark hotly.

'The real reason is that she is in love with that Russian brute, I'm sure. He has no such thing as a touch of morals about him; but he is amusing, and has just the manner to fascinate a woman. Apparently, also, he is as rich as can be. None of these things could be said of me.'

I volunteered a hope that Captain Poulaski might shortly be domiciled in a future state in a certain abode removed from that of bliss. In truth I thought it probable.

'After all, there are other women in the world, old chap,' I said, in sorry conventional comfort. But this form of sympathy was of little avail to him, naturally.

'So far as I am concerned there is only one,' answered Jack Carlton quietly; 'and the fact remains that that one has refused to be my wife. So I have wired an application to have my leave cancelled, and to be sent to a foreign station at once. I looked in here to tell you and say good-bye.'

'Will it be East?' I queried as he rose to go.

'I hope so. It will be war there soon; don't you agree?'

'Probably,' I assented. 'Japan means business this time, I think. Old Hughes of the reporting agency has promised me a correspondent's job if I like. He knows I have got money of my own to spend in travelling, and so I shall not haggle over terms, if his are a bit low, in exchange for a correspondent's authorisation.'

'Let's hope we shall meet out there, Harry,' said Jack Carlton; and his hand-shake was the warm clasp of a man who says little and means much, and whose friendship is consequently worth having. The curious part about it is that we did.

A fortnight later Jack was travelling hastily by the overland route to join a ship in the China squadron, while I was collecting kit more leisurely, to follow by sea. Just before I left I went to see Beatrice, and learnt from her mother that Captain Poulaski had been—or said he had been: they are not the same thing with a Russian—suddenly recalled to St Petersburg. Mrs Warrener seemed rather disturbed, and not unwilling to let her favourite nephew know the reason. In fact, she grew quite confidential as we waited for her daughter to come in.

'Why did Beatrice refuse Jack Carlton?' I demanded argumentatively after a time.

Mrs Warrener said she knew not.

'Is she fond of that attaché fellow Poulaski?' I asked.

'It is possible,' admitted her mother.

'Did he propose to her?' I pursued my cross-examination.

'No, certainly not,' replied Mrs Warrener, shaking her head vigorously. 'I cannot understand it. But it appeared to me that after Mr Carlton ceased to come here she was more anxious to be with Captain Poulaski than ever. It was he who seemed to grow colder.'

'Just what I should expect,' said I with reflective wisdom. 'He would be one of those men who cease to care for a girl the moment she begins to care for him.'

'I don't believe she is really fond of any one,' said my aunt with decision. 'In fact'——

But at this interesting moment Beatrice herself arrived on the scene. She remarked that she had been shopping, and that the shops were very full.

'I have come to say good-bye, Trix,' said I cheerily. 'I'm off to China for the agency again. Now, try to turn over a new leaf before I come home, and be good—for a change.'

'To China!' The girl gave a little, low exclamation, and Mrs Warrener discreetly left us. My cousin scanned me doubtfully, and her colour came and went. She looked particularly pretty, but rather more fragile, I thought, than usual.

'Have you got any message for Carlton if I run up against him?' I asked casually.

She hesitated. 'You might remember me to him,' she answered.

'I do not think that will be necessary,' said I; 'though I expect he is happy enough,' I added untruthfully.

'Happy?'

'Yes,' I nodded. 'Plenty to do, both work and play.'

'A man's life must seem much shorter to him than a woman's does to her,' said Beatrice Warrener slowly.

'Rather!' I assented grimly. 'Especially in war-time.'

'England is not at war!' She turned sharply at my words. 'You hurt me when you speak like that.'

There was a pause, and I wished she would take her hat off. It was a big one, and it hid her face.

'How long will it be before he comes home?' demanded the girl suddenly.

'Probably some years,' said I.

'Harry, you may give him a message from me, if you can.'

I looked at my cousin doubtfully, and thought what pretty curly hair it was that peeped from under that hat, and what lovely big dark eyes and small red lips were pleading at that moment.

'Well,' said I, willing to be told more, 'what is it?'

She tapped on the floor with her boot half-impatiently. 'You are sure to forget it,' she answered irrelevantly, and added some quite unnecessary remarks about the lapses of memory on the part of males in general.

'Then write it down, Trix,' I urged.

'You will lose the letter; that would be worse.'

'It's certainly a choice of evils,' I argued cheerfully.

'Harry, be serious,' she said in an odd, breathless way. 'I 'm afraid—horribly afraid!'

'What of?' I asked, rather astonished.

'Captain Poulaski has gone out east too; he might meet Mr Carlton.'

'Not likely,' I ruminated.

'Still, if they did?'

'You think there might be trouble?' I concluded.

She nodded slowly, and a flush spread over her cheeks so that I understood.

'Shall I tell Jack you 've changed your mind?'

'Of course you are not to say anything of the kind,' she flashed indignantly.

'I could hint it.'

'No, you mustn't.'

'What a lot of bother would have been saved if you had thought of this before!' I said, watching a sunbeam playing over a dimpled chin. She was colouring to the very tips of her small ears.

'Tell him to come home,' she just breathed.

'Whom—Poulaski?' I teased in evil fashion.

'And—and not to go and get into some dreadful battle.'

'I can't talk Russian,' I murmured dejectedly.

'Harry'—she laid a small white hand on my arm —'don't!'

'I comprehend,' I said sagely. 'I won't forget, Trix.' And as I drove away from the house in a hansom I decided that I had added to my stock of knowledge concerning women and their ways. Though a world without them would be a world with far less worry.

UNDERGROUND ST ANDREWS.

THERE is a haunting charm about St Andrews—standing on its windy promontory facing the North Sea—which draws the hearts of men of the most diverse taste and temperament. Its present and past are alike full of interest of a literary and historical kind, while its magnificent golf-links, the head-quarters of the premier golf-club of Scotland, prove a magnet to draw men from far and near for this favourite game. The town and university, to go no farther back than a single generation, have memories of Sir David Brewster, Robert Chambers, Principal Tulloch, Professor Shairp, Mrs Oliphant, A. K. H. Boyd, and many others; while the notable birds of passage include men and women eminent in every rank and department of life. Carlyle thought St Andrews a grand place, for there you had 'the essence of all the antiquity of Scotland in good and clean condition.' To A. K. H. B. it always had the look of a sacred and solemn city, seen from far or near. Froude, when lecturing there, thought the place 'the very ideal of a little university town;' while J. T. Fields the American publisher wrote to a friend that 'it seems like a dream sometimes that I have roamed around your most interesting old city, with good Robert Chambers to point out all the wonders of the place.'

The Rev. C. J. Lyon, Dr Hay Fleming, and Andrew Lang have written of the town and its history. The latter has given in impressionist verse the very atmosphere of the place:

> Gray sky, brown waters! As a bird that flies,
> My heart flits forth from these
> Back to the winter rose of northern skies,
> Back to the northern seas.
> And, lo! the long waves of the ocean beat
> Below the minster gray,
> Caverns and chapels worn of saintly feet
> And knees of them that pray.

The ruins of the Cathedral are close to the shore, at the east end of the town. St Regulus' or St Rule's, standing in the old churchyard to the south-east, is evidently the earlier Cathedral church, and may occupy the site of the still older Celtic church. The bishopric of St Andrews in the time of Malcolm IV. embraced nine or ten counties. The building of the Cathedral was begun by Bishop Arnold in 1159, but was not finished until the time of Bishop Lamberton in 1318. At the Reformation the archbishop held the patronage of a hundred and thirty-one benefices, and administered the affairs of two hundred and forty-five parishes. Andrew Lang terms the dedication-day the crown of the city's career. Robert Bruce was there; 'there doubtless were the brave Randolph, and the chivalrous Douglas who followed the hero's heart into the press of battle and died above it. There were seven bishops, and abbots fifteen, "and many other gret gentilmen." Their raiment must have been gorgeous, for they were probably clad and the Cathedral was enriched with the spoils of Bannockburn—wealth of tapestries, of plate, of cloth-of-gold.' The Reformation wave of 1559 stripped the Cathedral of its imagery and symbols; but Dr Hay Fleming says there is nothing to show that the place was then burned or destroyed. The real cause of destruction was neglect, not violence. Had there not been such a large parish church the Cathedral might have been preserved; it was allowed to decay as it was not required. The lead was probably stolen from the roof. Both before and after 1649, when the town was authorised by Act of Parliament to use stones of decayed buildings in fortifying St Andrews, it seems to have been used as a quarry. In 1826 the Barons of the Exchequer cleared away the débris from the bases of the pillars. In 1888 the outline of the vanished piers and walls was worked out in the turf; the ground-plan was then shown to perfection. It has frequently been suggested that there may be, as was

often the case in those days, a regular subterranean or crypt church with altars of its own, which are to this day perfect; and it is a question of great interest whether the valuables of the Cathedral may not be concealed in some such place at the present moment. Dr Hay Fleming is of the opinion that many of the most valuable decorations of the Cathedral were carried off to a place of safety before the storm of the Reformation burst. He mentions that at a slightly earlier period, when an English raid was expected, three chests 'contening certane reliquis and claithis of silk and gold with divers geir' were sent temporarily to Lochleven. There is an instance of the bishop and chapter of Aberdeen sending off their ornaments and valuables in like manner for safe keeping. A zealous local antiquary, Mr W. T. Linskill, is of a different opinion, which he sets forth in the annexed article.

Up to the time of the completion of the Cathedral, the old Church of St Regulus was used as the principal church of St Andrews, and its altars were richly adorned. Bishop Fothadus presented many ornaments to St Regulus, including the Gospels in a silver case. Hungus, King of the Picts (731–761), bestowed upon the Church of St Rule great and rich gifts of chalices, basins, the image of Christ in gold and of the Twelve Apostles in silver, and a case of gold for preserving the relics of St Andrew. These relics are now supposed to be at Amalfi.

The Cathedral itself must have been a wonderful sight, with its numerous richly adorned altars. The high altar would be furnished with a crucifix, a tabernacle for the Sacrament, a lectern, candlesticks, taper-stands, chalices, patens, cruets, ciborium, and a monstrance, in addition to a pyx and other accessories. Immediately before each altar there would be suspended a handsome lamp. Archibald Earl of Douglas gave two marks yearly for lighting the image of the Virgin in the Cathedral known as 'the Douglas Lady.' Then there would be a rood-screen and rood-loft in which would be placed statues of the saints and of the Virgin. The Cathedral may also have possessed an organ, and the priests' vestments would be numerous and costly.

The old Church of St Rule may possibly have possessed a crypt, which was afterwards enlarged and used by the Cathedral authorities. Martine informs us that this Cathedral was furnished with many fair, great, and excellent bells, which at the razing of the Cathedral were taken down and put aboard a ship to be transported or sold; but that the ship containing the bells sank within sight of the place where they formerly hung.

Lyon says it is remarkable that the very same accident is said to have happened to the bell-metal belonging to the Cathedrals of Aberdeen and Elgin. The same story is told of the bells of Towyn Church near Aberystwith in Wales; and on certain days the people believe they are still heard ringing beneath the waves.

It is well known that immense quantities of bell-metal and lead (taken from the religious houses and the disinterment of the dead) were exported from Scotland immediately after the Reformation. It is also known that most of the papers relating to the ecclesiastical buildings were sent to the Scotch College at Douay in France, and thence they were afterwards removed to the Vatican Library at Rome, where they now are. But of the removal of the altar plate we learn nothing. The writer believes it may lie concealed to this day in some place or crypt in conjunction with the Cathedral. Lyon says the stones and rubbish produced by the demolition of the Cathedral lay where they fell until so recently as the year 1826, when by order of the Exchequer they were removed, and the floor and the bases of the columns were laid bare. On this occasion the three stone coffins containing skeletons were discovered.

Any subterranean structure would necessarily be at some considerable depth beneath the surface, and would have its entrance within the walls of the Cathedral, where even now no graves are allowed to be dug.

The question is, What became of the large quantity of heavy and valuable church plate? The priests' first idea would be to conceal it in a capacious hiding-place, and the short notice which they had of the approach of the mob would necessitate a speedy removal thither. The priests and monks could scarcely have contemplated so immediate and total a destruction of their grand Metropolitan Church, and with it the complete overthrow of their religion, but would merely expect the affair to be a passing tumult; therefore their object probably was to place all their valuables in a temporary place of safety, the entrance to which would be well concealed. The very short notice would also prevent any attempts to ship even a small portion of their valuables away, such a process being at all times, and especially in those days, a slow and arduous task. The coast also was guarded by the Protestants in the Castle.

A crypt is an underground cell or chapel used for burial purposes or as a place of concealment. Crypts vary very much in size. The roof was generally constructed with very heavy stones, the groins being diagonal.

Crypts have been discovered under many churches and cathedrals, and it has been suggested that the Catacombs at Rome gave rise to their introduction. There are a few churches in Britain which have a semi-circular apse at the east end, but the apse has been altered at some time or other. In several cases the crypts beneath have retained their old form when the superstructure has been altered.

Some of these crypts are subterranean, others only partially so. They do not generally extend beyond the limits of the choir and chancel and its aisles, and are often of a smaller size, under the

high altar only. They were formerly used in Britain, as they still are abroad, as chapels, and are provided with altars and other requisites for the celebration of the Mass. Among many others, interesting crypts have been found at Hexham, Ripon, Lestingham, and Bury St Edmunds.

The crypt at Hexham was found as late as the year 1726 by workmen while digging for the foundation for a buttress. This crypt is built almost entirely of stones brought from a Roman building, and the passages have triangular roofs. At Hexham two passages lead east and one south. On the north side of the site of the altar are holes in which the crucifix was fixed, and in one of these holes there still remains a piece of solder. This crypt has a barrel vault. The crypt at Ripon unquestionably owes its origin to St Wilfrid. It is similar to the one at Hexham as to the general plan of passages round three sides of a central cell; but the entrances are not arranged quite in the same manner, nor is it as large as that at Hexham. The crypt at Lestingham Church in Yorkshire is entered by a trap-door at the west end of the choir, and the east end is circular, resembling the crypt at Ripon.

All these crypts resemble that which was discovered below St Peter's Church at Oxford so late as 1862.

One fact which strikes me as being peculiarly interesting is that considerable intercourse existed between the churches, abbeys, and priories of the north of England (especially Durham, York, Hexham, Ripon, and Rievaulx) and the monastic institutions of Melrose, Kelso, Dryburgh, Glasgow, Balmerino, and St Andrews.

A few of these facts which I have collected and put together may prove interesting. Eata, the first abbot of Old Melrose, was sent to assist Alchfrid, son of Oswy, king of Northumberland, in founding a monastery at Ripon in Yorkshire. This occurred in the year 661, and thirty years later St Wilfrid made Ripon a bishopric. When the Abbot Eata first went to Ripon he was accompanied by a number of Melrose monks, among whom was the famous St Cuthbert, who afterwards became prior of Ripon. Subsequently all these monks returned to Melrose, where Eata was once more elected abbot, and where St Cuthbert afterwards also became prior; but later St Cuthbert removed to Lindisfarne in Northumberland. He reluctantly accepted the bishopric of Hexham, but returned to his cell in one of the Farne Islands, where he died.

Eata, abbot of Melrose, was afterwards translated to Hexham, at which place he died.

Now, considering that St Wilfrid was so renowned for his construction of crypts, underground oratories, and winding subterranean passages; and further, considering that Eata of Melrose was evidently his coadjutor at Ripon and Hexham, it is only natural to imagine that the Abbot Eata would see the usefulness of these subterranean buildings, and would most likely introduce them elsewhere (especially into Scotland) even though he had not known of such constructions before he met St Wilfrid.

It also seems certain that the connection between the several monasteries in the north of England and those in Scotland continued through later times, as may be fairly gathered from a consideration of the following facts.

Early in the eleventh century William Douglas was abbot of Melrose, and was the companion and intimate friend of St Fothad, Bishop of St Andrews. About 1050 Old Melrose was deserted, but soon afterwards it became the temporary resting-place of a few monks from Jarrow (in Durham), among whom were Aldwine, prior of Wincelcombe, Gloucestershire, and Turgot, confessor to Queen Margaret and Bishop of St Andrews. But formerly Turgot had been Bishop of Durham.

Later on Old Melrose became dependent on the see of Durham until the founding of St Mary's, Melrose, by King David in 1136. The monks of St Mary's, Melrose, came from Rievaulx Abbey in Yorkshire. Richard, its first prior, was installed in 1136, but was removed from office in 1148 for harshness to the abbot of the parent convent of Rievaulx. The next abbot was St Waltheof or Waldeous, a son of King David, and who was elected Bishop of St Andrews. The clergy of St Andrews Cathedral and many of the principal noblemen in Scotland came to Melrose to announce his election.

Another interesting fact connected with this intercommunion between the monasteries of England and Scotland is that in 1211 Ralph, who was once abbot of Melrose and afterwards Bishop of Down, attended at Melrose to confer the Episcopal blessing on the newly elected abbot of Fountain's Abbey in Yorkshire.

We also learn that David Bernham, Bishop of St Andrews, and William Landells, also Bishop of St Andrews, spent a considerable portion of their time in Yorkshire. In like manner the famous Cardinal Beaton of St Andrews was often in Yorkshire visiting the monasteries.

At Melrose Abbey, in the year 1730, a spacious and secret subterranean vault was discovered at the foot of a winding stair near to the old wax-cellar in which the altar candles were kept. There appears to have been no entry to this hidden chamber except by lifting up the first step of the turnpike stair, and the vault had no window nor any means of light. This vault had doubtless been contrived and constructed for concealing altar plate and other valuables, and it is probable that all churches possessed similar hiding-places in those days.

The determination to secrete all valuables was a striking feature of the period of the Reformation, and it is curious to observe what peculiar methods were adopted to carry out this purpose.

As one example to show how hard pressed the

priests often were in early times, not long ago, near Cambridge, in England, a magnificent brass eagle lectern was found by some workmen at the bottom of a stagnant pond, where it had lain embedded in the mud doubtless since the Reformation. This lectern has been cleaned, and is now once more in regular use in Isleham Church.

But, returning once more to Melrose Abbey, we find that there is a subterranean passage leading to several parts of the convent. This passage is so large that two or three persons may easily walk abreast through it. The main passage leads from the bakehouse (which is a short distance from the Abbey, and beyond the mill-lade) to the church.

Fosbroke states that subterranean passages were used for the private conveyance of valuables, for means of escape or communication with a garrison, and for sending out secret messengers. He further states that these subterranean passages sometimes ended in sewers, sand-pits, tombs, or church vaults. In all coast towns there was a subterranean means of communication with the sea from the castle or principal church.

At St Andrews it seems to be an evident fact that the Castle and Cathedral are connected certainly by one if not more of such passages, as portions have been seen at different times, but no steps have been taken to follow them up.

A sort of man-hole may have been the immediate entrance into an underground church or crypt, or it may have been the means of communication with subterranean passages of a winding kind leading into some such place. In all probability when the new and magnificent Cathedral became the principal church in Scotland, most if not all of the ornaments of St Rule's Church would be transferred to the Cathedral.

Now, there is no doubt the Cathedral of St Andrews was very rich in presents of plate and massive ornaments; in fact, to put it in plain terms, the building would be greatly overstocked. For it may easily be conceived that old ornaments would give place to new ones of a more elaborate kind, and such superfluous ornaments would certainly not be given away or cast aside as valueless, but on account of their sanctity would still be most carefully preserved, and nowhere so likely as a secret hiding-place.

Besides St Rule's Church there were many other churches and chapels in the ancient city of St Andrews. The Church of Holy Trinity in South Street possessed numerous altars, all of which, as a matter of course, were furnished with the requisite costly ornaments, images, &c. Next in importance would be the Church of St Salvador in North Street. We learn in Lyon's *History of St Andrews* that Bishop Kennedy gave to St Salvador's Church not only stoles, tunics, dalmatics, and copes for the priests, but also chalices, goblets, basins, ewers, crosses, an image of the Saviour two cubits long, various gold and silver utensils, large bells, small musical bells, and silk tapestry for adorning the church.

These, of course, were only a few of the requisite ornaments for the several altarages which this most important church undoubtedly possessed. The next in importance probably was St Leonard's Church. There was also a church, the ruins of which may still be seen, on the Kirkhill, which ruins were only discovered when the battery was made. We must not omit to mention also the Churches of Blackfriars and Greyfriars, the chapel of the Castle, the chapel at the Priory, and the chapel of St Mary's College, all of which would possess numerous handsomely ornamented altars; also St Peter's, St John's, and St Mary Magdalene's.

With regard to altars, there is one fact which is mentioned by John Henry Parker in his book on Gothic architecture, page 7, that 'Anastasius frequently refers to the Pope's gifts of altars, and nearly always they are recorded to be covered with pure silver, and sometimes with gold.' From the record of the great weight of the silver, it may be assumed that the altar was chiefly composed of the precious metal, perhaps a wooden framework only being used to keep the plates of metal in place.

Now, the great and most important question for us to consider is this: Is it reasonable to suppose that all these costly valuables fell into the hands of the Reformers? The writer thinks not. That some portion of the valuables did fall into the hands of the Reformers seems to be but a natural conclusion; but nevertheless I am decidedly of opinion that only a very small portion was or could have been seized. For it is perfectly incredible that such clear-headed and sharp-witted men as the clergy were in those days would not devise some means to prevent any large portion of their treasure from falling into the hands of enemies. And it seems to me there is no reason to suppose that even such churches as Holy Trinity and St Salvador's, &c., should not, in common with the Cathedral, have small crypts of their own for purposes of concealment.

But still, the probability is that the main storehouse of all ecclesiastical valuables, especially for purposes of concealment, would be somewhere within the precincts of the Metropolitan Cathedral.

Any caskets containing relics of saints would be most carefully guarded; and the fact that crypts were generally used for preserving such shrines (of which we know there were many at St Andrews) is an additional reason in favour of there being a crypt or crypts at St Andrews.

The subterranean passage, chamber, and staircase at the Castle (which have been recently discovered) are beautifully hewn out of the solid rock, and the artificers of old at St Andrews seem to have been experienced adepts at cutting such passages and wells out of the rock with their picks. The pick-marks are quite fresh in these excavations even now, and this fact points to the idea that there may be vaults beneath St Andrews which are hewn out of the solid rock.

It is most probable that the principal religious buildings at St Andrews were connected by means of secret subterranean passages. And there is no doubt of the fact that there was in the west cliffs a subterranean passage leading to the sea; but the mouth of this passage has fallen in, or it has been filled up with débris since the new houses were built on the cliffs. No trace of this passage can now be found.

Many old citizens remember such an opening, but their description does not in any way correspond with the so-called smugglers' cave which lies to the west of the baths. The writer believes that the communication with the sea would be somewhere in the cliffs immediately below the old Castle.

Underground passages were not intended to be used as a common thoroughfare, nor to be in frequent use. They were only employed in cases of great emergency, and were generally made so narrow that people could only pass through in single file. The advantage of such a construction must be obvious to all. One man could do much towards keeping an army at bay, and though an enemy even did get into such a passage, it could be easily and quickly disposed of. If we take into consideration the round hole in the Castle passage, where the descent is now made into the lower passage by means of a ladder, might not that hole have been constructed so as to prevent more than one person from going in or coming out at a time?

Another point of interest in connection with our inquiry is the very large number of famous prelates who are buried in St Andrews. In Lyon's History, page 198, we find the following: 'It is stated of the abbots of Melrose that after their death they lay in state for three days in the centre of the choir of their church, arrayed in their pontifical robes; after which they were interred with their crosier, mitre, gloves, ring, sandals, and a silver chalice on their breasts. As the priors of St Andrews were superior in rank to the abbots of Melrose, it is more than probable that the same ceremonies were observed at their funerals.' From this we may infer how splendidly the bishops and archbishops of St Andrews (who were of the highest rank) must have been interred in the old Cathedral.

By permission of H.M. Board of Works, the St Andrews Antiquarian Society last year partly explored the Lady Chapel, choir, the north and south aisles, the north transept partially, and the foundations of the great central tower. The four great pillars of this tower stand on a massive underground wall from twelve to fifteen feet thick, previously unknown to us. Some well-built tombs of the old bishops and archbishops were met with, but they had been opened before and the bodies removed. It may be necessary to send a boring-rod through the rock. No coins were found, but some beautifully painted fragments of a reredos or altar-tomb were dug up, also some fine red, green, and yellow glazed tiles, and pottery and bits of old stained glass.

We hope to resume the exploration of the nave, south transept, and chapter-house this autumn, and some further investigations may be necessary in the vicinity of the high altar. Not a foot of ground should be left unexplored.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXXV.—WHAT WE FOUND AT THREAVE.

THE bull *passant gules* of the Borgias was certainly a significant sign, deep there in the bowels of the earth, so far from the scene of the Borgias' forgotten triumphs.

My two companions were beside me in an instant, and both agreed that the bull placed there was a signal to the person who gained the secret of The Closed Book—an invitation to search at that spot.

All three of us closely examined the rough stones with which the low tunnel was arched; but none of them showed signs of having been disturbed. The passage had, without doubt, been constructed by the Black Douglas as a secret means of ingress and egress to his stronghold, and most probably all trace of it had been lost before the days of Godfrey Lovel. He and his friend Malcolm had perhaps rediscovered it, and old Godfrey had there ingeniously hidden the precious casket which he had brought from Italy, and which had for years previously been concealed in the fish-pond at Croyland, or Crowland, as it is now spelled.

The position in which the bull had been drawn showed that it was placed there to attract the eye of the person possessing the secret. It would convey no meaning to any other. Yet, although we searched hither and thither, high and low, we discovered no cavity or any place where the casket was likely to be concealed.

Presently, after fully half-an-hour's search, Fred discovered upon the flat surface of a stone some little distance farther up the tunnel the numeral '15' marked with the same paint, and evidently put there by the same hand as that which had drawn the bull, only with one of those queer sixteenth-century fives like a capital N turned the wrong way about.

'Can this mean that the place is fifteen paces off?' I queried.

'Or it may be fifteen stones away,' suggested Sammy, starting at once to count them. 'Why, look!' he cried a few moments later; 'here's a stone that's been removed at some time or other.'

* Copyright, 1904, by William Le Queux.

It was a block about two feet long, and when I rushed forward and touched it, it moved beneath my hand.

Without a second's hesitation I grasped it, and with all my might tugged it out of the wall, allowing it to fall to the ground with a heavy thud, Sammy being compelled to step aside quickly.

Then, plunging my hand deep into the cavity behind, I felt something and pulled it out, with a loud cry of joy which was echoed by my two companions.

It was the long-lost casket!

About a foot and a half long, ten inches in height, and six broad, it was covered with stout old untanned leather, the lid being curved and studded with nails. The lock was an antique, and therefore a complicated one no doubt; but having no key, we at once set to work to force it open with the short crowbar which I had carried down there. So stoutly made was that ancient box that had seen so many vicissitudes, and had been hid in the mud of the abbey fish-pond at Crowland through all these years, that for some time I could not manage to force it open; but after several trials in the dim, uncertain light, I at length succeeded in wrenching up the lid, and there found within several old jewel-cases, which, on being opened, were found to contain those wonderful emeralds which were the most valued treasures of the Borgias.

We handled them gingerly, at my suggestion, not knowing whether those faded velvet-lined old cases might not be envenomed like the vellum leaves of The Closed Book.

The jewels we examined were, however, magnificent in their antique gold settings. Three collars of wonderful green gems, each emerald the size of one's thumb-nail, and each set separately to form drops, were the first ornaments we drew forth—emerald collars of which, we knew, the world had never seen the equal. Several bracelets, pairs of earrings, and pendants were also among the collection; one emerald, unset, and evidently the greatest treasure, being almost the size of a pigeon's egg—a truly marvellous set of gems, the like of which none of us had ever before set eyes upon.

There were eight small cases in all, seven of them as full of jewels as they could hold, while the eighth contained that which, in the day of Lucrezia Borgia, was more powerful and potent than the mere possession of wealth—a small sealed bottle of rock-crystal and a larger phial of greenish Venetian glass, the latter containing a thick dark-brown fluid.

This latter discovery interested my companions, who were much puzzled by it. But I knew the truth, and told them so. That tiny crystal bottle contained the actual secret venom of the Borgias, given by Lucrezia to old Godfrey, and the dark-brown fluid was the antidote.

The secret poison of the Borgias was no longer a legend. We had it actually in our possession!

I put my hand again into the cavity, while Sammy raised a lamp to peer within. But there was nothing else.

With our precious find stowed in our pockets we at last moved up the incline, in order to explore the full extent of the subterranean passage. The casket itself interested me; and, handing my lantern to one of the others, I carried the heavy old box, which through those centuries had contained treasure worth a king's ransom. Then, delighted with our success, we pushed forward and upward, finding the air fresher nearly every foot we progressed, until at last, nearly three-quarters of a mile from the point where we had descended, the tunnel went suddenly upwards, and we found farther progress barred by a huge oaken door strengthened by a kind of network of iron battens securely bolted on to it.

We tried it, but it would not budge. It was very strongly secured on the other side, and all our efforts to open it proved futile.

Having battered upon it and used our crowbar to little effect, we heard a frightened and muffled voice on the other side demanding who and what we were.

'Let us out, old chap!' I shouted. 'Can't you open the door? Who are you?'

'My name's John Kirk,' was the man's hoarse answer. 'Where are you, and who are you?'

'There are three of us. We've been along an underground passage, and this is the end of it. Where are we?'

'This is the old dairy in Threave Mains. Wait a bit, and I'll get the master.'

'Threave Mains!' cried Fred. 'Then we've passed right under the Dee into Balmaghie! You can see the Mains from the castle—an old white house about three-quarters of a mile away. I hope the master, whoever he is, will let us out of this very soon.'

We did not have to wait long; but the fact was that some old panelling in the ancient part of the building, now used as a dairy, had first to be taken down, and then the door was revealed and opened, letting us out once again to the light of day.

Truth to tell, we were nothing loath to breathe the fresh air once more; and the dirty and disreputable figures we cut as we emerged, I think, filled the good farmer with some suspicion. We told him of our explorations underground, not mentioning the treasure, of course; whereupon the old man said, in his broad Galloway dialect:

'I've heard talk of a passage under the river to the castle, but I thought it was only a fable. I had no idea it ended in this wall.'

'Well,' said Sammy, 'you go down and have a smell round yourself. You'll find it interesting. You won't want a boat in the future to get over to the island.'

Whereat we all laughed, and after examining the old oak panelling, and coming to the conclusion that the dairy was originally the most ancient part of the house, we gave the farmer a trifle to repay him

for the removal of the woodwork, and departed, carrying the jewels, in their cases, secreted in our pockets, and leaving the unfortunate Selby still a prisoner on the island, with Walter guarding him. One thing was at least reassuring—namely, that the casket, having been discovered beneath the bed of the river, could be claimed by neither of the owners of the property on either side.

In the lightest of spirits we joined the high-road at the Black Bride Burn, and hurried along for a mile to the Bridge of Dee, where we knew we could obtain a boat to fetch Walter off the island. This was done; and while Fred and Sammy rowed back up-stream, I idled at the wayside railway station close to the river, the whole of the jewels being transferred to my care, while the old casket had been wrapped in a newspaper we had picked up by the roadside.

The farmer at Threave Mains had looked askance at the old box until, in order to satisfy him, I showed that it was empty. He had no use for empty boxes, he said, laughing; but he was not aware of its precious contents then in our pockets.

I had a long wait at the railway station; but about six o'clock my companions returned, bringing Walter with them. The latter had feared, as we did not return, that some accident had happened to us, and had been amazed to find Sammy and Fred, afloat, hailing him.

Selby was still at the place where we had secured him, bound hand and foot, shouting and cursing until he was hoarse, and uttering all kinds of threats against us. But we had secured the historic jewels of the notorious Lucrezia, and now intended to make the best of our way to Crailloch. With that intention, we therefore tidied ourselves as well as we could, and walked on to Dildawn, the fine estate of our host's good friend Charlie Phillips, and there borrowed a conveyance to take us home, a distance of about fourteen miles as the crow flies.

So disreputable was our appearance, so mysterious our movements, not to mention the absence of guns or game-bags, that our friend's curiosity was aroused; but we merely explained that we had been out for a day's excursion and got stranded, the railway being of no use to us. He gave us some whisky, smiled knowingly, but was much puzzled.

'My opinion is that you fellows have been up to some trick or other that you oughtn't to have been,' was his remark as we drove away.

'All right, old chap,' shouted Fred; 'we'll tell you all about it some day;' and the smart pair of bays swung away down the drive.

We agreed to say nothing to any one, not even to the rest of the party at Crailloch. At present, in view of our forthcoming investigations at Crowland, it was not judicious to make any statement. We had forestalled our enemies at Threave, and for the present that was sufficient.

Our tardy and unexpected return gave rise to a good deal of comment, as may be imagined. The ladies of the party were soon around Sammy imploring him to tell them the reason of our mysterious movements, and many questions were put to Fred by the men. But to all we were dumb. We had been visiting friends was all we explained.

'Friends!' exclaimed Jack Handsworth, sucking at his cigar. 'Been down a drain somewhere, by the look of your clothes'—a remark that was greeted with considerable laughter.

That night, after the others had retired, the four of us held a secret conclave in Fred's study, where we examined our find, and discovered it to be even more remarkable and important than we had at first believed. The emerald collars were magnificent; but, besides what I have already enumerated, there was a magnificent Byzantine cross of diamonds, containing in the back the relic of St Peter which is known to have been the property of Lucrezia's father, the Borgia Pope. In the Vatican archives there are several references to it; but on the death of Alexander VI. it unaccountably disappeared, having been given, no doubt, to his golden-haired daughter. There was a heavy gold bracelet too, in the form of a serpent, and several fine rings. One, in gold, was engraved with the sacred tau, believed in the Borgian era to guard the wearer against epilepsy; another, of agate, carved with an image of St John the Divine, which was worn in those days as a protection from venom; and in a third was set a piece of toadstone or bufonite (the fossil palatal tooth of the ray-fish *Pycnodus*), the most potent periapt against black magic.

The most interesting of all, however, was a beautiful ring of gold *niello*, of the fourteenth century, with a hollow bezel or sharp point pierced by two tiny holes, which had undoubtedly been used to contain poison. It was quite easy to see that this ring, if charged with the deadly liquid, could be used with fatal effect in a hand-grasp with an enemy—a curio of world-wide interest, the actual poison-ring of that veneficious bacchante Lucrezia Borgia, which had caused the death of so many unsuspecting and innocent persons, from cavaliers in Ferrara to cardinals in Rome.

I turned it over in my hand and felt the sharpness of that fine needle-point. Surely the controversy regarding the venom of the Borgias would now be set at rest for ever.

The crystal perfume-bottle with its few drops of that deadly cantarella poison I held to the light and examined it carefully, as well as the antidote—both presents given to Godfrey by Lucrezia herself, with instructions how to use them.

I was in the act of replacing both bottles in the old jewel-case, with its faded lining of purple velvet, when I noticed that the top of the lining was loose, and on touching it it fell away, and a small folded piece of damp-stained parchment came into my hand.

There was faded writing upon it in Godfrey's erratic script, and the words I deciphered caused my heart to leap.

A REMINISCENCE OF SIR RICHARD BURTON.

THE account of a memorial window to be placed to the memory of Lord Salisbury recalled one of that discriminating statesman's acts of justice in the offer of a knighthood, after many years of neglect, to the great traveller and orientalist, Richard Burton. So does memory fly back to the past, and the pathetic line of Lamb recurs, 'All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.'

The writer first met Captain Richard Burton, as he was then called, in the summer of 188–, at Trieste, where he succeeded the novelist Charles Lever as English Consul. There was at this time still a considerable English colony in the Austrian free port, consisting of merchants, some of whom remain there; a few ladies married to officers of the Austrian navy; and a considerable number of Scotch engineers, a very capable set of men employed in the arsenals of the Austrian Lloyd's and private engineering works. But the soul and life of the English colony was Richard Burton. To meet him was to be fascinated by his commanding figure, his leonine expression, and, above all, by his wonderful power of conversation. At first sight the keen, fierce glance from beneath his shaggy eyebrows, the resolute mouth, and the tawny Eastern complexion almost inspired the stranger with alarm; but this effect quickly disappeared on closer acquaintance. Then the kindly, soldier-like greeting at once put you at your ease. Some bright remark or interesting piece of information at length led to conversation, in which Richard Burton quickly discovered the capabilities of his new acquaintance, while he at the same time imparted some fresh knowledge.

The writer was introduced to him by a resident, a considerable dealer in corn at Odessa and Trieste. It was in a charming villa on the outskirts of Trieste, near the Fortezza, that he first dined with the Burtons. The party consisted of the two Burtons, the Vice-Consul Edward Brock (whom Lady Burton described in a letter as 'the kindest creature on earth'), his two daughters, the widow of an Austrian naval officer with her charming niece the Countess of Gemmingen, the host and hostess, and myself. The dinner was to welcome the writer, who had just come to Trieste to act as Consular chaplain. 'Do you know, you are the only padre Richard has ever taken to,' said Lady Burton to me as I sat by her side at dinner. 'Richard was quite taken by your sermon on Sunday. He hasn't been to church for an age before.' I afterwards discovered that Lady Burton was a rigid Roman Catholic, which subsequent events manifested; but we remained the best of friends till her death. The conversation was chiefly on political topics, Trieste then being in a ferment owing to some demonstrations against the Austrian Government and the prospective bombardment of Alexandria, which subsequently became a matter of history. Though Burton hated the Russians, he equally hated the insouciance of the Turks, and thought that nothing less than an earthquake or the dismemberment of their country would awaken them from their profound lethargy. 'Imagine,' said he, 'the condition of an army whose soldiers will smoke cigarettes on a barrel of gunpowder!' He expressed great distrust of the Russians, and thought our Government sadly deficient in prompt action with the Sultan. He was scarcely fair to his opponent in the argument, Mr Edward Brock, who, being a staunch Conservative, supported the Government. No great love was lost between the two, Brock complaining that Burton was too supercilious and impatient of contradiction, and Burton taunting Brock with holding too insular views.

On several occasions during the visit of the Emperor Francis Joseph to Trieste to inaugurate the opening of the Exposition, Sir Richard Burton invited distinguished visitors to his house. How hospitable was the reception we have learned from his niece, who tells us that in three weeks the bill for guests was one hundred and sixty-three pounds. At a luncheon at which the Count and Countess de Sâles were present, together with other foreign visitors, it was a pleasure to observe the ease with which Sir Richard held the reins of the conversation, speaking equally well in French, German, or Italian, or indeed in any language. He was a supreme master of dialect; and, as his published memoirs have shown, he was equally proficient in the Eastern and Western tongues. This arose from his extended travels, combined with a marvellous natural facility for the acquisition of languages owing to his ready sympathy with all sorts and conditions of men. In addition, he was a keen and laborious student. To one who had been of English parentage, brought up on the Continent, an officer in India, a consul in Iceland, a traveller in Palestine, a discoverer in Africa, the gift of tongues was necessary; but a knowledge of the grammar and dialects of any language could only be acquired by persistent effort. No subtle distinction in language was passed over by Burton, who instantly detected any false quantity, spelling, or accent. Even of his friend the hostess, he said that she spoke 'excellent French, but with an Irish accent.'

To see Richard Burton at work was to see a man absorbed in his occupation. Of his long suite of rooms, one was laid out with small deal tables like those employed at a Civil Service examination. On these he would lay his books of reference, chiefly dictionaries and maps. Sitting with his manuscript before him at one of the tables, he would

allow no reference to pass without verification. He was exact to a degree, and while unsparing in his criticism of others, he was equally severe with himself. Being naturally of a quick and ardent temperament, impatient of inaccuracy, and jealous for the exact proportions of truth, he sometimes seemed unduly irritable, but the irritation quickly passed if he were left alone. Yet there were occasions, when the gout (his persistent and last enemy), or the petty interruptions of domestic affairs, or possibly the scarcity of money—not infrequently accompanying so generous a nature—produced a kind of cerebral storm. Then Burton would pack up his portmanteau, taking with him some favourite author with whom to beguile the time, and drive off to the Opçina, where in a hotel at the summit of the hill he escaped the discomforts of domestic life and the smells of Trieste. Here the writer once witnessed Richard Burton in one of his characteristic moments of passion.

The dinner had been ordered at six. At half-past the hour it was not ready. The waiter was summoned. He made excuse. '*Mille tonnerres—ventrebleu!*' roared Burton, with a volley of unutterable language which he only could translate. The waiter literally flew before the storm, looking back at the writer with '*Mais, mon Dieu, l'Anglais!*' The dinner quickly arrived, and with the soup Burton recovered his equanimity, though inveighing against all waiters, and the Triestin in particular.

'I can always manage him,' said Lady Burton to me; 'he is like a child.' That she should have done so was due to her exceedingly sweet disposition and gentle manner; for though Burton confessed he had the temper of a demon, he said his wife had that of an angel. Never were a pair more equally matched. 'One thing only would make me alter towards Dick,' she said, in confidence to me, when telling me that the doctors had told her that she had a disease which would eventually be fatal; 'if ever he were unfaithful to me I would kill him.' This devotion to the man of her choice made her repose the strictest confidence in him, while she evidently listened with pleasure to his description of the charms of other women, secure of her hold on his affections.

Burton had the greatest admiration for the Emperor Francis Joseph, and it was at his express wish that the writer attended the opera given in His Majesty's honour after the presentation or levée. Though, like all Continental State functions, it was held on Sunday, the Royal command made it imperative that the English chaplain should represent the English community in Trieste. The Imperial guard of honour was very imposing, and the soldier-like simplicity and geniality of the Emperor of the most gracious character.

On the occasion of Mr Brock's birthday, an invitation was sent to Richard and Isabel Burton, the Brocks, and one or two intimate friends to dine with the writer at the chaplaincy. Very early the cook had searched the markets for all that was rarest and best in the August season for the repast. To this was added what was most characteristically English in liquids. Knowing that Burton was not an abstainer, I had ascertained from Lady Burton his favourite drink. I procured some Allsopp's stout, and supplemented it with various wines, among which was the choicest Chianti which I could procure. The excellent Slav cooking effected quite an enticing meal, and when the dessert, which forms so necessary and pleasant a part of an Austrian repast, was reached, Burton was at his brightest and best. He told us tales of his African travels, and referred to the inaccuracies of the press with regard to Captain Speke. He complained only of the neglect which he had then received from the Government, and of the scanty recognition of the work he had done. We then had a hearty laugh over an episode of the afternoon. Lady Burton had asked the writer to accompany her to the quay. Stopping the cab where the Custom-House is situated, and where a sentry was mounted, she begged me to engage the Custom-House officer in conversation while she went aboard the *Morocco* to inquire about a case of wine for the Consul. Presently a porter came with the case and some loose bottles, the latter being placed by my orders in the bottom of the carriage. No sooner had this been done than Lady Burton followed, and stepping into the cab, bade the coachman drive off. Up to this moment I had kept watch, smoking a cigar, at the window of the carriage. The officer, seeing a case being placed in the carriage, was about to make inquiry just as the coachman whipped up the horse. Lady Burton smilingly saluted the officer from the window. This was enough to allay any suspicion; and, returning her Excellency's nod with a military salute, he was soon out of reach. But the speed at which we moved wrought havoc among the loose bottles, and soon the wine was running out at the bottom of the vehicle. Burton pretended to soundly rate his wife for exposing him to a charge of smuggling, and soiling the reputation of the chaplain; but of course I took share of the blame, as the penalty had been already paid in the libation from the broken bottles. It was early in the morning that our merry party broke up, and Sir Richard humorously asked his wife to see him safely home through the vineyards of the Fortezza to their suite of rooms near the railway station.

The time soon came for my departure from Trieste, when Lady Burton was on the platform to bid me farewell. I travelled *viâ* Vienna with Vice-Consul Brock, who had won his retirement. Within two years from this date I heard from Lady Burton the melancholy news of her talented husband's death. Now, after our recent war with the Arabs, I think of Burton as the first English-

man who penetrated Somaliland, and of the kindly heart that beat under the rough exterior of the traveller, the explorer, and the discoverer in Central Africa. The hale old Emperor of Austria, whose presence made Trieste for a time the centre of attraction, has long survived; but the name of Burton will always be enshrined in the memory of visitors to Trieste.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

WHAT AMERICA HOPES TO GAIN BY THE PANAMÁ CANAL.

LORD ROBERTS lately pointed out that it was to the Pacific that the centre of international gravity had now shifted. The Pacific was now connected with the Atlantic by no less than nine lines of direct communication, and others are under consideration. From a strategical point of view, they would be surpassed when the canal across the Isthmus of Panamá was built. America's great opportunity for trade in the East was the subject of a long and interesting address by Mr H. C. Mandeville, which was printed in the *Elmira Daily Advertiser* (New York). In reviewing the course of trade in Europe, Mr Mandeville said that after the battle of Waterloo the seat of trade crossed the Channel to England, where it remained undisturbed until recently. The trade-centre, he believes, is now passing to America, which has already laid a good foundation for obtaining the control of the Pacific. The gateway to the Pacific is the Caribbean Sea, and the opening of the Panamá Canal will divert the commerce of western South America through its waters. All the Chinese ports south of Hong-kong will be nearer New York than any European port. From New York to Shanghai the new route will save two thousand miles, and four thousand miles from New York to Yokohama. The ports of Europe will have no such advantage. When the Panamá Canal is ready, a tonnage of about seven millions may be expected to go through its waters. Thus both the American and Atlantic coasts will be nearer the East than Europe. Already there is a useful chain of harbours for steamers crossing the Pacific, in Hawaii, Guam, Wake Island, Intilla, and the Philippines. Water transport is more economical than that of land. Russia will be less well off in her dependence upon overland railway communication, and we have yet to see the full outcome of the Russo-Japanese war. If the United States increases during the next fifty years as in the past, she will be ready to join with England to prevent any partition of China, and to assist in developing her vast resources.

AN ILLUSTRATED BLUE-BOOK.

The blue-books which, under Government authority, are issued from time to time from the Stationery Office cannot be said to have a very general circulation. They are of great service to the statistician, to members of Parliament, and to writers who wish to become thoroughly acquainted with any particular subject dealt with in their pages, for the information given is unquestionably accurate. But from the general point of view they are not entertaining reading. A new departure has been initiated in the blue-book just issued as a report on the Bahamas, for it is abundantly illustrated with photographic views of the islands and their few industries, the principal of which is the sponge-fishery. The object is presumably to attract visitors to these beautiful islands, which have a peculiar interest attaching to them from the circumstance that they were the first of the western lands discovered by Columbus. Official recognition of photography is also instanced by the action of the Postmaster-General of Australia in inviting designs for pictorial post-cards illustrative of the various states under his sway, with a view to attract settlers. The same action may be looked for on the part of the authorities of our other colonies.

THE ORIGINAL AERIAL RAILWAY.

One of the most remarkable and sensational religious ceremonies in the whole of India takes place annually at Kulu in the Himalayas. As the following ceremony has been seen by few Europeans, a description of what is perhaps even more remarkable as an athletic feat than as a religious ceremony may be of interest. From a cliff overhanging a precipitous gorge several hundred feet wide and over a hundred feet deep a rope is stretched, of which the other end is fastened to a strong stake on the opposite side of the ravine. The rope is of great length, nearly two thousand five hundred feet, and when it is stretched taut the upper end will be several hundred feet higher than the lower end. Down this terrible incline the victim or performer slides, the precaution having been taken to wet the rope to prevent it from catching fire from the friction. This headlong descent is effected as follows: The performer sits astride on a kind of rough wooden saddle fitted with holes through which the rope is threaded, while to his legs are attached bags filled with sand to enable him to maintain an upright position during his headlong descent, and also to increase the momentum. The lower end of the rope is wound round with rugs and carpets in order to check the descent at landing, and prevent the *jheri*, as the performer is called, from dashing his brains out against the pole to which the rope is fastened. The first few hundred yards of the descent is accomplished with lightning velocity, as is

indicated by the stream of smoke which follows in his wake. The incline then diminishing, the pace becomes slower and slower, so that by the time he reaches the goal he is able to stop himself without danger. The underlying motive of this curious ceremony is, that if the flight is safely accomplished, prosperity is assured to the crops for that year. This sentiment naturally minimises the danger of the feat, as it is to every one's interest that it should be safely accomplished. Indeed, a similar motive is at the bottom of certain religious festivals in Roman Catholic countries. A well-known example of this is the fête of the Scoppio at Florence, when a dove, albeit an artificial one, performs an aerial flight of a somewhat similar nature on a wire stretched from the summit of the high altar of the cathedral to an ox-wagon filled with fireworks which is stationed in front of the west door. This Himalayan ceremony can be traced back for hundreds of years, and the men who perform the feat form a small distinct caste.

MORE JACOBITE GLEANINGS.

If we are to judge by the number of books, booklets, and articles always dropping from the press about the heroes of the '45 and Jacobite history generally, there seems to be no falling off in interest in connection with that fascinating theme. The continued popularity of Dr Robert Chambers's *History of the Rebellion* is another evidence of interest. One might have imagined that the field was quite bare did we not have fresh gleanings from time to time from State archives as well as from the charter-chests of Highland and Lowland families. Two recent publications of the Scottish History Society are *The Lyon in Mourning* and the *Journals of John Murray of Broughton*, both of which were subjects of articles in this *Journal* (1895–98). Lord Rosebery prepared a list of persons concerned in the Rebellion of 1745–46, and Mr W. B. Blaikie also prepared a painstaking itinerary of the movements of Prince Charles Edward. Mr Sanford Terry, Mr Drummond Norie, and others have also written on Jacobite subjects. Andrew Lang has published half-a-dozen volumes at least on the subject, including *Pickle the Spy*. The *Inverness Courier* has printed 'A Contribution towards a Jacobite Iconography' in the shape of a list of all the portraits and illustrations having any bearing on Jacobitism; while a successful Jacobite Exhibition was held at Inverness in the autumn of 1903. Recent contributions to the literature of the subject are *Jacobite Gleanings from State Manuscripts*, by J. Macbeth Forbes (Oliphant), *Sidelights on the Forty-Five and its Heroes* (W. J. Hay), and *The Land of Prince Charlie* (John Hay), an illustrated booklet. The first brochure gives short sketches of Jacobites, with a narrative of the transportations in 1745. Possibly many of those so dealt with may have welcomed death rather than be cribbed, cabined, and confined on board the wretched prison-ships of the period. Some were pardoned on condition of their enlisting into His Majesty's service to go abroad; and it is curious to read at a time when Canada promises to become our best colonial asset that Government was so desirous to get soldiers to help in the 'reduction of Canada' that an offer was made in June 1746 of a bounty of thirty pounds to be paid in bills of credit, a share in the plunder obtained from the French, a blanket to each man, and a bed for every two men. The editor of *Sidelights on the Forty-Five and its Heroes* has been fortunate enough to secure, amongst various other documents, the original manuscript of John Home's *History of the Rebellion*. It appears that there is a likelihood of Home's book being reprinted, embodying unpublished portions of the manuscript. The manuscript materials for Home's *History* quoted in the above volume are all interesting. The rebels of 1745 when in Glasgow are described as amounting to three thousand five hundred, about one thousand of whom were in good condition. The residue were badly clothed, many of them in rags and barefooted, 'but make no ceremony in taking stockings and shoes off any persons that they meet.' There are chapters on 'The Good Lochiel' and on 'Three Jacobite Maps,' with a reprint of the experiences of James Ray, a Whitehaven man. There are plans of the battle of Falkirk and Culloden, and portraits of Prince Charles Edward and the Duke of Cumberland.

KAPOCK.

Every year that busy centre of commerce Amsterdam receives nearly a thousand pounds' weight of a curious and interesting vegetable substance known in Java and in the trade as kapock, which, amongst other purposes, is found very useful for stuffing cheap mattresses and pillows. It is a sort of yellow wadding which nature uses as a covering for the seeds of certain trees in the Malaccas. Its fibres being very non-resistant, it has been found impossible to spin or weave it; but it gives excellent results for bedding, making a mattress delightfully soft if it is exposed to the sun before being used. It is exceedingly light and buoyant; in this greatly surpassing cork, as it will support in the water thirty-five times its own weight. The tree whence it is derived (eriodendron) grows rapidly, and in the second year is twelve to fifteen feet high, but it only fruits abundantly in the fourth season. Like the cotton-plant, it bestows two gifts on man: the special wadding mentioned, which lines the husk, and the oil extracted from the seeds, which is specially used in the Chinese markets. The threads of the soft fibre taken from the pods are light yellow, rather silky, and only about an inch in length. They are made into thin rings, and kapock, it is said, never decays. Besides the ever-increasing uses to which this curious vegetable product is put, causing the culture of the eriodendron to make great strides in the Dutch Indies, while efforts are being made to cultivate it in similar climates, it has been suggested

that excellent life-saving apparatus at sea might be made from this floating substance, which should be in the form of mattresses and cushions easily obtainable in a moment of danger. Three hundred grammes of kapock will support a man of ten stones five pounds in the water; and experiments made in the Garonne by a French society with articles made of this wadding, which had previously been soaked in water for eighteen hours, gave excellent results. One small mattress supported several men, and it is probable that soon all ships' beds will be made of it.

GEOGRAPHY IN COMMERCE AND EDUCATION.

Mr H. J. Mackinder, Reader in Geography at the University of Oxford, in speaking to the Royal Scottish Geographical Society on the Material Resources of the Empire, said we wanted to induce all the universities of the land to take up the subject of geography, notably in connection with the training of secondary teachers. They should deepen their teaching in the case of a certain number of graduates for the purposes of geographical research. In the new London University, geography was a compulsory subject in the faculty of political science and commerce. Mr Mackinder said we had eight essential elements in considering our material resources. Two were in the north temperate zone, the British Islands and British North America; two were mainly in the south temperate zone, South Africa and Australia; three were tropical or subtropical, such as the British Indies and Ceylon, Borneo, the Straits Settlements, and Hong-kong; the eighth element was the ocean, the highway that linked the distant parts of our Empire. The fact that the British Islands stood upon a great submerged plateau, which gave this country a tidal motion varying from twenty to forty feet, was an immense resource. By the time our coal-supply was used up that tidal power might be available. This country had the advantage, also, of the great momentum acquired in the past, which expressed itself commercially in the large amount of capital accumulated. At present in Great Britain we produce about a fifth of the wheat we consume; but an area the size of England and Wales, even with a four years' rotation of crops, would produce all the wheat required by the population. We have thirty million sheep in Britain, we have a country in which there is abundant moisture without excessive rainfall, we have a coal-supply which is calculated to last from fifty to one hundred years, the momentum from the past, and the great final resource of the tidal power round their shores. The balance of Canadian possibilities lay rather in the west than in the east, and that country could produce all the wheat required by the world. He estimated its ultimate population at seventy-five millions. Nigeria was capable of supplying all the cotton required for the manufactories of Great Britain; cotton-growing in the United States was confined to a mere strip of country. There are obvious limitations in South Africa and Australia, by reason of uncertain rainfall. The time might come when by some system of radiometers we should receive the sun's rays direct, and convert them into rotary motion.

AN OPALISED DOGFISH.

Since they were first discovered, the famous opal-fields at White Cliffs, New South Wales, have yielded many curious fossils, particularly those of prehistoric marine life. But the latest discovery is a most extraordinary one, and will prove of the deepest interest to the scientific world. It is that of a fossilised, or rather opalised, member of the shark family, which was found on Block No. 9, at a depth of thirty-five feet from the surface. The Sydney press states that the specimen measures three feet six inches from the snout to the tip of the tail. The body is in seven sections, the circumference of the largest of which (the head and shoulder portion) is eighteen inches; each section is six inches in length. The deeply indented eye-sockets show very plainly, 'and thin veins of purple opal encircle the fish from tip to tip.' At the mouth these veins make an oblong and clearly defined course, though the continuity is occasionally broken. No particulars as to weight are given; but as the fossil has been sent to London, these and other matters of interest will soon be determined. It was purchased from the finders by an opal-buyer named Murphy. Many incomplete 'opalised' fish and shells, &c., have been found on the White Cliffs opal-fields, which tends to prove that Central Australia was once an ocean-bed; but nothing so satisfactory as this specimen had hitherto been discovered. The average opal-miner, however, is not usually given to the study of prehistoric remains, and no doubt many very valuable evidences of the time when the world was young have been broken up and tossed aside as worthless. Many years ago, on the Gilbert River in North Queensland, the writer was shown an absolutely perfect fossilised specimen of a gavial which had been found by a party of alluvial diggers at a depth of twenty-five feet, in what had once been the bed of a creek. When discovered it was in a semicircular position. The finders broke it into three pieces. The head, with the long, slender muzzle, was given to the local publican (in exchange for a bottle of whisky) to adorn his bar-shelf; the other pieces were thrown on the mullock-heap of the claim. In 1856 a landslip occurred in the neighbourhood of the Hastings River in New South Wales, and an enormous and perfect specimen of the great sea-perch was discovered. The grandfather of the writer, who took a deep interest in such matters, sent four men with a dray and team of six horses to convey the find to Port Macquarie—a distance of forty-two miles through the roadless bush, giving the men detailed instructions as to the packing, &c. Unfortunately, on the return journey the dray became embedded in a quicksand at the mouth of a

creek on the coast; and, to save the horses and dray, the men tipped this valuable fossil out. It was never recovered; but the incident formed the theme of a sermon by the Rev. Canon O'R——, who told his congregation on the following Sunday that 'the discovery of these fossils led to absurd statements being made as to their age by people from whose education and position more belief in the authenticity of the Scriptures might be expected. To assert that this fish was perhaps six thousand years old was rank infidelity and a disbelief in the Book of Genesis.'

INDUSTRIAL SCOTLAND.

An old summer-house in the grounds of Moray House, Canongate, Edinburgh, is still a landmark in Scottish national progress, for it was there that the commissioners gathered after dinner to sign the Act of Union in 1707, although tradition says they had to fly and do it elsewhere, so unpopular was the Act. In three years the bicentenary of that event will fall due. These two hundred years have been the most prosperous the country has ever known, although John Hamilton, Lord Belhaven, only voiced much of the popular feeling at the time in the Scottish Parliament in a speech on the proposed union. All sorts of calamities were to happen. None could destroy Scotland save Scotland's self. 'Hold your hands from the pen and you are safe,' was Lord Belhaven's advice, which fortunately was not accepted. The industrious tradesman has not been loaded with new taxes, neither did he eat saltless porridge; nor did the ploughman curse the day of his birth, dread the expense of his burial, and become 'uncertain whether to marry or do worse.' The marriage with England has, on the contrary, been happy and successful for both suitors. *Scotland's Industrial Souvenir*, edited by Mr Alan J. Woodward, and published by Bemrose & Sons, Derby and London, is only one amongst many testimonies, if these were needed, to Scotland's quickened commercial activity. The chief towns, with their leading industries, are in this volume passed in review, and certainly the progress made since the Union is remarkable. If Glasgow should one day decide to absorb a few more of her suburbs, her population, which now stands at over seven hundred thousand, would be over a million. Here the steam-engine and the marine-engine were cradled, and something like thirty million pounds are sunk in shipbuilding plant. The British Admiralty spends several millions annually on the Clyde. Iron and steel works, locomotive works, chemical industries, and a healthy home and foreign trade are features of Glasgow commercial life. The atmosphere of Edinburgh is calmer, with less commercial rush but more beauty of situation. Law, education, printing, brewing, and many minor industries thrive in the capital, which is also extending its borders. The description of Edinburgh is rather high-pitched in this volume; but the facts given about Dundee, Aberdeen, and other Scottish towns are both interesting and instructive. An Englishman, Dr John Roebuck, planted the iron industry at Carron in 1760; but Watt, Symington, Henry Bell, and the Napiers, shipbuilders, were all Scotsmen. One hardly knows whether England has been more indebted to Scotland or if it is the other way. Certainly Scotland has always retained its individuality.

CO-OPERATIVE HOLIDAYS.

Co-operation in this sense has nothing to do with co-operation in business, but means that every one should aim at helping every one else to have a good time when on holiday. The Co-operative Holidays Association, in connection with the National Home Reading Union, dates from 1887, and since then has been the means of bringing a vast amount of brightness and healthful purpose into the lives of all who have entered into the aims and spirit of its founders. It offers a cheap and healthy holiday on simple lines, combining physical and intellectual enjoyment. The mountains and the moors and the quiet countryside, rather than the conventional holiday-resort, are preferred; and during open-air excursions the opportunity is taken of talks by well-informed naturalists and enthusiasts on country subjects. There are now guest-houses or holiday-centres at the Abbey House, Whitby; Park Hall, Hayfield, Derbyshire; Boscastle, Cornwall; in the vale of Newlands, Keswick; at Portrush; the Galway Grammar School, Galway; Bangor; and at Ardenconnel, Row, near Helensburgh. The charges are extremely moderate, and at some of the centres, where the charges are something like a guinea a week, guests have to see to making their own beds and blacking their own boots. The servant question has been so far solved by engaging the service of ladies called 'domestic helpers,' who work under somewhat ideal conditions as regards status and opportunity, and who aid in every way the enjoyment of those who come for a holiday to the centres. The idea came first to a Congregational minister, Mr T. A. Leonard, of Colne, Lancashire, who saw how utterly incapable many young people were of taking a rational holiday. There was thoughtless spending of money and an inane type of amusement, as well as unhealthy crowding in lodging-houses. A rambling-club was first formed; then there was some mountain climbing in the Lake Country. Dr Paton, of Nottingham, annexed the idea for his Home Reading Union; and his son, Mr Lewis Paton (headmaster of Manchester Grammar School), Canon Rawnsley, and others have been a great strength to the movement, which is growing every year. Many professional and business men give up their summer holidays and act as leaders of parties at the various centres. The society seeks to cultivate character by comradeship, helpfulness, simplicity, and reverence. Luxury and display are not encouraged at the guest-houses, which were started at first mainly for an industrial class, but at which now business and middle-class people, teachers,

and others predominate. Three-quarters of the guests are by no means of the wage-earning class. Those who do go seem sure of a cheery and healthful holiday at any of the centres—a holiday which leaves no bad taste in the mouth, but is full of inspiration for working days. All information about the movement may be had from its founder, Mr T. A. Leonard, Park Hall, Hayfield, Derbyshire.

ESTATE MANAGEMENT.

A bulky-looking volume, *The Country Gentleman's Estate Book, 1904*, edited by W. Broomhall, and published at the offices of the Country Gentlemen's Association, 2 Waterloo Place, London, is a veritable cyclopædia of all matters of current and permanent interest to landowners, farmers, and factors. The aims of the association are the applying of the principle of combination for the benefit of agriculture in every practical way; thus expert advice and assistance may be given as to the sale and letting of farms and seed-testing. It is an attempt to realise what was an ideal of Lord Winchilsea; and as agriculture is passing through troublous times, the editor believes it behoves everybody connected with it to draw closer together and secure the support that comes from co-operation. The conditions of success for the farmer of to-day are laid down as the same as in other pursuits: the man must know his trade and be prepared to give his whole energy to it; he must avoid speculation, take advantage of the teachings of the technical schools, and be ready to avail himself of opportunities. We have already (December 1902) given a recipe for preserving eggs by means of water-glass; there is a page in this book dealing with that subject, but in another section the cold-storage system is recommended as superior even to this method. As interesting a subject as any to the general reader is the section entitled 'Making Light of the Wind.' In *Chambers's Journal* for 1898 this subject was dealt with under the title of 'Wasted Wind.' We learn that since February 1899 Boyle Hall, West Ardsley, near Wakefield, the residence of Mr Simon Colbeck, has been entirely lighted by electricity with motive-power from the wind alone, and that never once has the light failed. A plant capable of lighting a residence can, it appears, be run at an annual cost of thirty pounds. Taking twelve hundred pounds as the amount sunk in the instalment, at an annual charge of 4 per cent. this works out at seventy-eight pounds a year. The engines are by Messrs Shepherd & Watney, and the plant is so simple that the head-gardener mastered its use at once, and does what is required in a few hours a week. The engine is of the geared 'Simplex' self-regulating type. The wind-wheel, thirty feet in diameter, is mounted on a hexagonal steel trellis tower thirty-five feet high, with two platforms and a ladder for oiling. The dynamo was supplied by Messrs Edmonson. The other matters dealt with include the law of estates, poultry-farming, the egg-trade, the Motor Car Act of 1903, export trade in horses, forestry, manures, inexpensive cottages, feeding-stuffs, breeding of horses and hares, and all subjects interesting to the agriculturist. A list is given of the land-agents in the United Kingdom, which should of itself prove a handy and useful feature. No man receives more good advice and acts less on what he receives than the average farmer; but the reading and digesting of this volume should supply hints and guidance, help his bank balance, and improve the condition of those dependent upon him.

OLD SURVIVALS IN ATTIRE.

In an article in the May number of *Chambers's Journal*, p. 335, it is stated that the two buttons on the back of men's waisted coats were originally used as a support for the sword-belt. A correspondent writes that he has always heard that the original reason for having two buttons was that in the olden days dandies wore such long tails to their coats that it was necessary on a muddy day to turn them up and loop them on to the two buttons. Buttons on the small of the back would be of little use for supporting a sword-belt. Other survivals are interesting; for instance, the belt round a groom's waist was, in the days of the pillion, a necessity, as the lady held on by same. The ribbon round a man's bowler hat is a reminiscence of a time when hats were made in a simple way. A piece of cloth was cut into a circle and a smaller circle drawn on it, in which sundry holes were cut or tape-loops sewn; a cord with tassels or a common string was passed through the loops or holes, and then tied to fit the owner's head. Of course, once tied, the hat fitted without further tying and untying. The Roman Catholic clerical hat still shows the cord and tassels. The three lines on the back of gloves are a reminiscence of the old steel gauntlet. Perhaps the most extraordinary survival of all is our Episcopal mitre, which in various shapes and forms is worn by Anglican as well as by Roman and Greek Catholic bishops. The high-priest of the fish-god Dagon, amongst the ancient Philistines, wore a mitre shaped like a fish-head. The Grand Lama of Tibet wears a kind of mitre; so does the Emperor of China when he assumes his priestly robes and blesses the nation. For the original, see *Helps to the Study of the Bible*, plate 49. The Jewish mitre was turban-shaped, with a band round the head.

TO A NIGHTINGALE.

Sweet warbler of the night, whose varied lay,
Now high and clear, now soft and melting, fills
The air with music, and my bosom thrills
With strange, sweet sympathy, what time I stray
On dewy lawn or blossom-scatter'd way;
Thy liquid voice, that thro' the hush'd air trills,
With charm mysterious all the tempest stills
Within my breast, throng'd by the cares of day.
A thousand songsters sing by sunlight glare,
In lusty choir, and all the ear delight;
But sweetest thou, for that thou pour'st thy rare
And tuneful numbers thro' the lone dark night.
So sings the chasten'd soul to God alone
A heavenly song 'midst joys of earth unknown!

J. E. P.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

TALKS WITH GIRLS.

VISITORS AND VISITED.

By KATHARINE BURRILL.

LONG ago there was a well-known form of entertainment that has, I fear, gone to join many other good old-fashioned things in the kingdom of the Dodo. It was called Spending the Day. Very often the invitation was worded, 'Come and spend a *long* day,' or 'Be sure and come early;' but no mention was ever made of food. Naturally, you could not exist from 11 A.M. (when you arrived) till 6 P.M. (when you departed) without food, but you were not specifically bidden to either luncheon or tea; these were understood to be part of the Spent Day. It was delightful, it was leisurely, and particularly attractive to elderly ladies and small children; the former carried caps and knitting in round baskets not unlike Japanese straw tea-cosies, and the latter had their white pinafores and strapped shoes carried for them. I am not at all sure that the invitation was not conditional; you went if the day was fine, if it were wet you went another day, but you always went. It was not merely an invitation for asking's sake—ask them and get it over; but you were really expected, and I do believe the hostess was disappointed if you could not go. For children it was ideal, especially if the visited owned a garden or a swing; sometimes they even had a pond, damp but entrancing. You were deposited by a nurse early in the morning and retrieved by her in the evening, and you invariably returned home breathing through wool. I cannot remember if all my happy Spent Days had remarkably cold evenings; but I do remember the wet, fluffy taste of gray Shetland shawl—a wonderful shawl! that wound round and round till I looked like a gray parcel, and that ended in a tight, hard knot somewhere about the middle of my back. Bar the shawl, they were very happy days, full of simple home-grown pleasures and very simple wholesome food. I do not think the plain roast-mutton dinner and the ordinary, old-fashioned nursery games would appeal to the modern up-to-date child. Wyemarke would be distinctly bored with the Fairchilds, though possibly interested in the extensive wardrobe of Miss Augusta Noble, whose pearl necklace, pink silk sash, and embroidered muslin made poor Lucy so envious. Imagine a spend-the-day party given by Anna Ross (the orphan of Waterloo) to such a mixed assemblage as Little Henry (his Bearer left in the hall), Harry and Laura accompanied by the faithful Peter Gray, Harvey Cheyne full of cheek and dollars, and Miss Tempe Vero-Taylor, our latest modern child. What a party! Only a really sensible, strong-minded person like Little orphant Annie could keep them all in order. Well, well! we must go with the times, and if we have a sneaking fondness for Henry Fairchild or Pet Ainslie, we have still to own that the nowadays story-book children are often very fascinating and amusing little personages; still, they *are* personages, and the old-fashioned kind were just children. Paul Dombey knew more than Dr Blimber—'I'd rather be a child'—but of course there will always be the Blimberian point of view.

If neither grown-ups nor children care for anything so mild and tame and peaceful as 'spending long days,' both of them have plenty of other entertainments offered them. For one thing, the grown-ups have infinitely more invitations to stay away from home. Why people are so anxious to leave their own comfortable firesides—was it Oliver Wendell Holmes whose definition of happiness was four feet on the fender?—and scuttle off to stay with all and sundry, I cannot imagine. To begin with, if you take up the rôle of visitor you must possess a wonderful fund of accommodating amiability. I know this is true because I once heard some one described as 'a nice, pleasant, civil little woman who need never unpack her boxes!' So, you see, if you want to be in great request and always leave your best hat in your hat-box and your smartest evening frock in your compressed-

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cane trunk, you must be nice, pleasant, and civil. That is, if you are going visiting among ordinary people; if you are fortunate enough (or unfortunate, just as you prefer to regard it) to visit eccentric, out-of-the-way individuals, civility and pleasantness are not so important. The hours will be vague and the meals sketchy, but the conversation will be infinitely more entertaining.

I do not know which is the worst—a visitor with very pronounced opinions or one who has no views at all. The latter is very irritating. When a hostess politely asks you will you walk or drive, don't keep on murmuring, 'Whichever you like,' or 'It's quite the same to me;' do have a mind of your own. She would not have asked you if she did not wish to know. In all probability she will be bored any way, so you may as well choose for yourself. If a hostess is much troubled with invertebrate guests who will not express an opinion, her best plan is just to cart them about with her like parcels where she wants to go herself. Of course, there is such a thing as having too much opinion, and that visiting girls should avoid. Older women much dislike the 'I am Sir Oracle, and when I ope my lips let no dog bark' attitude of chits of seventeen or eighteen. It does not sound very pretty to hear the youngest member of a party laying down the law; and though your hostess may be too kind to say so, she may feel a great desire to box your ears. There must surely be a happy medium, a sort of safe middle course between the 'forrard-some' visitor who *will* put on coal and poke your fire, and the shy guest who is too nervous to eat, and so frightened that she chooses a high, uncomfortable chair and glues herself in it to the wall. On the whole I would rather have the young visitor a little bit shy at first—it will wear off in time; whereas the Bouncer, who makes herself painfully much at home, bounces worse as the visit goes on, till you begin to think *you* are staying with *her* and not the other way about. One thing is quite essential: you must be punctual. As you grow older you may become pleasantly unpunctual if you like—say, five minutes' grace every ten years from thirty upwards; this would allow you twenty-five minutes to be late in when you are eighty! All the unpleasant virtues have to be practised when young, and punctuality is an important one. In many households, to be late for breakfast is a positive crime; if a guest knows this (the host generally makes it fairly plain), it is absolutely inexcusable to dawdle down ten minutes or a quarter of an hour after every one else. The young men and maidens who have so little regard for their hostess and her domestic arrangements as to appear, expecting hot breakfast, about eleven may be very smart and very charming, but they are remarkably inconsiderate and rude young people. Of course, if people are going to give you your breakfast at 7.45 A.M. they should have it printed on their notepaper, and not spring it on you when you arrive. Still, whatever the hour, you must be punctual. Do not, however, cultivate 'Too Soonism,' which some people have in a very aggravated and alarming form. These are the people who like a full hour in the station before the train starts, and who arrive ten minutes before the dinner-hour, a practice that does not endear you to your hostess. Neither does she exactly love you when you come down half-an-hour before the gong sounds in the morning, and prowl hungrily among the flower-beds just under her bedroom window. It tends to make her hurry, which is a bad beginning to the day. If you 'sow hurry' in the early morning, you will inevitably 'reap indigestion' in the afternoon. If you must have an early garden-ramble, keep out of sight of the house. Do not look reproaches and starvation at your hostess should she be rather late; there are so many patent foods in tablet or biscuit form that you can easily nibble away the pangs of hunger even when staying with unpunctual people or in a house where breakfast is much later than you have it at home. Personally, I am looking for that house, for wherever I go they seem to breakfast at Day-Break sharp.

After the morning meal the Good Guest writes letters, many, many letters, and she keeps out of her hostess's way. The Bad Guest hangs about wondering what is going to be done for her amusement. A very very Bad Guest asks, 'What are the plans for the day?' or spends her time trying over your music; the last is a brain-racking performance, but mercifully it is confined to people under five-and-twenty! Should a six-and-twenty-year-old attempt it, you are quite justified in locking the piano and hiding the key. The combination of visitors and a Pianola produces suffering almost akin to what one endures with Piano organs and 'Hiawatha;' it would not be so cruel if only the Pianola wrote its own music, or if the embryo performers could manage the time; but Beethoven's Funeral March *quick* and Schumann's 'Arabesque' *slow* are rather trying to listen to. The Good Guest never wants to touch a Pianola—too much sense. The crowning virtue of the Good Guest is difficult of attainment, I know, but it's worth attempting; she leaves while you still wish her to stay, and she takes everything belonging to her with her. The Best Guest in the world with the most delightful manners spoils her visit if she leaves behind her a pair of boot-trees, a black evening bodice, a sponge, a couple of songs, and an umbrella. Now, just for a moment think of that parcel. Can you wed boot-trees in three pieces to an umbrella? Will the sponge roll up in the songs? Tooth-brushes, nail-brushes, and handkerchiefs are comparatively easy to get rid of; but an umbrella! And yet sticks and umbrellas are more often left than anything else. There is a pretty old saying, something about leaving things behind you means you will come back. I do not advise you to risk it, at least not with boot-trees; a skirt or a blouse or something simple and easily Parcel Posted *might* ensure another invitation; but sponges are damp and

depressing, and a 'Kodak' would, I think, end a friendship of years. Also, the good guest does not take away other people's things. This is not 'Kleptomania' so much as inadvertence; you borrow a shawl or a lace scarf or a sash, and you or your maid carefully packs it away among your things. If by any chance your hostess's maid or the housemaid does your packing, you will be quite sure to take pretty nearly everything in the room but the heavy furniture! Maids and footmen have a pleasant way of not knowing their mistress's and master's belongings, and will cheerfully pack large, heavy Tomes bearing your host's crest, name, and book-plate, or china ornaments from the mantelpiece, as if you were likely to carry about spare bedroom china! Sometimes, in a burst of generosity, they put in photograph-frames or a blotter! It is always wisest to do the packing yourself, or at least to watch the operation. No! the Good Guest takes her own things, and all of them; she goes on the day she covenanted to leave; and she chooses trains, if possible, that are neither in the middle of the night nor in the small hours of the morning.

So much for the Good Guest. What about the Good Hostess? She must study her visitors' idiosyncrasies as far as possible, and she must make them physically comfortable and mentally happy. This is done by not leaving everything to servants, but looking through her guest-chambers herself. Physical miseries are caused by a feather-bed, a looking-glass at such an angle that you cannot see, a chest of drawers where the drawers will not work, no matches or candles (never mind the electric light, it sometimes goes out), a broken bell or one that only rings when it has the mind to, and, worst of all, hot-water that is not hot but tepid. Your guest will be mentally miserable if she is given a nibless pen, no blotting-paper or a bit like what they use in Post-offices, dried-up ink, no flowers or prettinesses, and no books but an old *Bradshaw* and a Stores List. There *is* a lower depth than this, and that is the guest-chamber that is a kind of wardrobe-room for all the household. The hanging cupboard, wardrobe, chests of drawers, and writing-table are intended for the passing stranger and not for the family. It is very disconcerting for the guest to find Mary's summer frocks, Ethel's hats, and Selina's ball-gowns in the places where she fondly hoped to put her own garments. Keep your spare room (it's mostly the people with only one who cram it full) swept and garnished, and not full of useless stuffery. There is a deeper depth of degradation even than filling the cupboards, and that is putting cardboard boxes under the bed. From a dust-collecting point of view it is appalling, and from a sanitary point of view—no fresh air can blow about the bed—it is even worse. I read an article lately about some hostess who, to test her guest-chambers, slept in them each in turn, and was grievously dismayed to find so many things wrong with them. You are very often much more comfortable in a tiny house where the mistress looks after things herself than in a huge establishment where everything is left entirely to servants, whose ideas of comfort are in one particular like Sam Weller's knowledge of London—they are *peculiar*. A Bad Hostess harries her unfortunate guests from morning till night; they never have a moment's peace. I believe there are women who would even show you albums rather than leave you alone. A good hostess provides a certain amount of entertainment for her guests, but also leaves them a good deal to their own devices. If you have a party of people, they will amuse themselves; a wise hostess asks those who either want to know each other or who are friends already. The most ideal house to stay in is one where you are not bothered or trailed about to be shown things; to a poor, tired-out, dusty town person it is treat enough to be in the country. All she wants to do is to sit still and enjoy the sunshine and the greenness, 'Annihilating all that's made to a green thought in a green shade.' A wise hostess does not chase a town person to country garden-parties, or insist on asking everybody in the neighbourhood to tea; she just leaves them to do nothing. It's a real holiday to many people to 'Have nothing to do and do it.' A country visit is quite spoilt if you have to dress up, drive miles in the dust to drink weak tea and eat cress sandwiches with people you have never seen before and probably hope you will never see again. Give the town visitor a real good dose of simple country delights and she will bless you for it. The Town hostess must remember that the country cousin *wants* to be taken about to see everything and everybody, and cram as much as she possibly can into her London fortnight. If you find Sleepy Hollow a fascinating place for a few weeks, the Sleepy Hollowite finds Town infinitely more fascinating. She is just panting to go to all the plays. If you are a really nice, do-as-you-would-be-done-by hostess, you will take her to as many theatres as you can manage; to the plays *she* wants to see even if you have seen them two or three times already. Living in town, you have no idea how attractive shop-windows are to the Country Cousin. Possibly the only shop-window she knows intimately displays clay pipes, bacon, mixed biscuits, notepaper, Local post-cards, and Coleman's starch; is it to be wondered at if she finds Bond Street enthralling? Give your Country Cousin a good time even if you do feel her departure rather a relief. Lady Violet Greville says it is pathetic to think how anxious every one is to have a good time; how we look forward to it, and how we are sure to have it next time if this has been a failure. Truly we all want to enjoy ourselves, and I hope we all want to make other people enjoy themselves. A selfish hostess will not give her guests a good time, and a selfish guest, especially if she is discontented (selfish people generally are), will make her poor hostess very unhappy. So you see, either as visitor or visited, you must try to think of other people's happiness before your own. If you are very busy making others happy, you haven't

time to think whether you are happy or not; whereas, if you are always thinking about yourself and how things affect you, you will be in a continual state of fret and misery. Life is full of small jars that have an unpleasant way of cropping up just when we least expect them. Like the poor old fiddler, we must take no notice, but 'just rosin again and go on.' If we are to play a good tune and a merry, happy tune, we must rosin our bows with love and thought for others. You need not make a door-mat of yourself to let people wipe their feet on you and walk over you—that only makes other people exacting and selfish; but you must play a good tune and keep a brave face. Does not Thackeray tell us that the world reflects like a looking-glass the face we show to it? Smiles beget smiles; a glum, grumpy face sees nothing round it but glumness and grumpiness. So the girl who wants to be a welcome and valued visitor must arrive with a smile and leave with a smile. And one last word: 'Don't forget to pack your manners in your portmanteau.'

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXXVI.—SHOWS THE ACTUAL SPOT AT CROWLAND.

THE words, badly faded by the action of the water which had apparently got into the casket during its years of submersion, we made out as follows:

'YE WHO HAST DARED to learn this secret, may ye benefit greatly by it. Know ye now also that ye may discover the treasure of our good abbot John of Croylande by means only of this plan I have hereunto drawn.

'GODFREY LOVEL, sometime monk at Croylande.'

Below was a rough plan similar to those in The Closed Book, but which needed no second glance to show the exact spot where the abbey treasure lay hidden.

'See!' I cried excitedly. 'The secret is at last revealed to us! What is written in The Closed Book was only in order to mislead any curious person who attempted to search. The truth was deposited in this casket by Godfrey before he left Scotland.'

And my three companions bent eagerly, and for themselves slowly deciphered the words after I had repeated them aloud to make certain of no misreading.

'Well, our next step is undoubtedly to go down to Crowland,' Fred remarked. 'Let's get the treasure first, and clear up the mystery afterwards.'

'Certainly,' we agreed in chorus; and then, after placing the Borgia jewels in Fred's iron safe, we all smoked and discussed our future plans, finally deciding to go up to London again in the morning, as Crowland could be easier reached from King's Cross than from Scotland.

Next night, therefore, we arrived in town, Fred and Sammy putting up at the Euston Hotel, and I going home with Walter. On the morning after our arrival I deemed it wise to pack up the Borgia treasures, all save the poison-ring, the tiny crystal bottle, and the antidote, and deposit them with my bankers, just as I had already placed The Closed Book in safe keeping.

The historic ring that had dealt death so frequently, and had enabled the House of Borgia to become the most powerful in Europe, I put with the little bottle in the old velvet-lined jewel-case, and placed them aside in a drawer in Walter's writing-table, intending later to take them down to Professor Fairbairn at the British Museum.

Fred Fenwicke had some pressing affairs to attend to in London; therefore it had been arranged not to go to Crowland till the following day.

We were much puzzled regarding the whereabouts of Glenelg and the hunchback, and also wondered whether Selby still remained a prisoner at Threave. The loaded weapon upon him proved that he intended mischief; therefore neither of us expressed much regret at leaving him in such evil case. The silence of his companions was, however, ominous.

While I had been down at the bank Walter had strolled round to Harpur Street, only to find the house still closed. Of Judith's whereabouts I knew nothing. She had disappeared. Through those weeks I had been living in alarm and dread. Scarcely a day passed without some puzzling incident, and I longed to see my love again and hear a full and frank explanation from her.

I recollected how, when we had parted outside the town of Castle-Douglas, I lingered there speaking gently, and making a thousand promises at which she smiled. At last it became imprudent for us to tarry there longer, and as we stood to bid each other farewell, face to face, I saw her eyelids quiver. And then I did not dare to seek her lips.

Yet it was all so strange, so mysterious, such an utter enigma, that I had become overwhelmed by fear and suspicion, bewildered, staggered, and aghast.

I idled away the morning, and about noon I received a note from the woman Bardi, in response to the letter I had sent her, making an appointment to meet me under the clock at Charing Cross Station at three o'clock. I was there to time, and found the dark, neatly dressed figure awaiting me, just as strange, just as mysterious, as before.

We walked together down Whitehall and across St James's Park, chatting affably in Italian. I put

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to her a number of questions, but gathered little in response. Her motive puzzled me, for she neither assisted me nor repeated her words of warning.

'I am returning to Italy soon,' she told me. 'I suppose you have made up your mind to live here in England in future?'

I responded in the affirmative; and then, halting in the quiet path beside the lake, I tried to obtain from her the identity of the person who induced her to steal my Arnoldus, but she steadily refused to tell me anything.

Just before five o'clock, after giving her tea at Blanchard's, I took my leave of her, more than ever puzzled. She had fenced with every question, and with the exception of giving me to understand that Judith Gordon was not my friend, she had really told me nothing. Consequently I resolved to trouble myself no further about her in future. The woman had been proved to be a thief, and therefore unreliable. Yet my sole aim now was to get at the meaning of the bear cub in the window, and the actual motive of the remarkable conspiracy.

On entering the hall in Dover Street, I ascended the stairs to the second floor, and rang at the door of Walter's cosy flat. There was no response, and at first it struck me that the faithful Thompson had gone out upon some errand in the immediate neighbourhood. I pressed the electric bell again and again, but there was no sign of life within. Of a sudden, however, I recollected that Walter had that morning given me a latch-key, and taking it from my pocket, I let myself in; but judge my dismay when, in the small hall quite close to the door, I found the white-haired old valet lying half doubled up on the carpet, motionless as one dead.

My first idea was that he might be intoxicated; but on bending over him and drawing his face into the light, I saw that its pallor was death-like. He seemed to be in a sound sleep.

Then glancing into the sitting-room at the farther end of the passage, I noticed that the drawers of Walter's writing-table had been broken open and turned hurriedly out on to the floor. The truth next instant was apparent. The old valet had been rendered insensible by callers during our absence, and the place had been ransacked.

I dashed on into the room, and went to the drawer wherein I had placed the ancient jewel-case with its strange contents, but found it empty. The ring and the poison had been taken; but what was infinitely worse was that I had left in the cover of the case, where it had been concealed all these years, the plan of the hiding-place of the treasure at Crowland!

I was beside myself with anger and chagrin. Our enemies had ingeniously outwitted us after all, for that female accomplice had held me in conversation purposely while the search was being made, thus showing that they were well acquainted with our success at Threave.

Yet when Walter had locked the box safely in his drawer with the key upon his chain, I had never dreamed that a bold attempt would thus be made to obtain it. Ingenious it was, for, as was afterwards proved, Wyman himself had been called by an urgent telegram to Richmond, which turned out to be fictitious.

At first I was so aghast that I knew not how to act; but, obtaining the assistance of the young valet in service in the flat below, I succeeded at last in getting Thompson round and hearing his story, which was to the effect that about half-past three o'clock two men called, one of them short, and the other clean-shaven, tall, and powerful. They inquired for Captain Wyman, and entered the hall on pretext of writing a message on a card. The instant, however, that old Thompson turned his back a handkerchief was clapped over his face and held there tightly until in a few moments he lapsed into unconsciousness.

The description of one man tallied with that of Selby; but the other, who had thin, sandy whiskers, was unknown to me.

As soon, however, as Thompson felt a trifle better, and began to inspect the disorder caused by the intruders, I ran downstairs and telephoned to Fred at the Euston Hotel. The Major was not in; but Bailey the hall-porter, who answered me, promised to give my message to Major Fenwicke or to Captain Waldron, whoever should be first to return.

Therefore I could do nothing but wait. Walter arrived in about half-an-hour, and was followed five minutes later by Fred and Sammy, all three standing dumfounded when I explained what had occurred.

The secret venom of the Borgias, together with the actual ring, were now in the possession of our enemies, and neither of us knew in what way it might be used against us. They had also secured the secret of the Crowland treasure, for they would undoubtedly find the piece of parchment behind the loose top of the case. It had fallen out in my hand, and would do so in theirs.

Selby's action was certainly a bold bid for fortune, and showed conclusively that he was aware of our success in Scotland, the theft being committed, no doubt, in the belief that the jewels discovered were in my friend's rooms. My intuition to place them in the bank only a few hours before was certainly a fortunate one.

The woman Bardi was still acting in concert with the conspirators, and the fact that Walter had been called to an appointment at Richmond by a telegram signed by a lady friend showed how ingeniously and swiftly it had all been worked.

'Well,' exclaimed Fred, gazing around the disordered sitting-room, 'our policy seems quite clear. First, we should go down to Crowland and prevent any investigations from being made there; secondly, we will arrest Selby for assault and theft the next time we meet him; and, thirdly, we must at all hazards reobtain possession of the ring and poison, for we can't tell what atrocious assassinations these

people may not commit now they have a poison so subtle, so deadly, and so impossible of detection.'

'Yes,' I cried. 'Think of what possession of such a secret compound means! They might contrive to use it upon us at any moment by sending us an envenomed letter, by placing it on the knob of an umbrella or walking-stick, or by impregnating our gloves, our hats, or any object left about, just as the Borgias used it in the old days.'

'It certainly isn't a very bright prospect,' remarked Waldron. 'I'd rather face a revolver than a secret poison. I've seen too much of poisoning in India. We in the police know something about it.'

Old Thompson was thoroughly unnerved by the drug; therefore, it being decided that we should all four go down to Crowland by the last train, Walter gave him leave to shut up the flat and go over to see his married daughter at Hackney Wick.

A telegram to Frank the ostler at the 'Angel' at Peterborough brought the carriage to meet us at the station by the 10.30 train from London, and by midnight we were comfortably installed at the 'George' at Crowland, the inn which to Walter and myself was already full of memories.

We had telegraphed to the rector, and he called upon us, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour. As we sat together in the private room I briefly related to him our success in Scotland, and how we had discovered the actual plan of the spot where the treasure lay concealed.

My words at once filled Mr Mason with eager interest; but when I told him of our irreparable loss his spirits fell and he shook his head and sighed. I explained the dastardly manner in which the thieves had drugged my friend's valet, and our determination to give Selby into custody.

Then, while we were discussing the possibility of using the ground plan of the abbey given me by Professor Fairbairn, Fred suddenly interrupted us as he took something from his pocket-book, saying:

'It's true we've lost the plan we discovered at Threave; but on the night of our return to Crailloch I thought it would be advisable to take a copy of it, so I made a rough tracing. Here it is;' and he opened a small piece of foreign notepaper, disclosing an accurate copy of the stolen plan.

He received a chorus of praises for his foresight, and Mr Mason expressed his eagerness to commence excavations at once, in order to forestall the others. He had not yet demanded back the books found by Lord Glenelg, having waited to confer with us as to the present advisability.

Upon the table we compared the tracing given us by Fairbairn with the copy of old Godfrey's plan made by Fred, and Mr Mason recognising the points where we were of course in ignorance, we came, after a long and careful examination and comparison, to the conclusion that the wealth of the abbey as enumerated in The Closed Book was concealed at a spot nearly a mile from the abbey, in the centre of the Great Posthand Fen, in a field which was on his own property—for he was squire of the place as well as rector—about midway between Thornbury Hall and the Decoy Farm. The position of St James's Bridge and the ancient stone cross at Brotherhouse were both shown, as well as the old Asen Dike and the Wash-bank at Cloot. The plan showed that the old abbot was crafty enough to carry the treasure sufficiently far into what must at the time have been a dangerous quagmire, wherein none dared venture who knew not the way, but which has of course since been drained and reclaimed by the building of banks and cutting of dikes in all directions. Mr Mason told us that the whole of the district shown on the plan was until the end of the sixteenth century a dismal, unhealthy swamp, the sparse inhabitants of which were fever-stricken, and the spot where the treasure was apparently concealed was in the deepest part of the basin, and in all probability a treacherous bog purposely chosen in order to defeat any efforts of Southwell's soldiers.

The allegation in The Closed Book that gold and silver objects had been sunk in the fish-pond was no doubt in order to mislead, for, after all, it was not likely that the abbot should make so little attempt to effectively conceal what he wished to rescue from sacrilegious hands.

'Depend upon it, gentlemen, we're on the right track at last,' declared the rector decisively. He was an archæologist himself, and was eager to see our splendid find of gems, just as he was eager to recover the long-lost treasure of the Abbot John.

The measurements on the plan which had so cunningly been concealed were given in paces from St James's Bridge, about a mile to the south-east of the abbey, and Mr Mason suggested that, having regard to the fact that Selby and his companions had the original plan in their possession, we should lose no time in going to the spot.

I glanced at my watch, and found it to be a quarter-past one in the morning.

Fred drew the blind aside, and discovered that it was not a particularly dark night, although heavy rain-clouds had drifted across the moon. The suggestion to fix the spot was a good one, although it was arranged that as the land was Church property, and there was no reason for secret search, the excavations should be carried out on the morrow.

Together, the five of us, having borrowed two lanterns from the hotelkeeper, left the house, and under the guidance of Mr Mason, passed down the road beside the rectory, skirted the north wall of the abbey, and then out upon the broad, flat high-road, past the dilapidated windmill, and on to St James's Bridge, where we took another road eastward, flat, hedgeless, uninteresting like the first, and running straight as an arrow towards our destination.

Presently the rector halted and pointed out a distant clump of trees looming in the darkness as Thornbury Hall, while to our left lay the Decoy Farm. Beneath the uncertain rays of the lamp he carefully examined the plan again, and then led us

through a gate into a large field sown with fen-potatoes, which we crossed carefully in the darkness for fear of falling into the dikes which in that country separate one field from another. At last we found the boundary, and discovered a single plank which gave access to the next field, with a crop of potatoes like the first. Then, having counted his paces carefully from the roadway, his face always turned to Thornbury Hall, he suddenly halted, saying:

'The actual spot is here, or within a few feet. According to the plan, it is one hundred and eighty-six paces due south towards Thornbury from the road anciently known as Guthlac's Drove—the road we have just left.'

We lowered the lanterns, and groping about, examined the ground. The crop had certainly not been disturbed. We stamped just as we had done at Threave, but there was no hollow sound in the heavy fen-clay.

'My suggestion is that we should send Barrett the town policeman to keep guard upon the place till morning, and then commence operations,' was Mr Mason's suggestion. 'We shall recognise the spot by yonder old willow-tree.'

This suggestion we acted upon, and when we turned in an hour later the constable Barrett was keeping vigil in that lonely field, wondering, no doubt, why the rector had sought him on his beat on the Eye Road and posted him away in that unfrequented spot.

(To be continued.)

DESTRUCTION OF LIFE IN WAR, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

DOES war, as carried on in our own days, entail a greater destruction of human life than was formerly the case? That this question would, by the great majority of the people, be answered in the affirmative is more than probable. So much have we heard during recent years of the terrible death-dealing powers of modern artillery, firearms, shells, bullets, lyddite, cordite, melinite, and what not, as almost to remove any reason to doubt that the adage, 'Every bullet has its billet,' rests, nowadays at all events, on a solid basis of fact. Indeed, there has arisen a school of writers, amongst whom the late M. Bloch carried the greatest weight, who contend that the conditions of warfare are rapidly tending towards the limit of human endurance, and will thus put an end to the thing once and for ever. No men of any nation, it is affirmed, however brave or fortified with the stoicism born of fatalism, will be able to bear up against the veritable hail of fire poured forth from huge cannon, Maxims, gatlings, and repeating-rifles.

General impressions of this nature, however widespread, are not necessarily always correct; and before taking it for granted it may be as well to endeavour to ascertain how far the facts warrant it. That is to say, is the roll of the slain and wounded greater in proportion to the numbers engaged under existing conditions than it was in the bygone days of the old clumsy cannon and flint-lock musket? Strange as it may appear, the answer, if the inquiry were extended to the times of antiquity or even of the Middle Ages, would be a very decided negative. For warfare as then waged was indeed 'war to the knife,' ferocious and merciless. To the victors it was but a barren triumph if any of the foemen were 'left to fight another day.' All who did not promptly yield themselves captive were remorselessly despatched, and as often as not no quarter whatever was given. Such was the case, for example, on the fatal field of Towton, in Yorkshire, the scene of the triumph of the Yorkists over the Lancastrians in the Wars of the Roses. The whole army of the vanquished faction, said to have numbered forty thousand, were slain on the spot, barely a dozen managing to effect their escape. But, limiting the inquiry to what is termed civilised warfare, it will be as well if we take the opening of the eighteenth century as the starting-point; it serves to mark a new epoch in the military art. The mail-clad warrior (armed with spear, battle-axe, or mace), the archer, the pikeman, had given place to cannon, muskets, and bayonets. Surgeons and hospitals first make their appearance. In short, we pass into the period of the war of men, not the struggles of savages.

With the names of Charles XII. and of Marlborough, without doubt the two greatest captains of the first half of the eighteenth century, the history of modern warfare is closely identified. In the year 1700 the Swedish monarch demonstrated, at the battle of Narva, how small is the chance of success of a mere multitude of men, however brave, against a force numerically inferior but thoroughly disciplined and ably led. The mighty Muscovite host, eighty thousand strong, was decimated by the ten thousand tried soldiers commanded by Charles; eighteen thousand were killed and wounded—that is, about 23 per cent. of the total—whilst thirty thousand prisoners and all their artillery fell into the hands of the victors. Thus each Swedish soldier accounted for nearly two enemies dead or disabled, and three captives. Of the numerous battles gained by our great captain, Marlborough, those of Blenheim and Malplaquet stand out as the most sanguinary. In the former the total forces engaged on both sides were close upon one hundred and twenty thousand strong, and the losses about thirty-two thousand—equal to something like 27 per cent.; at the latter one hundred and ninety thousand, yet the

losses were no greater, so that in that instance the percentage comes out at about 17 per cent. During the Seven Years' War waged by several European Powers against the great Frederick of Prussia some tremendous battles were fought, and blood poured out like water. At Zorndorf, on three successive days in August 1758, the Prussian king at the head of thirty thousand men contended against fifty thousand Russians. The latter, badly led, were really beaten from the outset, but, very illogically, refused to acknowledge it; standing like masses of granite, whole regiments were literally swept off the face of the earth by the skilfully directed Prussian artillery. When at length they retired it was in one massive and imposing square, which their foes did not dare to pursue. The losses reached the appalling total of thirty-three thousand, or close upon 40 per cent.! Nearly as bloody in its character, although the contending forces were much smaller, was the famous assault of the British redcoats on Bunker's Hill on 17th June 1775. Of the three thousand men to whom the task was entrusted, one thousand, or 33⅓ per cent. of the total, strewed the slopes before the American trenches were stormed.

During the Napoleonic era were fought some of the greatest battles in the world's history. The great adventurer owed much of his phenomenal success to his determination to win at any cost, and this was demonstrated on the field of Arcole, in North Italy, where the foundation of his great reputation was laid. Fighting with his thirty thousand men against forty thousand Austrians for four successive days, he wore them out by sheer obstinacy. The aggregate losses of the two armies reached to twenty-five thousand—more than one-third of the number engaged. Just as did Charles XII. and Frederick, so did the great Frenchman find the Russians the most enduring, if not the most skilful, of his Continental foes. At Eylau, Friedland, and Borodino were the scenes of Narva and Zorndorf repeated: indomitable valour on the side of the Russians rendered useless by bad leadership. In those three terrible conflicts the losses in killed and wounded of the two armies amounted to forty-five thousand, thirty-five thousand, and eighty thousand respectively, being in each case almost exactly one-third of the number of combatants. If the magnitude of the armies be considered, the greatest battle of all that period was fought around Leipzig on three days in October 1813. In that great 'battle of the nations' (almost every Continental State took a part on one side or the other) close upon five hundred thousand men met in deadly strife, and the star of Napoleon paled. The losses, as may readily be imagined, were enormous, aggregating one hundred thousand; but, appalling as these figures appear, the actual percentage, it will be perceived, was smaller, being but 20 per cent. The same, too, was the case as regards the decisive struggle of Waterloo, where the losses, terrible as they were, did not give such a heavy percentage as in other cases where the results were not so far-reaching. The reputation of the bloodiest of all the conflicts between British and French soldiers during that period attaches to Albuera, in the south of Spain, where in 1811 a small British force, supposed to be assisted by certain none too reliable Spanish troops, discomfited twenty-three thousand French veterans under Marshal Soult. As Napier says in one of his most stirring passages: 'Fifteen hundred men, the remnants of six thousand unconquerable British soldiers, stood at length triumphant on that fatal hill.' The total losses on both sides exceeded twelve thousand, or not far short of 40 per cent.

During the great Civil War in America (1861–65) the loss of life in many of the battles was tremendous. At the great battles of Antietam, Gettysburg, Murfreesboro, and Chickamauga, the percentage of killed and wounded on the number of men engaged ranged between 25 and 30 per cent.; whilst during Grant's last advance upon the Confederate stronghold of Richmond, his army lost over forty thousand out of one hundred and thirty thousand during a week's incessant fighting. The great advance in the power and accuracy of weapons of war may fairly be said to have been inaugurated with the adoption by Prussia of the earliest breech-loader—the famous needle-gun. This was brought to bear upon the Austrians in the campaign of 1866; but although, without question, its effect was decisive, strange to say its use apparently had the effect of reducing the number of casualties. In the colossal struggle on the field of Sadowa little short of five hundred thousand men took part, yet no more than twenty-seven thousand were killed and wounded during a combat of ten hours' duration—barely 8 per cent. During the Franco-German war, four years later, the great struggle round Metz on the 14th, 16th, and 18th of August, if not the most absolutely decisive, saw the most obstinate fighting on the part of the largest armies. Over four hundred thousand were arrayed against each other, and eighty thousand fell—equal to 20 per cent. No other battle of that war showed anything like so high a percentage. Nor has that percentage been exceeded in any battle of the wars of the last two decades. Indeed, the tendency appears to have been towards a decrease. During our struggle in South Africa even the hardest-fought fields failed to show a greater percentage than 20 per cent. Indeed, 10 or 15 per cent. was rarely exceeded.

Our most recent examples are, of course, the battles in the Far East, Kiuliencheng (on the Yalu River) and Kinchau (or Nanshan). Both were, beyond doubt, fiercely contested and productive of important results. Yet, although we read of 'fearful hailstorms of bullets,' 'a veritable hell-fire,' and 'appalling slaughter,' a cool and dispassionate examination of the real facts proves that the actual number of the combatants killed or disabled amounted—if the official accounts are to be credited—to no more than 5 or 6 per cent. in the former and 10 per

cent. in the latter instance of the total numbers engaged.

It is, therefore, difficult to escape from the conclusion that the warfare of to-day, despite all the powers brought to bear by science for destroying human life, for some reason or other fails to fulfil that object. Compare the instance last adduced with Albuera, Zorndorf, Eylau, or Bunker's Hill, with their 30 to 50 per cent. of slain or wounded, and we shall then be able to form some conception of what the flint-lock and cold steel were able to effect in the hands of men determined to 'do or die.'

A MESSAGE FORGOTTEN.

PART II.

AS a war correspondent of some slight experience, I have had my vicissitudes. Suakin was by no means a picnic, nor do rear-guard actions on the Indian frontier tend to monotony of existence. The Ashanti bush has its trials, and the Dervish-haunted sands of the Nile their excitements. But despite the Stoicism of the war-worn, I objected with as much forcible language as the mouthfuls of salt-water allowed at being scared unceremoniously from my bunk on a dark night in the China Seas, and at having to swim for life in the coldest of water, to be dragged into a tossing dingy by an arm and a leg. Then the little coasting-steamer, which I had just left so precipitately after the collision, went down with a gurgle into the deep, and a figure clad in oilskins flashed a lantern cautiously on to my dripping form.

As I regained my powers of observation I took in a long, thin steel deck, short squat funnels, and a few dark figures moving silently amid objects that resolved themselves into guns and tubes. A waning moon which shone dully among racing storm-clouds revealed other similar-shaped craft near at hand. The foam was curling white from their sharp, pierced bows. I had been picked up by one of a flotilla of torpedo-boats!

'No lights on any of your blamed vessels,' I found myself pointing out with an emphasis not unwarranted by the occasion. The man addressed gave a low chuckle, caught me as I reeled on a slippery, freezing deck, and suggested in English that I should go below.

Another man brought me hot brandy and some dry clothes. He too was an Englishman, and uncommunicative exceedingly.

'H.M.S. *Squasher*—that's what yer on,' I extracted at length from him after much difficulty. 'No, them other boats ain't British—they're Japs.'

Apparently one of the Royal Navy was numbered with the aliens; nor was I the less puzzled by the appearance of a sturdy little Japanese sailor in the doorway.

'You'd best turn in for a spell, sir,' advised my countryman. 'Nothink ain't agoin' to 'appen till the moon's down.'

Now, I knew perfectly well that we were close to Wei-hai-wei, also that the remainder of the Chinese fleet had taken refuge there after the battle of the Yalu. It was the bitter wintry February of 1895, and the Japanese were hemming in the doomed town by sea and by land with an iron circle of men and ships. So intense was the cold that blocks of ice were frozen into the mouths of the guns and torpedo-tubes. But how came H.M.S. *Squasher* to be concerned in the struggle? As I reflected on this problem a cross-sea struck the torpedo-boat angrily, and I decided that I was not inclined to sleep. I rose to go on deck, and forthwith came face to face with Carlton.

I am not easily surprised, and there followed prompt explanation on his part. As he brushed the snowflakes from his greatcoat I watched his face, with its clean-cut jaws; it was set and stern. I leaned back against the heaving table—we were making worse weather every minute—and learnt things.

While on a cruise with part of the British squadron in China Seas the *Squasher* had sat incontinently on a rock, and the Admiral had not been pleased. His annoyance had taken the form of peremptorily removing the unfortunate lieutenant who commanded her, and replacing him temporarily by an officer lent from the flagship. Jack Carlton took the *Squasher* into the nearest Japanese port for repairs. The very day that these were completed the Japanese reserve torpedo-boats sailed to co-operate with their land forces in the attack on Wei-hai-wei. Then came the hand of Fate. Jack was watching with interest their preparations to weigh anchor when a note was brought to him.

Under the quiet, unassuming manner of a certain type of man there often rests iron determination and unrelenting passion. Thwart the one and rouse the other—as a woman alone can do effectually—and that man will act with savage, unsparing persistence. Such men have few enemies, but, given a real foe, are to be feared.

Carlton was convinced that the influence which had prevented his winning Beatrice Warrener for wife had been that of the Russian Captain Poulaski. It may not have been a reasonable conclusion; but in such matters one is prone to hasty judgments. He had friends among the silent men who act as collectors of intelligence for their Government in the many strange places of the earth, and he had tracked down his rival's movements with all a detective's pertinacity. By curious channels the final information came to him that the Russian

ex-naval attaché in London was taking an active part in the Chinese defence of Wei-hai-wei. This news reached him with the added detail that Poulaski was in real though not nominal command of the battleship *Ah Yuen* at the very moment that the Japanese flotilla sailed for the fray. Thereupon the *Squasher* had hastily completed her coaling, borrowed some Japanese sailors to complete her war complement—they were only too eager to come, and would ask no questions—and had stolen away from port unheeded amid the bustle. Jack Carlton must have squared the Japanese senior commander into acquiescence; but of the means by which he did this I am ignorant to this day.

'Good heavens, my dear fellow! you'll be broken everlastingly,' I cried, aghast, as I began to realise the situation. 'You will be disowned—cashiered—ruined. We are not at war.' I choked in my astonishment.

'What does it matter,' he asked coolly, 'so long as I settle with Poulaski once and for all?'

'There will be a boom across the entrance to the harbour, for certain,' I returned. 'We are much more likely to go down ourselves.'

'The Japs are going to try to dynamite it.'

'The harbour itself will be mined.'

'Then we shall go up—not down—to glory.'

Personally, I did not want to go to any such indefinite destination, and I said so with great emphasis. Had lurid language been able to affect inanimate matter, I had done enough to make the *Squasher* refuse to answer her helm. Jack only grinned and remained resolute.

'You're a mad fool,' I grunted at last. Argument having been exhausted, abuse alone was left me.

'Look here, Harry,' he said with sudden seriousness. 'The boldest course is always the safest, because it is the least expected. My orders are to rejoin at Yung Cheng Island, to the westward of Wei-hai-wei, where the Admiral is watching operations with the foreign squadrons. The Japanese attack at 1 A.M., and the Chinese cannot hit a haystack, much less a boat of our speed, except by accident. I shall run in under cover of the darkness—it is a howling gale and snowstorm too—and see the show. If I can get in a torpedo at the *Ah Yuen*, I shall loose it off with its warhead on. Then—oh, then I lost it, you know, by culpable carelessness, and I get a severe official reprimand.'

'But your crew?'

'They are all right; enjoying the joke.'

'They will chatter like parrots if ever they live to have the chance.'

'Not they,' said Jack with decision. 'Anyhow, I'll risk it. But I didn't expect to have you aboard, all the same. It has upset my calculations.'

He stared at me thoughtfully, and I took some more brandy because I felt as if I needed it. Suddenly he undid his jacket and pulled from a pocket-book a little faded bunch of blue violets pressed with loving care.

'It was Beatrice who gave me these barely six months ago. We had been riding in the Row. She had been wearing them pinned in her habit. I begged them of her when we got home. I should have been with her now—have had her as well as the violets; but Poulaski charmed her away. Come now, Harry, I'll put it to you: shall we go?'

Fair and square we met each other's eyes. I, too, dislike the Russians.

'You really wish it?'

'It is certainly my wish.'

'Yes, we'll go,' I answered almost in a whisper. There was no need to speak in whispers, but I seemed to do so instinctively. It may seem incredible, but nevertheless it is true that no memory of Beatrice Warrener's message ever crossed my mind. Yet the thought of her was uppermost, and her existence the reason of as wild an escapade as was ever indulged in by a ship of Her Majesty's Navy. So that of the few men who have ever heard of it in confidential corners most have never believed it true.

An hour or two later I was standing by the silent figure on the lookout. All lights were screened, and the rising wind screamed shrilly at the choppy seas, which flung masses of ice-cold water along the turtleback and around the obstacles on the deck. I was glad of the companionship of the quiet little Japanese pilot, who knew the coast and was peering ahead with trained eyes through the driving blackness of the night. Muffled in an enormous great-coat, he grunted occasional directions. Snowflakes whirled down upon us fitfully from the inky clouds overhead. The cold was intense.

Most people now know the story of the deadly night attacks by the mosquito torpedo-boats of the Japanese on the hostile fleet which Admiral Ting had gathered in the great semicircular bay of Wei-hai-wei—gathered to their doom, since it was this course of action on his part which proved so fatal to the Chinese, and ended in the suicide of the one Chinaman who showed himself a leader in the hour of his country's downfall. Once they were there, however, it was the single occasion on which their navy showed bravery and foresight; though it is whispered that the presence of a few stray foreigners on their ships guided their actions and stiffened the desperate resistance offered to the attacking force. That there was one such European Jack Carlton and I soon had reason to know.

It is written in the history of the war how the first night-rush by the Japanese torpedo-boats failed; how ice choked the tubes on one boat; how some grounded or fouled the boom; while others drifted, disabled, to destruction under the fire from forts and warships. Men were scalded to death from shells that wrecked the boilers, or perished frozen in the icy water, or were shot down by the relentless hail of bullets that spattered the snow-covered decks. But two nights later Admiral Ito gave the unhesitating order to repeat the attack, confessing to the pain it gave him, but unswerving in his determination to succeed. The reserve torpedo-boats were

brought up and flung into the fray, their crews cheerfully destroying their signal-books, papers, and all written orders and unnecessary articles beforehand. The official records give the number of the attacking craft with Japanese precision. That there was an unofficial stranger among them has been recorded by no historian.

The *Squasher* arrived upon the scene with the third or reserve torpedo squadron; later she acted with entire individuality. Sometimes when I look back upon that night I wonder if it is all a bad dream, and then I have to rub a jagged little scar underneath my temple which will always be there as a reminder of reality. There are not many Englishmen who have taken part in a real torpedo-action with a modern boat and a Mark A 18-inch Whitehead; but Carlton and I are to be numbered among them.

Dynamite had proved unavailing to break through the boom at the entrance to the channel leading harbourwards; but between its end and the rocks on the shore there existed a gap which had never been completely barred. This the industry and pluck of the attackers had succeeded in widening. Now, through the darkness and storm of the winter night, the torpedo-boats sped silently and swiftly on their errand of death.

The pace of the *Squasher* seemed to *me* tremendous. Carlton, with set face and braced nerves, peered out from the conning-tower. Ahead, the funnels of the preceding boat were flaming slightly, and a bearded sailor beside me was cursing in soft monologue lest they should betray us all. With splendid seamanship and no slackening of the headlong speed, our onward rush scraped us past the end of the boom—it lay a grim, black line on the tossing water on our quarter—the helm went hard over, and we tore round into the great bay. As we did so a rocket shot up in the distance, and the white beam of a search-light burst out through the gloom of the night.

Then all hell seemed to be let loose around us.

We circled at tremendous pace round a great ship silhouetted in broad black lines. It was not the *Ah Yuen*. Her guns roared out in angry alarm, and the shells came hurtling through the air and splashed furiously into the surrounding water. A bit of one tore a hole in the forward funnel, and the furnace flames and smoke spurted out savagely. The forts on shore added their hurried storm of projectiles to the thunder of the warships.

Such moments do not inspire self-possession. I looked at Carlton. Every minute must have brought some new problem to the hard, wiry sailors guiding our tiny craft with the self-restraint and indifference to danger that is taught in the Navy; but their resource and audacity never failed. Fortunately a great deal of the Chinese ordnance proved more efficient as to noise than as to aim; but, then, it is difficult for a flurried gunner to hit a target tearing through the water at twenty-five knots in the darkness. Nevertheless, I found myself making so many good resolutions to be performed, if ever I survived at all, that had a fraction of them been carried out later I should undoubtedly have deserved to be canonised as a saint.

'Where, in heaven's name, is the *Ah Yuen?* Are you sure she was on the western side? Can that be her? I shan't let off the torpedo till we are within three hundred yards. What's that?—Hit?'

A little shell chipped through the steel of the conning-tower, and a splinter caught the Japanese pilot. He gave a curious shrill cry and collapsed in an unsightly heap.

'Confound their electrics! That big chap there knows what he's about. Hard aport!' We shot from the arc of the search-light into an outer darkness, and I felt dazed.

'The *Ah Yuen* at last!'

Jack's tone reached me quiet and exulting. Together with a Japanese torpedo-boat near us, we were racing furiously for the Chinaman. Some one aboard the warship knew his work. It was no mere Chinese brain which directed her fierce resistance. She spouted a rain of shells and bullets at her foes, and there followed a sharp explosion from our Japanese consort.

'Muck-up in their engine-room!' said a voice near me, aloud to the air.

Miraculously we seemed to dodge the *Ah Yuen's* deadly fire. Carlton, as an expert torpedo-man, knew the vagaries of his weapon: how uncertain, how difficult to use with precision. Should we never be within torpedo range? Now! Out of the tube plunged the long, shining Whitehead, and was gone into the waves.

The seconds that followed seemed hours; the torpedo had missed, and a shell swept one of our deck mountings to destruction in the interlude. Would the continuous patter of bullets from the enemy's machine-guns never cease? We fired a second torpedo, and the wheel-spokes flew over as the *Squasher* tore away from the inferno of fire. Then came what we were waiting for—the boom of a muffled explosion high above the general uproar; the two hundred pounds of gun-cotton had run dead straight on to its target, and its work was done. Out went the Chinaman's search-light, and the noise of her guns was suddenly succeeded by a sinister quiet.

Something had stung me on the forehead, and my hand came away from the spot red and sticky. But I rushed from the conning-tower, one of a little knot of mad, excited men who hung on to the frozen rail of the torpedo-boat and watched with strained, tense faces the ruin our hands had wrought.

Now the *Squasher's* search-light lit up the scene—horrible, appalling. Gradually the great Chinese warship was heeling over, her decks swarming with little frantic figures who poured up from her depths and flung themselves headlong into the water. We picked up all we could. Poulaski was among them. I found him recovering consciousness in the

Squasher's little cabin, and babbling incoherently of a wife and child in far-away Odessa.

I sought Jack Carlton with the news; he was dragging a wounded sailor from under a mass of splintered deck-hamper. Could Beatrice in her dainty Kensington home have had a vision of him then, she would surely never have recognised her soft-mannered, gentle lover in the white-faced, stern-eyed sailor, flinging his sharp orders to the men around, and bleeding from a graze across his cheek. I remember his calling to me hoarsely, 'He has lost her. I will have her yet!' and I remember nothing more that night; the bullet across my forehead had seen to that. Nor do I know how we escaped from Wei-hai-wei Bay in the end—but we did.

Our disabled Japanese consort, which I saw drifting unsteadily past us in a haze of hissing steam, has to this day the credit of having fired the torpedo which sunk the *Ah Yuen*. True, a few sundry Britons think otherwise, but their mouths are closed. Did the Admiralty ever learn all the story? Really, I cannot say. Yet, who hushed up the loss of the two torpedoes, and who paid for the further repairs of H.M.S. *Squasher* of the Royal Navy? These things may reasonably be asked; but there are some questions to which discreet people will not press for an answer.

. . . . . .

The worst—or the best—of love is that we always return to it in the end. Thus there came a summer evening months later when I called on the Warreners in Kensington. Beatrice began the conversation abruptly.

'Mr Carlton was here this morning.'

'I am not surprised,' said I.

'You forgot my message entirely.'

'Not entirely,' I protested rather feebly. 'I gave it to him two days after we met.'

'When it might have been too late,' the girl rejoined. She tapped on the floor with the toe of a very becoming little slipper; also she simulated deep annoyance.

'He told me lots of dreadful things,' continued Miss Warrener, with illogical disapproval of me as if I were the culprit and he the victim. There was a pause.

'I never saw you look prettier, Trix,' I remarked, patting a rather flushed cheek with cousinly appreciation. I gazed at her inquiringly.

'Yes—we are engaged,' she murmured in answer to my silent question, adding several other things more or less humdrum, but sufficiently cumulative to be convincing. Thereupon I offered the correct congratulations with heartiness.

When she allowed me to see her face again she was quite collected, but introduced another topic.

'So few girls really deserve to be worshipped,' she observed.

'It *is* very bad for them,' I agreed inwardly, reflecting that it was also sometimes a bit trying for other folk as well. Still, the *Ah Yuen* would undoubtedly have been sunk in any case, and we had certainly saved Poulaski from drowning.

'When is the wedding to be?' I asked confidentially.

Her reply contained none of the elements of an answer. Instead, it consisted of a sofa cushion which was directed at my head with a skilled aim unpossessed by Chinese gunners. Meanwhile, the Royal Navy is the richer by an officer of greater knowledge of torpedo-work, and the light of a sweeter content has dawned in Beatrice Warrener's dark eyes.

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

TUBERCULOSIS.

THREE years ago the eminent German savant Dr Koch startled the British Congress on Tuberculosis, sitting at that time, with the declaration that human and bovine tuberculosis were separate and distinct forms of disease. Our leading physicians and scientists hesitated to accept this dictum, which, if true, showed that all the usual precautions against infection, such as the use of boiled milk, need no longer be taken. As a result of the controversy raised, a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate the matter, and this Commission, after a series of exhaustive experiments, has just issued an interim report which shows that Dr Koch has been misled in coming to his revolutionary conclusions. This report says that the Commission has very carefully compared the disease set up in the bovine animal by material derived from a human being with that set up in a bovine animal by material of bovine origin, and that it has so far failed to discover any character by which one can be distinguished from the other. This report, then, confirms the old belief that to guard against tuberculosis the greatest care must be taken to obtain a pure milk-supply.

FOOD ADULTERATION.

We have so many persons among us who are willing to spend time and money upon fancied grievances and fads which are of no moment to any one but themselves, that it seems a pity that some of them cannot be induced to make war against the real evils which cry aloud for redress. How much good they would do, for example, if they would hunt down those who deliberately adulterate such necessaries as food and drugs! The law sometimes reaches these dishonest traders, a small fine is imposed and paid—and the business goes on

much the same as before. Only the other day it was boldly stated in the press that milk which failed to satisfy the sanitary authorities of one of our northern cities was sent to London, where they are not so particular. Some cases were lately tried in the Metropolis in which it was proved that cod-liver oil had been adulterated with 90 per cent. of fish oil, the former being a valuable medicine, and the latter a product which would 'destroy the digestive power of a child.' Fish oil is only one-seventh the price of cod-liver oil, so that the traders can well afford to pay the small fines inflicted.

FOR OUR SOLDIERS.

As the appliances of warfare become more deadly, it is comforting to see that at the same time much attention is being directed to the welfare of soldiers in the field. Every one knows that in a campaign the loss of life from wounds is as nothing compared to the ravages of disease, and of late years strenuous efforts have been made to minimise the mortality from this cause. The Ford-Palliser water-tank, which lately went through an experimental trial at Bisley, is an appliance for quickly boiling and cooling large quantities of water, for it is known that the use of boiled water banishes enteric fever. On the same occasion was successfully tried a motor ambulance, made by the Joel Motor Company, of London. This is a bullet-proof vehicle driven by a petrol-engine, the back of which can be opened out so as to afford a screen behind which first aid can be given to the wounded on the field. One more valuable appliance for use with an army which was exhibited at the same time was a machine, made by the Pulsometer Engineering Company, of Reading, capable of producing three hundred pounds of ice per day. This machine is driven by the same Joel motor as that employed in the ambulance already mentioned.

ULLSWATER.

One of the most beautiful spots in the English Lake District is Gowbarrow Park, Ullswater, which consists of nearly eight hundred acres, with a frontage of one mile to the lake. To tourists its chief attraction is the well-known waterfall Aira Force, which has been immortalised by Wordsworth in more than one of his poems. There is now an opportunity of acquiring this estate for the use of the public for ever for the sum of thirteen thousand five hundred and eighty pounds; and Canon Rawnsley, Hon. Secretary of the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty, is appealing for funds in order to further the scheme. It was through the exertions of this trust that the Brandelhow property on Derwentwater was acquired as a national possession, the necessary money being collected chiefly from residents in the north of England. It is now suggested by the trust that, as so many Scottish people appreciate the English Lake District, they also may be asked to contribute towards the present scheme; and with this view committees have been formed both in Scotland and England, by the aid of which it is hoped that the funds necessary for the purchase of Gowbarrow may be secured. The sum named will purchase the park, the deer therein, rights of fishing and boating on the lake, Lyulph's Tower, and Aira Force.

INDIGO.

More than twenty years ago, and after an extended series of experiments, it was announced that chemists had discovered how to make artificial indigo, and it was soon ascertained that the new product was identical in its properties with the old. A very few years elapsed before the new indigo was made in Germany on a commercial scale; and, as it could be sold at a cheaper rate than that derived from cultivation, the planters were threatened with ruin. But a strange thing has happened. It has been recently found that when the two kinds of indigo, the natural and the artificial, are blended in equal proportions, a dye is obtained which is not only more durable but is brighter in hue than either by itself. This discovery has naturally resulted in an increased demand for the old-fashioned indigo, and fresh impetus has been given to an industry which was much in need of support.

MINIATURE RIFLE-CLUBS.

The difficulty of finding a place where ordinary rifle practice can be carried on free from danger, except in remote places which are difficult of access to busy men, is obvious. This difficulty has been met by the establishment of miniature ranges and the use of miniature ammunition fired through a Morris-tube fitted to the ordinary service rifle. A number of clubs have been formed throughout the country, and it is found that the men trained in them become good marksmen when subsequently they approach the long ranges and use the full service charge. There is, of course, a difference in the recoil of the bigger cartridge, and windage has to be allowed for in using the full range. But at the miniature target the rifleman learns to hold his rifle steadily, and to pull the trigger without jerking the weapon. It has been suggested that the Government might do well to encourage these miniature ranges by supplying them with ammunition at a nominal price.

MUSICAL EDUCATION.

At the eighth annual conference of the Parents' National Educational Union, held at Edinburgh, many excellent papers were read, and perhaps one of the most generally interesting was that by Professor Niecks on the 'Place of Music in Education.' More than 99 per cent. of our music-teaching, he said, was little better than a horrible, ghastly waste of time, energy, and money. He condemned the common system of aiming at the attainment of mechanical skill, unaccompanied by the intelligence how to use it. The early training should be informal; the sense of hearing should be cultivated, especially with regard to the perception of pitch, the relations of the notes of the scale to each other,

and the value of time. Children should not be taught to perform musical tricks, but to acquire a knowledge of and taste for music. The mass of present-day students had no ear, were unable to read at sight, and did not understand music. He recommended parents to fix upon a competent teacher for their children, and to give him a free hand. They should take an interest in the pupils' progress, not by exhibiting them at parties, but by listening to them and encouraging them in private.

MARINE BIOLOGY.

A lecture was recently delivered at the Royal Institution, London, 'On the Progress of Marine Biology,' by his Serene Highness the Prince of Monaco, who has for a long time made a study of this branch of science. He has furnished a ship with all the equipments of a whaler, including three whale-boats, each containing a harpoon-gun, and has placed the whole under the direction of an experienced Scotsman. Voyaging in this vessel in search of the fauna of the ocean has been his hobby. The cetaceans have their favourite hunting-ground, and they seldom leave it, coming to the surface of the water to breathe at intervals of between ten minutes to forty-five, according to the species. Very often the same animal will come up almost in the same spot for several hours consecutively. This is when the harpooner gets the opportunity for a shot. But there is nothing to show at once that the creature has been hit; presently the line runs out and the boat is towed rapidly along, leaving in its wake, if the animal be a large one, a broad red streak which will persist for eight or ten miles. At last the exhausted creature slackens its speed, it is cautiously approached, and a long lance gives it its death-blow. This is a critical moment for the crew of the whaler, for a boat has been more than once crushed between the jaws of a powerful cachalot, and even ships have been sunk by the enormous wedge-shaped head being used as a ram.

DIVERS' PALSY.

Professors Hill and Macleod have performed a good service in calling attention to the frequency of what is known as 'caisson' disease or 'divers' palsy,' which affects men who have to work under unnatural air-pressure. Professor Hill states that nearly one hundred lives have been lost from this cause in America during the last few years, and that such a death-roll indicates at least ten times as many cases of illness. As long ago as 1861 a German savant showed that the paralysis and other ailments of divers who go to great depths are due to the disengagement of bubbles of gases in the blood which have been dissolved under great pressure; and a few years later a French observer pointed out that danger from this cause might be obviated if the diver, after his work was done, were made to occupy a chamber in which decompression took place very gradually. In this way frothing of the blood is avoided, and diving can be carried on with impunity at depths which at present are out of the question. Messrs Hill and Macleod have determined that animals can be exposed safely to eight atmospheres—which means a depth of two hundred and thirty feet—for four hours if two hours be spent in gradual decompression. They consider, however, that the safe limit should be placed at two hundred feet, for in more highly compressed air the oxygen has a toxic effect. Apparatus is now being designed to give effect to these recommendations.

LIFTING BY MAGNETS.

A child playing with a toy magnet will often attach a string to it and use it for picking up nails from the floor. Magnets for lifting articles whose weights are measured by tons have been used in the same way for some years in certain iron and steel works, and the only difference between the toy magnet and that used for serious work is that the latter is of the electric kind. In other words, it consists of a soft iron core, surrounding which is a coil of insulated wire, a current passing through which makes the iron strongly magnetic so long as it is maintained. At Liége, Belgium, electrical engineers claim to have produced a most perfect installation of this kind for employment in mills, foundries, &c., and by its use an immense amount of labour is saved. One man at a crane fitted with one of these magnetic appliances can pick up enormous masses of iron or steel by just operating the switch which gives current to the magnet that hangs at the end of the chain under his control. After the mass of metal has been carried to the place assigned to it, another touch of the switch stops the current and the burden is dropped. All the time usually consumed in adjusting chains and ropes round awkwardly shaped pieces of metal is saved, and the employment of many hands is dispensed with. Another point worthy of notice is that masses of metal far too hot to be meddled with in the ordinary way can be dealt with by the lifting magnet. The apparatus takes two forms, one a single magnet and the other double. Now that the electric current is so commonly available, this system of lifting by magnets is sure to come into extensive use.

MOTOR SPEED INDICATOR.

The disputes which are constantly arising relative to the speed of motor-cars, and the conflicting evidence which is given in our police reports with regard to the rate at which a particular vehicle was running on a given date, may be obviated by the use of a device which has been patented by Mr Richard Paulson, of Hove, Sussex. This is a clock-driven apparatus attached to the motor-car, which prints on a travelling tape the date, the speed at which the vehicle is running, any stoppages which may be made and their duration, the distance travelled, and the time consumed. In addition to this, should a set speed—say twenty miles per hour—

be exceeded, a warning bell is rung, and the driver acts accordingly. The apparatus works automatically, and when once it is wound up and set going, the driver's attention need not be distracted by referring to it. Such is a brief description of a very useful piece of mechanism, and it remains to be seen whether motorists can be persuaded to adopt it. A distance-indicator has long been at the disposal of cabmen; but so far as this country is concerned, they have steadily refused to have anything to do with it. To some persons truth is not only stranger but is much more inconvenient than fiction.

A NEW SMOKE-CONSUMING APPARATUS.

Mr George Sinclair, of the Albion Boiler Works, Leith, having studied the practical side of the smoke-abatement question for many years, has come to the conclusion that the admission of a certain quantity of air above the grates in steam boilers is as necessary as the admission of air below the grates in order to obtain perfect combustion. He has therefore devised an air-chamber and receiver to be placed at the back of the furnace-front of ordinary hand-fired boilers; the admission of the air to this chamber, through rectangular holes cut in the dumb-plate at each side of the furnace-door opening, being caused by the natural draught produced by the boiler chimney. The air-chamber and the air-admission holes in the dumb-plate are made of sizes proportionate to the amount of grate-surface in each boiler, in order that the smokiest coal may be burned without the emission of smoke from the chimney; but as some qualities of coal give off less smoke than others, and therefore require less air for perfect combustion, slides or doors are provided on the under-side of the dumb-plate, so that the area of the air-admission holes may be reduced when desired. The apparatus is simple in construction and cannot get out of order, and costs about thirteen pounds sterling per furnace. By its means all kinds of coal can be burned without the emission of smoke from the chimney; and as with this apparatus more steam can be raised on a smaller consumption of coal, it may also be regarded as a coal-saver as well as a smoke-consuming contrivance.

THE LEPERS OF ROBBEN ISLAND.

Dr George Turner, Medical Officer of Health for the Transvaal, and resident physician at Pretoria Leper Asylum, sends the following correction upon statements made as to the segregation of lepers at Robben Island. The paragraph in question was founded on Mr Jonathan Hutchinson's researches as published in the *Times:*

'In your *Journal* of April 1st, 1904, you make some remarks on the prevention of leprosy. Amongst others, the following passage appears: "Therefore the segregation of lepers, as at Robben Island, where its victims are condemned to a life-long and miserable imprisonment, is unnecessary and inhuman." The paragraph is probably a quotation, because I am sorry to say I have seen much the same thing in other publications. I have even seen the term leper prisons applied to leper asylums. It would be quite as appropriate to speak of lunatic prisons. Robben Island is by no means the terrible place it is represented to be. When I was Medical Officer of Health for the Cape Colony I used to send my wife and children there for the benefit of their health. I have lived on the island for six weeks at a time, and invariably went there to spend any holidays I could obtain. The lepers on the island are housed, clothed, and fed at the public expense on a far more liberal scale than they have ever been accustomed to in their own homes. Should the disease become arrested, as it sometimes does, they are brought before a board of medical experts, and if found to be free, are given a certificate to that effect, which is sent to the Colonial Secretary. If on inquiry it is found that the patients or the patients' friends are able to provide for them, they are liberated. This provision is made entirely in the interest of the patient, because the majority, if liberated, would starve. Many are helpless from the loss of fingers and toes, and those able to do any work would not be able to find employment. So far from the retention of these patients being "unnecessary and inhuman," it is the greatest kindness and benefit to them. The same rule applies to patients in this asylum (Pretoria). In three years I have liberated two white men and one white woman who are able to support themselves. There are, I admit, patients in the asylum who could, as far as the public health is concerned, be released; but in that case they would starve. There are also a few able to provide for themselves, and fit to go out, but they prefer to remain. Quite recently I told a well-educated woman, a Swiss, that if she cared to return to her farm I would obtain permission for her to do so. She replied, "I am quite comfortable here. I have all I want; no one avoids me as he would outside, and so I prefer to remain where I am." In my opinion she was a wise woman. In the Pretoria Asylum no patient is compelled to submit to treatment, no patient is compelled to work. If the patients work—and they usually do—they are paid for their labour. Every three months or so the white patients have a dance and supper in the recreation-room, and they have occasional picnics beyond the asylum; and everything is done, by the provision of musical instruments, bagatelle-boards, and other games, to make life as little tedious as possible. Many of the white patients, especially the girls, have bicycles, and some of them are to be seen racing each other in front of my window. The coloured patients also have dances and feasts as frequently as the white patients; but these festivities take place *sub Jove*, as they are too numerous for any room in the asylum. Your *Journal* is widely read by a class of people who are able to influence popular opinion, and I am anxious they should be under no misapprehension as to the condition of life in leper asylums. Leprosy is a sad disease, almost the saddest that can afflict

man; it is therefore necessary to limit its spread, and that can only be done by preventing contagion. It is little contagious, I admit; but contagion is practically the only means by which it is spread.'

AN EMERGENCY RAILWAY-BRAKE.

From time to time references are made in the newspaper press to the ever-increasing speed, not infrequently up to eighty miles an hour, of railway-trains; and, having this in view, the want of an efficient emergency-brake capable of checking the highest-speed railway-trains daily becomes more pronounced. For all ordinary purposes the Westinghouse-brake is apparently unassailable; but, rapid as is the action of this beautiful arrangement, there may be extreme cases where the driver has no option but to rush his train and its human freight into some obstacle, it may be only a couple of hundred yards ahead, the impact with which means certain death and destruction in a large degree. For, reliable as our trains are, such a catastrophe may be caused at any moment by a stray bullock getting on to the line, or by a pointsman falling asleep, as has happened on several occasions. As emphasising the need of an efficient emergency-brake, we may instance the recent deplorable accident to a motor party who were caught by a French express while passing over a level crossing. Here, although six persons lost their lives, it was shown that the express, notwithstanding that the brakes were applied immediately the driver saw the motor, ran for eight hundred yards after the accident before being brought to a standstill. To meet the now well-recognised want of an emergency-brake, capable, as it were, of catching and holding a railway-train from certain destruction, we have got in the invention of Mr Charles Mackintosh, of London, a form of electrical emergency railway-brake which in any case affords a good foundation-stone to build upon. Mr Mackintosh's plan, which he has recently patented, consists in fitting to each carriage of a railway-train a pair of powerful electro-magnetic brakes, placed so as to come, when in action, between the wheels, and attached to bars which cause them to act as drags or pulls upon the front ends of each carriage in the train. A simple mechanical device normally holds the brakes from contact with the rails, and is so arranged as to release the brakes and so let them fall on to the rails simultaneously with the switching on of the current which serves to excite the electro-magnets. The result of the instantaneous application of such a brake might be as disastrous to the passengers as the impact from an actual collision itself; and to prevent this the brake-shoes are fitted with a lubricating pad, which serves to prevent the immediate magnetic gripping of the rails by the brakes, thus avoiding bringing the train to an absolutely dead stop. The composition and proportion of the lubricant used could be arranged so as to ensure a rapidly increasing augmentation of the brake's effect, the action on the train being perhaps best comparable to that of a strong spiral spring whose retarding effect increases in a rapidly increasing ratio as the spring is extended; or, to further illustrate this, we may say that the train is controlled as would be a large ship moving at great speed on being checked and finally pulled up by an immense spiral spring. The advantages of this seemingly ingenious plan could be simply and cheaply demonstrated by actual experiment, and the oft-debated question as to the exact distance, whether it be one hundred yards more or less, in which a rapidly moving train could be safely pulled up would be thereby set at rest.

CHANGE.

Flowers that in my garden grow,
Why so sadly are you pining;
Vanished all your sunny glow
And your forms to earth declining?

Lilies, why your golden head
Hang you thus; and, roses, say,
Why is all your beauty fled,
And your fragrance gone away?

Daisies, pansies, phloxes, tell,
What has happened—yestermorn
You were jubilant and well—
Wherefore are you now forlorn?

Is the sky to you unkind,
Does the sun withhold his light,
Has a breath of frosty wind
Blown upon you in the night?

Heavy drops of tearful dew
Upon all your leaves are lying;
My sweet flowers, tell me true,
Wherefore are you thus a-dying?

Ah! the reason I have found
Why your radiance is o'er:
'Tis that in this garden round
One dear lady walks no more!

And you long for her returning,
For the kindness of her eye;
This is why we both are mourning,
My sweet flowers, you and I!

T. P. Johnston.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SIXTH SERIES.

'VAIN THREADS.'

By Mrs ISABEL SMITH, Author of *The Romance of Mutby Workhouse, Setting the Clock Back*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

We spin vain threads, and toil and strive.

MRS ELLIOT forgot many things concerning her late husband (perhaps advisedly); but she never forgot that he had been the grandson of a viscount, and no one who was in her society for any length of time was likely to forget it either.

It was a great consolation to her in her somewhat straitened circumstances to reflect upon this fact, and she was never tired of impressing it upon her husband's niece and adopted daughter, Joane Elliot, who now and again showed signs of a democratic turn of mind.

Mrs Elliot herself was of no particular family, which partly accounted for her veneration for the aristocracy and her determination to live up to the traditions of the House into which she had married.

Joane's father, like Mrs Elliot's husband, was only a younger son, and had got rid of his substance with even more effectual completeness, leaving his daughter to the mercy of his relations.

Ever since she had been twelve years old Joane had lived with her 'Aunt Mamie,' as Mrs Elliot chose to be called, in an atmosphere of unnecessary restraint and strict observance of etiquette. In a less pretentious style of living they could have had considerably more solid comforts; but Mrs Elliot was one of the numerous class of people who prefer appearances to anything, and consider what their neighbours and outsiders think of the utmost importance.

Joane used to fret against the artificially absurd restrictions of her lot when she was a child; now she was a woman, trying to realise that she had left youth behind her without having tasted any of its enjoyments, she fretted still more keenly. It was a dull life at the best. Mrs Elliot had not the means or the inclination to entertain much, and what parties she gave were of the tamest description, mostly what used to be styled 'tabby-parties,' and Joane seldom saw an eligible man.

It is true she might have been married once. Old Lord Pottleby, who, if ancient saws be true, would have made the best of husbands, proposed to Joane, and Mrs Elliot had never forgiven her for unhesitatingly refusing such an advantageous offer. But Joane had shown on this occasion that she possessed a will of her own, though as a rule she was content to let it slumber, it being easier to fall in with Aunt Mamie's little arrangements than to contest them. And so, with the exception of this one chance of changing her condition, Joane had lived through dreary, uneventful years, following a monotonous and wearing round at the dull house in Kensington, with visits to foreign spas or the seaside whenever Mrs Elliot's health seemed to require a change.

For, having no particular object in life, Aunt Mamie, as a natural sequence, had become a semi-invalid (and, with the distinctive peculiarity of such, was only well enough for what she wanted to do), always fancying herself ill and spending a disproportionate part of her income on sympathetic doctors, who were wise enough in their generation to encourage the delusion.

So, when one May brought a spell of hot weather with the delightful unexpectedness of the English climate, Mrs Elliot, in her stuffy drawing-room with the dust-collecting draperies, fluttered and drooped, and declared she must have a change of air.

The doctor seconded the assertion, and the matter was decided; and a few days later some rooms advertised in a quiet seaside place on a picturesque coast were secured, and Mrs Elliot, her niece, and a sort of hybrid attendant—a lady who had come as companion, but had to perform all the duties of a lady's-maid into the bargain, Miss Macey by name—went to take possession.

Whittlebeach was a welcome change from London,

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its fresh, bracing air from downs and sea life-giving after the close, mews-scented atmosphere of Kensington.

Joane rejoiced in it. Her wearisome little daily duties would seem light in such surroundings, and perhaps Aunt Mamie would be outdoors more and not require quite so much reading to or mending done as she usually did. Anyhow, it was a change. They had neither of them been to Whittlebeach before. When they went to the seaside Mrs Elliot usually chose to go to a remote village in Suffolk, solely because the Elliots used to have a country-seat there; and the simple villagers still remembered the days when 'old Lady Elliot,' Joane's grandmother, sailed into church on Sunday, all the congregation rising to greet her entrance, bobbing and curtsying to the haughty, irresponsive old woman, and remainng in their places when service ended till her ladyship chose to leave her square pew in the chancel. Joane did not like to hear these reminiscences; they did not suit her independent spirit. But at Whittlebeach no one knew the past glories of the House of Elliot, and Mrs Elliot felt constrained to impress the landlady's daughter with the same soon after her arrival.

Sea View, as the house was called, was a low, white building, with outside shutters that had once been green, but which time and weather had faded to a dull-blue shade. It stood almost on the edge of the cliff, a quaint figurehead guarding the door on either side, one representing a man leaning on a spade, the other a woman in short petticoats with a cat peeping out of her apron.

Outside the tiny strip of garden, in line with the front door, was a windlass; and beyond, the blue sea stretched away to the horizon.

It was a restful scene. Joane liked to go down the rugged steps cut in the chalk-cliff, and on to the beach, with its few pleasure-boats drawn up on the shelving bank, and little patches of sand among the shingle. Mrs Elliot fancied she could not walk much herself, so an antiquated bath-chair was commandeered for her. The landlady at Sea View was a real invalid, not a spurious one like Mrs Elliot, so her daughter managed the house.

Sarah Cable was a comely young woman, with fresh complexion and uncommon gray eyes with thick black lashes. She spoke nicely, though with a slight provincial accent, and seemed altogether, as Mrs Elliot condescendingly remarked, 'quite a superior person for that class.' Joane took a liking to her at first sight. She was honest and direct, and that in itself was refreshing after the unreal atmosphere to which Joane was accustomed.

'It is such a comfort,' continued Mrs Elliot one day when, in an unusual fit of gratitude, she was summing up the advantages of her new quarters—'it is such a comfort that there are no men in the house! So much nicer and quieter, being only women!'

Joane did not echo the reflection. She had had enough of the wearisome insipidity of a household composed entirely of her own sex for the best part of her life.

Miss Macey, her aunt's companion or white slave (the terms are sometimes convertible), agreed meekly. 'It is delightfully quiet,' she said.

But they congratulated themselves too soon.

They had been at Whittlebeach about a week when one evening, returning from the usual stereotyped stroll along the sea-front, they were greeted on their return to Sea View by the unmistakable scent of tobacco. A man's step sounded in the back regions of the house, and a man's voice, of good carrying quality, made itself heard in the distance.

'Dear me!' cried Mrs Elliot, sniffing disapprovingly, 'what is the meaning of this?'

Miss Macey, who had been left at home to do needlework for her employer, and was waiting to relieve Mrs Elliot of her outdoor attire, hastened to explain.

'I fancy it is Miss Cable's brother come home from sea,' she replied. 'I passed Miss Cable in the passage just now, and she said the ship had got in rather sooner than they expected.'

'How very annoying!' said Mrs Elliot. 'I did not know she had a brother.'

'It's delicious,' said Joane mischievously; 'that good strong tobacco is what I like.'

'It will make my head ache, I am sure,' moaned her aunt. 'Just when I was thinking how nice and quiet it all was.'

'He is a very good fellow, I believe,' ventured Miss Macey, extracting the bonnet-pins from Mrs Elliot's head carefully, so that they would not endanger her false plait of hair. 'Miss Cable happened to remark in passing that he was a brave sailor, and had done something wonderful about a wreck.'

Mrs Elliot made no response. She did not encourage her companion to talk, as she thought it made Miss Macey forget her station—which, by the way, was quite equal to Mrs Elliot's own as far as birth went.

Joane, however, who delighted in deeds of heroism, flushed with interest. 'What did he do? Do you remember, Miss Macey?'

But with a surreptitious glance at her employer, Miss Macey decided that she did not remember. 'It was only just in passing,' she hastened to explain.

'I will ask Miss Cable myself,' said Joane.

Miss Cable did not need asking. When she brought Joane's breakfast into the little, old-fashioned parlour looking on to the sea next morning, she hastened to announce that her brother Jim was home.

'I am so glad,' said Joane sympathisingly. 'I expect you are fond of him?'

'And proud too, miss,' answered Sarah, blushing. 'His name was in all the papers two years ago, when the *Oriama* went down. Perhaps you saw it. He saved a lot of lives through his bravery. I've got cuttings from the papers in a drawer

upstairs, and a picture from the *Graphic* showing him in a boat on the top of the sea, keeping a crew of lascars at bay.'

'Oh, he's a hero!' cried Joane, her eyes flashing.

'He is, miss, and so modest with it all it's difficult to get him to tell all his experiences; but he's had a good many in his time.'

'I should love to hear,' cried Joane.

'I hope he did not disturb you last night, miss; his room is over yours, and the floors are rather thin. You would hear him walking about.'

'I liked to hear his quarter-deck tread,' said Joane. 'Don't go,' as Sarah picked up her tray to depart. 'Tell me something more about your brother.'

'But there is your aunt's bell, miss,' said Sarah. 'I'll show you those papers another time;' and she hurried off.

Mrs Elliot partook of her breakfast in bed, and Miss Macey took hers in her own room—distinctions must be observed—so Joane had the enjoyment of her meal in solitude.

She looked up presently at a step crunching the gravel outside. She sprang up, and hiding behind the window-curtain—what would her aunt have said?—watched Miss Cable's brother go down the tiny path, pipe in mouth.

He stooped to shut the little blue-painted gate after he had passed through, and Joane had a good view of him. He was a square-built, fine-looking man, with dark, close-cropped hair, short moustache, and gray, black-lashed eyes, like his sister Sarah. In her interest, Joane had got out of the shadow of the curtain, and as he suddenly looked up their eyes met.

Joane hurried back to the table, a vivid colour on her cheeks. It had been only a momentary glance; but that look was like the beginning of a new life to her. She did not know how it had agitated her till she found herself absently putting sugar in the milk-jug.

Mrs Elliot found an absent listener to her morning's list of complaints when she presently came down, and the limit of her endurance was reached when Joane received a peculiarly aggrieved remark with a happy smile.

'Did you hear what I observed, Joane?' asked her aunt icily. 'I said that the house is quite scented with that creature's tobacco. I really think I must complain to Miss Cable.'

Joane became suddenly grave. 'Oh! pray don't do that, Aunt Mamie; a sailor must have his pipe,' she cried hastily.

'Let him have it outdoors, then,' retorted Mrs Elliot, sniffing at her smelling-salts. '*I* can't stand it in.'

'Well, here comes your bath-chair, auntie, so you will escape the poisoned atmosphere for a little while. Do you want me to come with you, or is Miss Macey'——

'Miss Macey has to turn an old skirt of mine. You must come, Joane.'

'Poor Miss Macey does not get much exercise,' said Joane.

'My dear Joane, what is she paid for? Besides, people in that position don't expect to be gadding about all day.'

With a sigh for the unfortunate companion's lot, Joane got her hat to accompany the bath-chair, inwardly chafing against having to go. She would have liked to be free that morning to go—well, she hardly knew where—at any rate, where she chose.

However, her self-denial was somewhat rewarded. After the procession had got to the end of the promenade, and was about to turn for the first time, the old man who drew the equally ancient chair remarked, 'I see, ma'am, you've got Cap'n Cable home again at Sea View.'

'Captain!' cried Joane eagerly. 'Is he *Captain* Cable?'

'Well, if he isn't he ought to be,' was the reply; 'and I dessay he will be soon. He's second officer aboard one of these 'ere big ships. We allus call him Cap'n, though.'

'Then he isn't really.' Joane's face fell a little.

'My dear Joane, what does it matter what petty rank a person in that station holds?' said Mrs Elliot in a low tone.

The old man, pausing to spit upon his palms, was about to take hold of the handle again, but paused to observe, 'He's a bit of a hero, you know, he is. Why, when he come home after that wreck when he was three days and three nights in the open sea in a small boat with some of the passengers, and a crew of rascally Chinese, whom he had all his work to keep in order, threatening of him with knives—why, when he come back—pretty nigh done he was—they'd have carried him shoulder-high all over Whittlebeach if he'd a let un.'

'You may go on,' said Mrs Elliot haughtily.

'Yes, m'm,' replied the charioteer, pulling his forelock respectfully. 'Seem as if I can't stop when I get talking of Jim Cable and his brave deeds. Three days and three nights all in the bitter cold and sleet; I always remember it because it was the same time our Saviour was in the tomb. Ah! we're proud of the Cap'n we are, for he was bred and born at Whittlebeach; and his father he was a brave man too—was cap'n of the Revenue cutter for twenty year.'

'I meant go on with my chair,' said Mrs Elliot.

'Oh aunt! don't interrupt,' said Joane. Standing behind her aunt's chair, she had been listening eagerly.

'I ask your pardon, ma'am, I'm sure,' said the old man with dignity, flushing at this rebuff. He took up the handle again and went on dragging his burden patiently.

Joane felt more impatient with her aunt's want of sympathy than ever. She had never been able to love Mrs Elliot; gratitude for her adoption was all she could experience, and even this was

difficult. Mrs Elliot's cold, selfish nature was incapable of inspiring affection, and probably neither desired nor missed it.

Joane would have liked to earn her own living and be independent; but besides the difficulty of such an enterprise without any particular training, Mrs Elliot's strict ideas of what was correct for her position were scandalised at the mere suggestion, and Joane had ceased to press the point.

When they got back to Sea View that morning 'Captain' Cable was standing at the windlass near the edge of the cliff, looking out over the sea with a telescope. He put it down when he saw the ladies, and came forward to open the gate for them. He would, further, have carried the cushions indoors from the bath-chair had not Miss Macey, who had been on the watch, come running to take them with more than usual alacrity.

ROUND THE WORLD 'ON DUTY.'

By Surgeon-General G. J. H. Evatt, C.B.

THE amount of travelling done by officers of the army in the course of their services over a great Empire is very considerable and also very full of interest. In my own case, after nearly forty years' army service, I can look back on very many wanderings about the world. In this paper, however, I propose briefly to sketch a journey round the world made by myself on duty, which may interest the readers of this *Journal*.

When promoted to the rank of colonel I was ordered to proceed to Hong-kong for service in that colony, and received with the order the usual notice to embark at Gravesend on a P. and O. steamer for China, *viâ* Gibraltar, Malta, the Suez Canal, Aden, Colombo, and Singapore, and so on to Hong-kong.

As I had already been many times up and down the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, and had also been to Ceylon, I applied to the War Office to cancel the P. and O. passage order, and to grant me the passage-money and let me find my own way to China. To this proposal the War Office assented, and I received the sum of seventy-three pounds ten shillings, the cost of a contract-passage for an officer to China.

I then proceeded to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company's office in Cockspur Street, London, and obtained a through ticket *viâ* New York, Montreal, the Rocky Mountains, Vancouver, and Japan to Hong-kong, which is placed well to the southern part of China, off the coast of the Canton province of that empire.

I despatched my heavy baggage to Hong-kong by the German Lloyd steamers that call at Southampton, and this was in due course landed at Kowloon Docks, opposite Hong-kong. I myself crossed with very light impedimenta to New York. As I had already been frequently there, I hastened on *viâ* the Hudson River to Montreal.

On the way I stopped for a day at West Point, on the Hudson, to visit the United States Military Academy at that place. This institution is one of the most interesting in any part of the world, and is a combination of our Woolwich and Sandhurst Colleges, where officers of all branches of the United States army receive their training. The course is long and very exacting, and the whole organisation well worth studying. I say this after having served six years at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, and after visiting the Military Academies at Berlin and St Petersburg.

I reached Montreal in due course on 9th April, and I mention the date because the St Lawrence was still frozen over and the whole country under snow. I entered the trans-continental train on a Monday morning, and remained in it for six days, arriving at Vancouver, on the Pacific seaboard, on Saturday afternoon. I found the confinement in the train irksome for the first two days, but after that I became accustomed to the life. I passed by Lake Superior, and then on to Winnipeg in Manitoba, a thriving city which has sprung up within the last quarter of a century. I then passed by Regina, Moosejaw, and Calgary, until the train began to ascend the slopes of the Rocky Mountains. Throughout the whole line the country was under snow, and it was not until we crossed the Rocky Mountains and began to descend the Pacific slope that the weather improved. Of course the railway carriages were well heated—indeed, too well heated, for they became close and uncomfortable; and I carried on an unceasing warfare with the coloured railway-conductor, who continually endeavoured to close any window I opened. The carriages are commodious and a passage extends through the train, and excellent dining-cars are attached. The lavatory and bathing arrangements and sleeping-berths are also quite satisfactory. I purchased in London tickets for the various meals on the train, and so was saved the trouble of carrying money for this purpose. Hour by hour the local travellers came on to or passed off the train, and one learned much from them of their experiences in the wide-spreading prairie-land which, while covered in winter everywhere with snow, bursts out in the summer-time to a never-ending harvest-field of waving corn. The scenery of the Rockies is, of course, superb, and some travellers stop at Banff to enjoy more fully the delightful surroundings. I was, however, pushing on, and, crossing the watershed, began the descent to the Pacific coast. The railway runs along the winding course of the Fraser River. This great stream rushes down the sloping watershed, and has torn its

way through the solid rock often to great depths, forming *cañons* or deep rock-cuttings through which the water flows. In due course we reached the level shore-land of Vancouver, and left the train. All along the Fraser River, during the descent to the sea, the huge forest-trees of the British Columbian forests lined the hillsides, and splendid pine-trees rose like giants in a dense forest all along the route. Vancouver is a brisk, business-like town, and will one day, no doubt, be a city of importance.

The Canadian Pacific steamers that carry one to Yokohama in Japan lie at piers close by the railway terminus, and there is no more trouble in getting to Yokohama than in crossing from Holyhead to Dublin. Being anxious to see Esquimalt, the Royal Dockyard near Victoria, in Vancouver Island, I started by a local steamer for that very interesting place, and reached it in a few hours; and the next afternoon the Great Canadian Pacific Ocean steamer called at Victoria, and we steamed away for Yokohama.

The ten days of the voyage I found very instructive. The passengers were varied in character and full of information. Some were missionaries returning to China or Japan; others were consuls either of the special British-Chinese consular service or of the Japanese special consular service. Some were officers of the Imperial Chinese Customs; many were merchants trading in the Chinese treaty-ports. I learned a great deal from them, and this oral instruction was well supplemented by the books on China and Japan to be found in the ship's library.

It took ten days to cross the lonely Pacific Ocean, and we never once saw a ship until we were close to Yokohama.

Japan came upon one with all its dainty freshness, its romance, its peculiar indefinable charm, and a feeling of repose not usual in other parts of the extreme East.

One comes off the noisy steamer and in a few minutes is in the midst of the art collections and beautiful objects of the Japanese curio and artistic shops. Everything seems charming, but nothing more so than the children, so well dressed and cared for, and so healthy-looking. I call Japan 'The Happy Land of Children;' and the girls of six or eight years of age, dressed in their *kimonos* of bright colouring, are perfect pictures of ruddy health. A passenger can break his journey to China at Yokohama, and visit Tokio, Nikko, Myanoshta, and other places, and either rejoin the ship at Kobe or at Nagasaki.

The steamers leaving Yokohama call at Kobe, near the entrance to the inland Sea of Japan, and then steam through the islands and wooded channels of this delightful sea, a kind of long-drawn-out Killarney, but with a peculiar dreamy softness of its own.

One feels the whole magic of Japan when passing through this enchanted land, and in no other part of the world have I felt so influenced by the surroundings through which we passed.

It seemed as if something were unceasingly calling one to dwell in this Lotus-Eaters' Land.

But gradually we approached the beautiful port of Nagasaki, and visited Decima, the old Dutch settlement of the 'exclusion régime' in Japan; and after some little stay we left Nagasaki for the twenty-four hours' voyage to Shanghai, on the Chinese mainland. Every traveller will be surprised to visit this sixty-year old European settlement-city, with its wharves, piers, great river-front, fine houses and clubs, cathedral, and dwelling-houses. It is a kind of Calcutta in China, so far as the river-front is concerned.

It is a busy hive of industry and shipping, and will one day be the New York of China, for the Yang-tsze River pours its splendid volume of water into the China Sea close by the city.

Three days after leaving Shanghai I reached Hong-kong, steaming due south and plunging at once into the tropical heat of that enervating island.

Hong-kong would need a volume to describe its many sides, European and Chinese; and it is a highly interesting study to watch this little colony, which occupies a splendid business position in the extreme East. Here we have a garrison, and many warships of all nations assemble in the cold weather. After staying some months in Hong-kong I went to Tonquin, passing through the Hainan Strait, and reaching Haiphong, the port of Tonquin.

Here I visited the French troops and barracks and hospitals, and saw the life of the French residents.

I then visited the Baie d'Along, a wonderful collection of beautifully wooded islands on the Tonquin coast. It was somewhat like the inland Sea of Japan, but the islands were more numerous, and it seemed more like a great maze than anything else.

From Haiphong I proceeded to Phulangthong, well up in the Tonquin interior, and here, entering the light, narrow-gauge railway, proceeded to the cantonment of Langson, near the Chinese frontier of the Kwangsi province.

I then crossed the frontier to Lung-chau, and returned to Hong-kong by the route I came.

From Hong-kong, of course, I visited Macao and Canton, which are both within easy reach of Hong-kong, and I thought Canton a very interesting city.

Later on I went up the Yang-tsze valley to Hankow, a very pleasant journey of six hundred miles through the heart of mid-China, and saw that China is indeed the 'Flowery Land.' It is along this great river-valley that I believe the future civilisation of China will develop, and I hope and trust it will be on lines like Japan, so as to enable China to take her place amongst the nations.

From Hankow I returned down the Yang-tsze River and visited Wei-hai-wei, our new settlement on the Shan-tung peninsula, and thence proceeded in a torpedo-destroyer in a few hours to Chifu, a treaty-

port of Shan-tung. I then steamed up the Gulf of Pechili to Taku, visited Tien-tsin, and finally reached Peking.

This city well repays a visit, and one there sees on what bold lines the founders of that great city laid down the plan of their capital. The feeling of being shut in is very striking in Peking, where the small gates and the huge walls give one a feeling as if escape were impossible.

From Peking I visited the Tombs of the Emperors, some twelve miles from the city, and proceeded to Nankau. I also visited the Wall of China, wondering, as all must wonder, how so great a structure was ever built, or how, indeed, the builders were fed and supplied with water.

Returning to Hong-kong, I again remained for a short period, and after a time sailed in an American man-of-war to the Philippines, landing at Manilla and visiting its neighbourhood, proceeding up to the beautiful Laguna behind the city, and journeying also one hundred and twenty miles up the country to Daguban, in the Philippino insurrection country.

Back once more in Hong-kong, I later on received orders to return to England on promotion, and travelled *vid* Saigon in Cochin-China to Singapore, and then by Singapore and Colombo in Ceylon to Marseilles, and crossing France, reached London in four weeks from leaving Hong-kong. I went to China feeling quite disheartened at the idea; but I learned in my service there greatly to value and respect the Chinese people, and to feel that they have a real future in the world. I hope one day they will throw off their old-world customs and become one of the sisterhood of the nations, when they will be a great power in the world.

I thus completed my tour of foreign duty, and in carrying it out went round the world, a very educative experience.

The journey is so easy and so instructive from its variety that all who can make the trip should do so.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

By William Le Queux.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—IN WHICH I ENTER THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY.

WHILE we sat at breakfast next morning the constable, with his hand bound up and suspended in a black scarf from his neck, was brought to us by Mr Mason, and asked to report upon the result of his observations.

'Well, gentlemen, I met some rough customers last night,' exclaimed the man through his brown beard. 'All was quiet till the abbey clock 'ad just struck three, when I heard the sound of wheels, and a trap came up the road from the direction of Brotherhouse Bar. There was no light on it, and I heard it stop just opposite where I was on duty. Three men and a woman got down, lit a lantern, and took out some spades and picks; therefore I crouched down and watched. Two of the men were tall, and the third, who carried the lamp, was short and looked as though he were deformed, while the woman was slim and young, and dressed in dark clothes. I heard one man say, "This must be the place. That house over there is Thornbury Hall. I recollect it is marked on the Ordnance map we looked at in the train. And there's Decoy Farm! Now, one hundred and eighty-six paces due south. This way;" and he led them into the field, and continued straight across to the dike, over the plank, and then half-way across the next field, where he halted close to the old willow-stump. "This is the place!" he exclaimed, little dreaming that I was so near. "It's quite a long way off the spot we tried before." "Are you quite certain of the distance and the direction?" inquired the other man, in response to which the first speaker quoted some kind of direction which he seemed to know by heart. The short man made some observation in a foreign language, but I didn't understand what he said.'

'And what did you do?' I demanded eagerly.

'Well, the moment the four of them started to dig up the potatoes, I slipped out from behind the willow-stump and demanded what they were up to. My sudden appearance upset their little game at once; but one man, the tallest of them, was inclined to be defiant when I ordered them off, telling them that the land was the property of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and that they would be prosecuted for trespass. He struck at me with the pick-axe he carried, whereupon I took out my truncheon, and next instant I saw a flash and found myself wounded in the hand. The fellow had used a revolver on me! This sudden action called forth the condemnation of his three companions, who declared that to fire on the police was highly dangerous. Then all three, fearing that the shot had raised an alarm, threw down their tools and made their way back to the trap as quickly as they could, being followed by the cowardly fellow who had fired at me. I rushed after them, although my hand pained me badly; but they succeeded in getting clear away. Then I came back to Crowland and called up the doctor, who took the bullet out of my hand. I had a very narrow escape, gentlemen,' added the rural constable. 'I wonder what those people were up to?'

Mr Mason and Fred Fenwicke exchanged glances; but no one satisfied Barrett's natural curiosity.

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'You see, I couldn't well distinguish the face of the man who fired at me,' he said, in response to my inquiry; 'but I heard the woman address him as Selby.'

The woman! Could it have been Judith who had accompanied them, or was it Anita Bardi?

Barrett presently left to report the incident by telegraph to his inspector at Spalding, and the rector took counsel with us. A bold attempt to search had evidently been made, and had only been abandoned by the ill-advised action of one of the party. Although the constable had been the victim of a dastardly outrage, it had certainly been fortunate that we had marked out the spot and set watch upon it. Our enemies had made wrong calculations at Threave by not having noted the second clause of the instructions; but here, with the aid of the plan, they had certainly hit upon the exact spot designated by the monk Godfrey.

Mr Mason had gone out to obtain assistance in our work of excavation, which we decided should commence at once, when a telegram was brought to me which showed that it had been handed in at King's Cross Station, and read as follows:

'Come to Grosvenor Street. Most important. Must see you immediately. If I am not at home go to Harpur Street; but if you desire to fulfil your promise to help me, do not lose an instant.—JUDITH.'

My first impulse was to read the telegram aloud; but my companions being in ignorance of my intimate friendship with her, I resolved to keep my own counsel.

'I have to return to London at once,' I announced, crushing the message in my hand. 'You fellows will continue the search, and I will return to-night if possible.'

'Private business?' queried Sammy, who had lit his morning cigarette airily, and stood with his hands deep in his trousers-pockets.

I responded in the affirmative, and, turning, told the maid to order a trap at once to take me to Peterborough Station.

Thus I was compelled to absent myself from the work of excavating in that low-lying fen-field a mile beyond the abbey; and at half-past twelve o'clock I alighted from a hansom in Grosvenor Street, and running up the broad flight of steps to the big portico, rang the bell.

'Yes, sir, her ladyship is expecting you,' was the footman's response to my inquiry; and without further ceremony he conducted me through the fine hall, filled with magnificent trophies of the chase, and up the wide staircase to a small room on the first floor, wherein, white and haggard, Judith rose quickly to greet me.

'Oh, Mr Kennedy!' she gasped when the man had closed the door. 'I'm so glad to see you safe and well!'

'Why Mr Kennedy?' I asked half-reproachfully.

'Well, Allan, then,' she said, smiling. 'But we have no time to lose,' she went on. 'I fear that something terrible has occurred; but exactly what, I don't know.'

'How do you mean? Explain,' I urged excitedly.

'You probably know what occurred down at Crowland last night?' she said. 'They obtained the parchment plan, and at once determined to search for the treasure known to be hidden there; but a policeman discovered them, and they shot him.'

'I know,' I responded. 'And what occurred afterwards?' That was the first time she had mentioned the search for treasure.

'They returned to London—all three of them.'

'And the woman?'

'What woman?' she inquired, looking me straight in the face.

'The woman who was with them,' I said meaningly, recollecting that her own telegram had been sent from King's Cross Station.

'I know nothing of her,' was the response. 'I'm speaking of my father, Selby, and the hunchback. They returned to London at seven this morning—to Harpur Street.'

'Well?'

'I went there at nine o'clock, but found the house still closed, and could make nobody hear, although I know they entered there about eight o'clock. The blind is now up, and the bear cub is in the window,' she added hoarsely. 'There is death in that house!'

'Death! Is that the meaning of the strange sign?' I gasped. 'Do you really suspect that some tragedy has been enacted?'

'Yes,' she cried hoarsely. 'I fear so. I've been there three times this morning and can make nobody hear. Oh, Mr Kennedy! you do not know the awful secret—the terrible'——

But she stopped herself, as though she feared to tell me all the truth.

'Is it that you fear for your father's sake?' I inquired, a new light suddenly dawning upon me.

'Yes,' she cried, her white trembling hand upon my arm; 'I do fear. Will you go with me to Harpur Street?'

'Most willingly,' I said. 'But if you fear a tragedy, had we not better seek aid of the police?'

'The police!' she gasped, her face blanching in an instant. 'Ah, no! Let us see for ourselves first. The police must know nothing—you understand. We must not arouse suspicion. I know they have returned, because at eleven last night, after they had left for Crowland, all the blinds were down, whereas now one blind is up and the sign is in the window.'

I saw that she was nervous and agitated, and that her suspicions were based upon some secret knowledge. She believed that some hideous tragedy had occurred in that house of mystery in Harpur Street, and invoked my aid in its elucidation.

'You will not blame me,' she said in a hard voice. 'I am culpable, I know; but when you have heard everything and are aware of the extraordinary circumstances which have brought me to what I am, I

know you will forgive me and look leniently upon my shortcomings. Promise me you will,' she implored in deep earnestness, taking my hand in hers.

I promised; then she rushed into another room for a moment, and reappeared in hat and jacket.

We drove quickly to that short, dismal street in Bloomsbury, and on approaching the house I saw that the dingy Venetian-blinds were all down save at that window where showed the mysterious sign.

Having dismissed the cab, we both ascended the dirty, neglected steps, and rang. The bell clanged loudly somewhere in the regions below; but no one stirred. I was in favour of calling an inspector from the nearest police-station and telling him of our suspicions, but she would not hear of it.

'No!' she cried, terrified at my suggestion. 'The police must know nothing—nothing at all. If they did, then I myself must suffer.'

Her words were, to say the least, very curious.

'No,' she went on; 'we must try and get in ourselves—force the door, or something.'

To force a door of that strong, old-fashioned character would be difficult, I saw. The latch, too, was a patent one, with a well-known maker's name on the keyhole-cover—nearly new. To force a front door in a public street in the broad light of day without attracting attention is well-nigh impossible; therefore, instructing her to wait patiently where she was, so as not to arouse the suspicion of the neighbours, I waited my opportunity, and then got over the locked gate and went down the steps to the kitchen door in the basement. That too was securely fastened; but after I had made an examination of the window it struck me that the shutters were only closed-to and not bolted; therefore I determined to go back to Theobald's Road and purchase a chisel, a glazier's diamond, and a putty-knife, and return with them as soon as possible. I acted on this at once, and until my return a quarter of an hour later, Lady Judith walked past the house and remained at the other end of the street.

The door resisted all efforts; therefore I presently turned my attention to the window, and at last succeeded in unlatching it with the putty-knife, working back the bolt of the shutters, and crawling inside the dirty, disused kitchen.

At that moment Lady Judith had ascended the steps to the front door; and groping my way in the semi-darkness up the stairs, I gained the wide, old-fashioned hall, and after some difficulty with the complicated lock, opened the door to her.

Then, together, we went inside to ascertain what mystery that closed and gloomy place contained.

THE EDUCATION OF BLIND DEAF-MUTES, WITH THE CASE OF HELEN KELLER.

By Charles Ray.

WRITING in 1809, Dr Watson, an eminent British authority on the education of the blind, said: 'Whether any instance has ever occurred of a case so melancholy as that of one of our species being born deaf and blind I am unable to say. I would gladly hope that the case has been of rare occurrence. May it ever continue so; for should it unhappily occur, what could be done for the subject of it but supply corporal sustenance? I am aware that the Abbé de l'Epée, always ingenious and humane, had offered to undertake the instruction of such children of deprivation, upon the supposition that the touch might be employed as a medium of mental communication. But I must acknowledge I can form no notion of the practicability of this to any extent that might be termed *rational* without admitting the exploded hypothesis of *innate* ideas. Every friend of humanity will rejoice that, though we are informed the good Abbé made his offer known through the public journals of the time, it does not appear that he ever had an opportunity of reducing his theory to practice.' That was penned less than a century ago; but what would the doctor have said could he have foreseen the giant strides that would be made within a comparatively short time in the education of persons suffering from this double affliction? Much has been written as to whether the blind or the deaf may be considered the least unfortunate, and the question is usually decided in favour of the blind; but the case of Miss Helen Keller has proved that even when both deprivations meet in the same individual there need be no limit to the mental development of the afflicted. This young American lady was born at Tuscumbia, Alabama, on 27th June 1880, and for a brief period possessed all the faculties of the average child. But at the age of nineteen months she suffered a serious illness, with the result that both sight and hearing departed for ever. Her case, indeed, seemed hopeless; and it is not surprising that a child possessing the mental vigour which after-events have proved that Helen Keller had, should have fretted and fought for release from her prison-house, and have found vent for her feelings in violent fits of passion. 'Once,' she says, 'I knew the depth where no hope was, and darkness lay on the face of all things. Then love came and set my soul free. Once I knew only darkness and stillness. Now I know hope and joy. Once I fretted and beat myself against the wall that shut me in. Now I rejoice in the consciousness that I can act, and attain heaven. My life was without past or

future; death, the pessimist would say, "a consummation devoutly to be wished." But a little word from the fingers of another fell into my hand that clutched at emptiness, and my heart leaped to the rapture of living. Night fled before the day of thought, and love and joy and hope came up in a passion of obedience to knowledge. Can any one who has escaped such captivity, who has felt the thrill and glory of freedom, be a pessimist?'

The story of how the little blind deaf-mute was taught and her mind developed until she could hold her own, as she undoubtedly can at the present time, with the most brilliant students of Girton and Newnham is a marvellous story, and not the least remarkable fact about it is that it has been told in a book written by Helen Keller herself.

When she was nearly seven years old, a teacher from the well-known Perkins Institution at Boston, Miss Sullivan, was engaged to commence her education, and if the blind girl is to be admired and congratulated for her determination and perseverance, certainly Miss Sullivan is worthy of equal praise for the patience and ingenuity which she has shown. The senses of smell and taste were well developed in the child, and of course proved useful; but it was by touch that the great world of thought was opened out to her. Miss Sullivan began by spelling with her fingers into the palm of Helen Keller the word 'water,' while that liquid was poured over the child's other hand. 'That living word,' says the blind girl, 'awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy—set it free!' Other words were associated with objects; and with infinite patience Miss Sullivan went from material objects to abstract ideas, and from promiscuous instruction to systematic study. Natural history and botany were taught in the open fields of the Sunny South, and geography became a delightful pastime for the eager young girl. 'I built dams of pebbles,' she writes, 'made islands and lakes, and dug river-beds, all for fun, and never dreamed that I was learning a lesson.'

She was taught to read books in Braille type, and her progress was astonishingly rapid. In infancy, before her illness, she had indulged in baby prattle; but after the blindness and deafness came, the child was dumb save for inarticulate sounds. At ten years of age, however, she learned that a Norwegian girl, both blind and deaf, had been taught to speak, and at once Helen Keller was all eagerness to achieve a similar success. The difficult task of instructing her was undertaken by Miss Sarah Fuller, and how thoroughly well she and her pupil succeeded in what to the uninitiated must have seemed an impossibility may be gathered from the fact that Helen Keller can now talk fluently not only in English but also in German and French, and she has publicly addressed a legislative committee in the United States on behalf of the founding of trade-schools for the adult blind. As is generally known, the seeing deaf-mutes are taught to speak by watching the mouths of their teachers as they talk, and feeling the various muscles of the throat and face as various sounds are articulated. Helen Keller had only her touch to guide her; but in the first lesson of one hour she had learned to pronounce fairly distinctly the letters M, P, A, S, T, I. Progress was now as rapid as in the acquirement of the touch-alphabet, and after eleven lessons the girl could speak the sentence, 'It is warm.' Miss Sullivan took up the work of continuing this branch of teaching, and then for two years Miss Keller attended the Wright-Humason School for the Deaf in New York, where her training in lip-reading was perfected.

The girl's thirst for knowledge was insatiable, and particularly was she interested in literature. She soon knew whole passages of Tennyson and other poets, and these she could repeat vocally with real emphasis and feeling, so that often her listeners were moved to tears. After receiving a thoroughly sound groundwork of education in all subjects, Helen Keller, accompanied of course by Miss Sullivan, proceeded to the Cambridge School for Young Ladies, preparatory to entering Radcliffe College, where she determined to work for a degree. At both the school and the college Miss Sullivan sat by her pupil's side, repeating upon the girl's fingers the lessons that were given, and never once was any difficulty experienced. Of all the pupils, Miss Keller was the quickest to grasp a point, and at the examinations she passed with the highest success in Greek, Latin, French, English literature and history, mathematics, and art, receiving honours in German and English. The examinations lasted nine hours, and the blind girl received no advantages or favouritism. She had the questions read to her, and then gave her answers upon the typewriter in the specified time allowed to other pupils. Her method of studying art, in which she came to take a keen interest, was to visit the galleries, and, perched upon steps, to pass her fingers lightly over the statuary. In 1893 she was taken to the World's Fair at Chicago, and there the various treasures—jewels, bronzes, Oriental work, &c.—were placed in her fingers so that she might understand their form and nature. Even in instrumental music Helen Keller has come to take a delight, for, although she is quite deaf, so sensitive are her nerves that she appreciates the relative value of the sounds by the vibration, and has been able to understand the various styles of the leading composers.

Many prominent men have been interested in the young girl's case, and she has numbered among her friends and acquaintances Oliver Wendell Holmes, Phillips Brooks, Whittier, Dr Everett Hale, Mark Twain, Sir Henry Irving, and William Dean Howells. At the present time she is completing her studies; but already she has a profound knowledge of men and things, of modern and classical learning; and a new book which she has written on *Optimism*, setting forth her philosophy of life, is

even a greater proof than her autobiography of the power of her intellect and her determined energy.

Helen Keller's case is indeed a triumph of human nature, and a proof that there are no disadvantages of matter which cannot be overcome by mind. In no study, save music and the drama, is she one whit behind people who can see, and even of those things she has a very thorough grasp and appreciation. Of course, she has had the advantage of personal and individual tuition, necessitating infinite patience; but even with these it might have seemed an utter impossibility ever to break through the prison walls from within or without, as Dr Watson, himself an authority on the subject, declared less than a century ago.

Without seeking to minimise in the slightest degree the credit for skill and patience and ingenuity due to Helen Keller's instructors, we must recognise that they owe a vast deal to Dr Howe, a former manager of the Institution for the Blind at Boston. It was Dr Howe who first showed the possibilities that lay before a blind deaf-mute, and his training of Laura Bridgman was perhaps a greater triumph than even Helen Keller's case, seeing that not only was there no earlier case of success for incentive and encouragement, but all precedent and opinion was dead against him. Before we give some account of how Dr Howe enabled this afflicted girl to communicate with the outside world, it will be interesting to refer to two earlier cases of blind deaf-mutes. The first known instance, though undoubtedly there must have been others unrecorded, is that of Hannah Lamb, who lived at Burleigh Street in the Strand, London. Her story, told in a few lines in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for November 1808, is terribly tragic. No attempt whatever seems to have been made to enable her to communicate with others; and when nine years of age she appears to have left her bed one night to sit by the fireside while her mother was out of the room, and a red-hot cinder, falling from the grate, set fire to her clothes. She was terribly burned, and four hours later died from her injuries. The next case we find is that of James Mitchell, the son of the Rev. James Mitchell, of Ardelach, Inverness. He came before the notice of Sir Astley Cooper, the distinguished surgeon, in 1808, when his father brought him to London to see if his eyes could be operated upon. The lad was then thirteen years of age, and although to all intents and purposes blind, he was able to distinguish a strong light. This was ascertained from the fact that he used to retire to an outhouse or room, and closing the doors and shutters, would place his eye at any small opening to get the full benefit of the sun's rays. Sir Astley Cooper pierced the tympanum of each ear, but without result, and two years later the right eye was operated upon, with indications that further use of the needle might have resulted in the eyes being rendered comparatively useful. But unfortunately the boy's father died at this period, and the lad returned to Scotland without undergoing any further operation.

Mitchell's sense of smell was very acute, and if a stranger entered, however quietly, the room where he was sitting, James could detect the visitor's presence, and locate him quickly by the scent. He would then examine the stranger, and get an impression from the sense of touch. The boy appears to have obtained considerable pleasure from the vibration caused by striking his teeth with metal, and he would often sit for hours with a bunch of keys, testing each key in succession, and evidently delighting in the varied vibrations. No serious attempt to communicate with him or to enable him to communicate with others seems to have been made, although his mother and sister developed a very rude and elementary method of indicating to him by touch and action what they wished him to know. Thus, to signify approbation the boy's head or back was patted gently, and if this were withheld he seems to have known that his friends were displeased. Once when his mother went away from home for a time, his sister was able to tell him how long the parent would be absent by placing his head upon a pillow once for each night she would be away. There being no method of communicating freely with him, it was of course impossible ever to teach him religious truths; but he accompanied the family to church, and was habitually present at family prayers and behaved reverently, kneeling when the others knelt. Shortly after his father's death a minister happened to be staying in the house, and on Sunday evening James pointed to his father's Bible, and signified by his action that the family should kneel. Exactly how much may be inferred from this it is impossible to say; but there seems no reason to suppose that James had any notion of the existence of beings superior to himself.

The case of Laura Bridgman is remarkable in more ways than one; for not only was she the first blind deaf-mute to have a means of communication with the outer world opened to her, but she was a most unpromising subject with which to commence such an experiment. Laura Bridgman was a weakly infant from the first; but just before she was two years of age she had a serious illness that prostrated her, and resulted in the complete destruction of the organs of sight and hearing. When at last, after two years of illness and convalescence, she was so far restored as to be able to sit up all day, it was discovered with dismay that not only sight and hearing were gone for ever, but that her sense of smell was also destroyed and her taste much blunted. The poor child was thus left with only one sense—that of touch—possibly a unique case in the history of humanity. He must have been a bold man who saw possibilities in a creature so handicapped. 'What a situation was hers!' wrote Dr Howe. 'The darkness and silence of the tomb were around her; no mother's smile called forth her answering smile; no father's voice taught her to imitate his sounds. Brothers and sisters were

but forms of matter which resisted her touch, but which differed not from the furniture, save in warmth and in the power of locomotion, and not even in these respects from the dog and the cat.' Charles Dickens, who in his *American Notes* has made her early history familiar, has graphically described her as 'built up, as it were, in a marble cell, impervious to any ray of light or particle of sound; with her poor white hand peeping through a chink in the wall beckoning to some good man for help, that an immortal soul might be awakened.' Those who are desirous of learning how her education was commenced can read the story in *American Notes*. Instead of continuing and developing the language of signs which Laura had commenced for herself, Dr Howe determined to attempt to impart to her a knowledge of the alphabetic language in general use. Common objects such as knives, forks, keys, &c. were taken, and upon them were pasted labels with their names in raised letters. Then the labels were detached, and after a time the blind girl was able to select the right label and place it upon its corresponding object. Next the individual letters of each word were separated, and Laura learnt to build up the names of things placed in her hands. 'Now the truth began to flash upon her,' says Dr Howe, 'her intellect began to work; she perceived that there was a way by which she could herself make up a sign of anything that was in her own mind. It was no longer a dog or a parrot; it was an immortal spirit seizing upon a new link of union with other spirits. I could almost fix upon the moment when this truth dawned upon her mind and spread its light to her countenance. I saw that the great obstacle was overcome, and that henceforward nothing but patient and persevering, but plain and straightforward, efforts were to be used.' After a year of training she was able to converse fluently with the other blind children of the institution, they seeing her hands and she feeling theirs as the letters and words rapidly succeeded one another. Before long she was seen to soliloquise in the finger-language, and when her sleep was disturbed by dreams she would express her thoughts in the same way, just as the ordinary person murmurs or mutters indistinctly in broken sleep. The sense of touch was so exquisite that she could tell of the approach of people in the corridors merely by stretching her fingers out before her; and if she once passed her hand over any individual she was always able to recognise the person in a moment, even after a long interval. Laura Bridgman soon developed a keen sense of humour. Thus, when her teacher told her that the blacksmith made nails, she laughingly held up her hands and asked if he made the finger-nails.

One or two anecdotes will show the difficulty of imparting ideas to a person so afflicted. They are taken from the diary of a lady under whose tuition Laura was placed by Dr Howe:

'At eleven, gave her for a writing-lesson the story I read to her on Friday noon. She said at first she could not remember it, because it was long ago that I read it; but she did very well. After writing it she said, "Is this truth?" Told her I thought it was not. "Is it a lie?" Tried to make her understand that it was not wrong to write it; but I doubt if I succeeded entirely. When writing she spelled the word "bureau" wrong, and then I asked why; she said, "I was very *unremembered*." She knows the word "forgetful," but wished to try to make one, and after she had done so she turned to me for approbation.

'When I went to Laura after the recess she said, "I was very much frightened." "Why?" "I thought I felt some one make a great noise, and I trembled, and my heart beat very quick." She asked me if I knew any crazzy persons, then altered it to craxy, then to crazy. I asked her who gave her the new word crazy. She said, "Lurena told me about crazy persons, and said she was once crazy. What is crazy?" I told her that crazy persons could not think what they were doing, and attempted to change the subject; but she immediately returned to it, and repeated the question, "Have you seen crazy people?" I told her that I saw a crazy woman walking about, and she said, "Why did she walk? How could she think to walk?" [The imperfection of the teacher's definition had evidently occurred to the girl.] I told her they were sometimes sick, and became crazy; she said, "Who will take care of me if I am crazy?" I laughed at her, and told her she would not be crazy. She replied, "I said *if*."' This conversation was interesting as proving, what had been disputed, that she had a correct conception of the idea which the word *if* suggested.

One day Laura was left in the library while her teacher went to church, and on the latter's return the girl appeared very much fatigued. Inquiry revealed the fact that she had found a Latin book printed in raised letters, and had puzzled over it for hours. Hitherto she knew nothing of foreign languages, and the fact that she could not understand a single word in the book had worried her exceedingly. It was explained to her that different nations used different languages, and she was very pleased when her instructor taught her a few words of French and Latin.

Laura Bridgman never attained to the culture of Helen Keller; but she became as accomplished as the average young lady, studied geography, history, mathematics, &c., and finally was able to think deeply on religious and other subjects. Her case became known to prominent people in all parts of the world, with many of whom she corresponded, her handwriting being clear and legible. After the completion of her own education, she herself became a useful teacher of the blind and deaf and dumb.

Lack of space forbids any further instances of blind deaf-mutes being given here; but in the three cases of James Mitchell, Laura Bridgman, and Helen Keller we have the whole history of

the education of these sadly afflicted members of society. If the Abbé de l'Epée was the first to see the possibilities of a system of finger-language for blind deaf-mutes, it was Dr Howe who first showed how real those possibilities were, and laid the foundation for that perfection of training by which Helen Keller has benefited, and which has placed her educationally and intellectually on a level with those who have the use of all their faculties.

THE FREEING OF IVANCHO.

AN INCIDENT IN THE MACEDONIAN INSURRECTION OF 1903.

By Nigel Carlyle Graham.

THE air in the village was thick and choking with the smoke of discharged rifles. The soldiers had just entered it, and up on the hillside intermittent cracks and puffs of white smoke from among stunted oak-trees showed where the insurgents were making their escape. Only by the daring use of hand-bombs had they broken through the surrounding cordon of Turkish troops. Two hundred ill-armed, inexperienced peasants against three thousand soldiers—it was a hopeless affair from the very start; and after a stout defence of two hours from the cover of mud-walls and wood-stacks, the leader had ordered a retreat.

The women and children had to be left behind to the tender mercies of the foe. One or two were shot down while trying to escape with the men; but most were sitting stupefied and helpless in their homes.

In one cottage a woman was nailing down a kerosene-box with feverish haste. The face of the lid was perforated with a number of irregular holes. She had just finished the work when a sudden darkness in the room caused her to look up to ascertain the reason. Wedged in the window, like a couple of Balkan quinces, were two swarthy faces breathing heavily, each surmounted by a dirty fez. With a cry of dismay the woman rose to her feet, letting fall the shell of an exploded bomb which she had been using as a hammer, and at the same instant the heads uttered a Turkish oath and disappeared. The poor woman, sick with fear, sank on a three-legged stool, sobbing in her anguish.

Before long a *usbashi* (captain) entered, accompanied by half-a-dozen soldiers.

'Here, woman,' he said, shaking her roughly, 'what were you doing with that box and that bombshell there—eh?'

But the woman only gave a moan.

'Tell me what is in that box, or, by Allah! I'll make you,' shouted the officer, infuriated at her silence.

She lifted her face from her hands. Her countenance was one typical among Bulgar women—dull, heavy, stupid, absolutely lacking in imagination.

'Nothing,' she lied frightenedly; 'nothing, *effendi*. Only kerosene.'

'Nothing! Kerosene!' cried the *usbashi* scornfully. 'Mehemet, Ali, and you others there, open that box.'

In a moment the timid, cowering creature was transformed. Snatching a burning brand from the hearth, she rushed madly at the men as they attempted to carry out the orders, and dashed her weapon in the face of the foremost. A shower of sparks, a guttural exclamation of pain, and the soldiers retreated shamefacedly to the door. There was a swish through the air as the *usbashi* dealt the woman a sickening blow on the back with the flat of his sword, and she fell paralysed and half-senseless forward among the soldiers. Two of them seized her arms while the others stepped forward to break open the box.

'If you open that box,' said the captive in a low, breathless voice, 'you will all be dead men.'

They drew back hastily, and the *usbashi*, looking rather scared, left the room. At the door he called back, 'Take the woman before the *mir alai bey*; and you others, carry out the box into the open, and be careful.'

An unnecessary warning. Had they dared they would have disobeyed. But that is impossible in the Turkish army. Very gingerly, very slowly, their trembling hands bore the box outside and deposited it tenderly on the ground. The sweat was dripping from their livid faces when the job was over, and they hurried to a safe distance.

The woman was hauled roughly to the church, which had been made the headquarters of the *mir alai* (general) and his staff. The *mir alai*, a corpulent, white-bearded man with an amiable countenance, was seated in the priest's chair writing despatches, while some of his officers were idly breaking down the sacred candles or teasing out the eyes of the saints in the holy pictures with the points of their swords. On the sudden entry of two soldiers dragging forward a captive, the *mir alai* looked up, annoyed.

'What has this Bulgar woman done?' he asked.

Her guards relinquished their hold for an instant to salute the commander. But it was the *usbashi* who answered the question.

'She was discovered with an empty bombshell in her hand, kneeling beside a nailed-up wooden case. When we sought to examine it she dared us, and struck Mehemet, here, in the face. She has just declared that whoever opens the box will die.'

'Well, is all this true?' asked the *mir alai*, looking benignly at the prisoner.

There was dead silence, broken only by Mehemet, who dropped his rifle-butt heavily on the woman's foot. With a whimper, the foot was drawn in. The *mir alai* eyed the soldier sternly, and the offender cringed.

'Tell me,' he asked insinuatingly, 'what is in the box?'

The prisoner's mouth was hard shut.

'Was it an explosive? Remember,' he added in a bland tone of voice, 'there are ways of making stubborn women speak.'

She trembled violently. Her forehead was wrinkled in unwonted thought. With the mind of an ill-trained child, this woman was deciding a problem of life and death.

'Yes,' she replied, 'it is explosive.'

'And it will burst if the lid is opened?'

She nodded her head.

'Perhaps you prepared it for us?'

For the first time the woman raised her head and looked her judge in the eyes.

'I did,' she answered firmly.

The *mir alai* looked benignantly at the prisoner for the space of a few seconds.

'Take the woman away,' he said to the soldiers; adding, as the *usbashi* saluted and prepared to leave also, 'Tell *Onbashi* Abdullah to take a firing-party and have this woman shot.'

The prisoner gave a piteous cry as she heard the sentence, and the guards dragged her senseless body from the church.

The *mir alai* settled himself again in the chair and resumed his writing. So absorbed did he become in his work that he never noticed the departure of his staff, who wished to see the shooting; and the volley of the shooting-party caused him to start violently, fancying that the insurgents had made an attack. When, after a moment's brain-racking, the recollection of his sentence came back to him, he sat dreamily looking before him, pondering deeply. His musings were interrupted by the entrance of the *usbashi*.

'What does your Excellency wish done with that case of explosives?' he asked.

'That,' observed his superior officer, 'is exactly what I have been wondering; and I have just formed a plan.'

The *usbashi* waited attentively for its enunciation.

'First of all, have we taken any of the band prisoners?'

'Only one. We found him hiding in a house, wounded.'

'Is he badly wounded?' asked the old man anxiously.

The *usbashi* looked surprised at this solicitude.

'No,' he said. 'He is slightly wounded in the leg, so he could not run away.'

'He will do, then.'

'He will do?' questioned the *usbashi* respectfully.

'I mean that this Bulgar prisoner is the very man to open that box.'

'Oh, I see,' said the other, casting a look of admiration at his chief; and it was with rather a deeper salaam than is customary that he bowed and withdrew.

'Mehemet!' shouted the *usbashi* when he got outside. 'Mehemet, where is the wounded Bulgar?'

'Here, *effendi*,' answered the soldier, saluting, and pointing to the despondent prisoner, who, dressed in the brown uniform of the committee, was sitting on the ground nursing a bandaged leg.

'What is your name?' asked the officer.

'Ivancho,' returned the insurgent gruffly.

'Well, Ivancho, it has pleased the *mir alai bey* to be lenient.'

The man looked up suspiciously.

'You may bastinado me until you are tired; but I shall tell you nothing,' he said doggedly.

'Did I ask for information?' asked the other.

Suspicion gave way to a vague hope.

'The *mir alai bey*,' added the *usbashi*, 'makes your freedom subject to one insignificant condition. Do you see that box lying out there in the open? If you will go to that box and open it and bring me what it contains, by the Prophet! you shall go free.'

There was some laughter at this among the soldiers, and the prisoner relapsed into suspicion.

'If I don't?' he asked.

The *usbashi* shrugged his shoulders.

'The *mir alai bey* does not brook disobedience,' he remarked.

Ivancho rose and began to limp towards the box, when the officer checked him.

'Here,' he said, handing him a tool they use in the East for shoeing horses, 'is an instrument to force the lid open.'

With a muttered word of thanks, Ivancho took it and continued his painful journey. As he neared the box the crowd of spectators melted rapidly, so that when he knelt down to force the lid not a soul was to be seen; everybody had sought shelter from the coming explosion. The man was too intent on getting his job over as soon as possible to notice the strange silence and solitude which had suddenly come over the village. The watchers from their places of vantage saw the doomed man place the bit of iron under the lid and brace himself to wrench it open. Instinctively they held their breath and every organ seemed to halt in suspense with the expectancy of a terrific explosion.

A faint sound of rending, splintering woodwork, succeeded by an exclamation of surprise, reached the spectators—that was all. Amazement overcame disappointment when they saw the insurgent stoop an instant over the box, and then rising, advance slowly towards his captors holding a baby in his arms.

'By Allah!' exclaimed the *usbashi*, looking ill at ease, 'they are brave these Bulgars, but of such stupidity!' And he did a thing which no Turkish officer had ever done before: he salaamed courteously to the astonished Bulgar.

THE PENAL SETTLEMENT OF PORT BLAIR IN THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS.

By a late Settlement Officer.

PART I.

N the year 1872 I was stationed at a small cantonment in the North-West Provinces of our great Indian Empire, little thinking that I should soon find myself on my way to Port Blair in the Andaman Islands, to take up an appointment on the staff of the great Indian penal settlement, of which little was then known. Indeed, when I was appointed to the commission I could get but meagre information concerning the place. However, having obtained an advance of pay, I was told to make my way to Calcutta, where I should get further instructions.

In 1871 I had been sent with other officers to Sambhur, to take over the great salt lake from the native states of Jeypoor and Joudpoor. Whilst there we had a visit from that most able and popular of viceroys and statesmen, the late Lord Mayo.

It was my good fortune to be introduced to the Viceroy during his visit to the Sambhur Lake, when he expressed himself much pleased with the work we had done during the short time we had been in charge of the manufacture of salt there. By perseverance and tact we had become on good terms with the representatives of the two states, and by the time of Lord Mayo's visit all was tranquil and friendly, outwardly at all events. Much of this was due to the influence of the rulers of Jeypoor and Joudpoor, who assisted us in every way in their power.

I arrived at Calcutta in January 1872, when I had the honour of being present at a grand ball given by Lord Mayo at Government House to the King of Siam. The brilliance of the scene cannot be forgotten by those present. The Viceroy and Lady Mayo were most hospitable to all their guests, and a very enjoyable evening was passed.

At the time of which I write there was only one steamer every six weeks from Calcutta to Port Blair, so I had to wait about a month before I could proceed to the settlement. After a pleasant passage in the British India Company's steamer *Scotia*, commanded by Captain Lewis, we arrived at Port Blair. The ship was no sooner at anchor than the superintendent, General D. M. Stewart (the late Field-Marshal Sir Donald Martin Stewart), came on board and in the kindest manner took us off to Government House on Ross Island, and made us quite at home under his hospitable roof.

I might here explain the use of the word *we*. I had taken unto myself a wife just before leaving Calcutta, one who has been my partner for over thirty years, and who has helped me to battle with the vicissitudes of a long official experience in an isolated place, where life without her loving care and devotion would have been unbearable.

It so happened that Lord Mayo, who had been on a visit to Burma, came to Port Blair in H.M.S. *Glasgow*, and unfortunately, to the deep regret of all India and Great Britain, was murdered by a dastardly convict-assassin at Hopetown on the 8th of February 1872. The story has been told by much abler pens than mine, so that it is hardly necessary to give any details here. Suffice it to say that India lost one of its most popular rulers, and I a kind friend and benefactor.

Port Blair is situated on the east side of the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal, five hundred and ninety miles from the mouth of the Hooghly, and eight hundred and fifty miles due south from Calcutta. As the steamer coasts down the east side of the islands, the most conspicuous feature is a mountain called Saddle Peak, two thousand four hundred feet above the level of the sea, which has seldom been ascended by man. Those who did perform the task found it a 'hard nut to crack' and the cold rather severe, particularly if they had not taken the precaution of providing themselves with blankets and warm clothing.

The islands are clothed with dense undergrowth, and graceful forest-trees rise to the height of over one hundred feet, the jungle being almost impenetrable. Orchids in great variety abound, and are much prized by collectors. Coral-reefs surround the islands, and when the sea is calm the water is so transparent that the beautiful lace-like coral-beds can be distinctly seen spread out like fans, whilst fish of all sizes and colours glide about in perfect peace, taking little notice of the approach of a boat or any other object.

The settlement of Port Blair was established for the reception of mutineers captured during the Indian Mutiny of 1857–58, and when I went to the place I found many of them still there. The superintendent's boat-crew and the crews of other officers' boats were composed of these men, splendid specimens of that native army which helped to conquer the Punjab, and who in their turn were practically destroyed by Sikh regiments, aided by the British troops who so nobly upheld the traditions of our army.

In 1872 Port Blair was in the early stage of its existence. There were roads on the three small islands of Ross, Chatham, and Viper, which had first been cleared and occupied; but the rest of the settlement was in a very primitive state, and presented the appearance of newly cleared lands in the Far West. Trunks of trees were lying about in

all directions; the stumps remaining in the ground were burnt, and as far as possible dug out. The felling of the forest-trees was effected by large gangs of convicts armed with axes. Tree-felling was a dangerous operation, the trunks being laced together with creepers; and when a tree fell it often brought down other trees or large branches, sometimes killing or wounding the convicts beneath. For a full description of the Andaman forests I would refer the reader to Mrs B. M. Croker's *Bird of Passage*. This lady has given a very interesting and true description of the place as it then was. At the time of which I write the gifted authoress was a resident at Port Blair.

When the islands were first occupied the aborigines, or Andamanese, were very hostile. No one could safely venture into the interior, and they invariably murdered any one who fell into their hands. They naturally looked upon us as the invaders of their country, and acted accordingly, Europeans as well as convicts being slaughtered at sight. But by degrees British officers won them over. Homes were established for them, and by kind treatment the once savage and hostile tribes became perfectly peaceful; now they are most useful to the Government by aiding the police in the prevention of the escape of convicts, and their often speedy recapture when they enter the surrounding jungles. The Andamanese do not hesitate to shoot them with their bows and arrows if they attempt to resist capture. There still remain small groups of savages known as Jarawas, inhabiting certain parts of the jungles, whom we have hitherto failed to civilise.

I will now give, as far as I can do so without books of reference, a short description of the daily life we led for over a quarter of a century at the penal settlement, the period being from February 1872 to March 1898.

The day usually began with work out of doors, each officer having charge of a division of the settlement.

The divisions were attached to districts, the settlements being divided into two for administrative purposes, a senior officer of the commission being in charge of each. The headquarter division, Ross Island, on which the chief commissioner resided, was an independent charge. We rose early, mounted our ponies, and started off on our morning rounds. There were convict barracks to visit, gangs of convicts at work to be directed and orders to be given, road repairs, road-making, construction of bridges, lime-burning, brick-making; in fact, all kinds of public works. A settlement officer was supposed to know almost everything, and one never knew what one might not be called upon to undertake. Experimental cultivation was an interesting part of our duties, and had to be supervised.

On returning to quarters, say, about 10 A.M., a refreshing tub is enjoyed, followed by breakfast. Then the court-room is visited, where cases against convicts who have committed petty offences against jail discipline are disposed of. Criminal cases under the regular law might also have to be tried; and on set days in the week civil suits had to be taken up. All settlement officers were magistrates, and had civil powers also. All appeals from their decisions were heard by the deputy-superintendent, or in some cases by the chief commissioner, who sat as a court of sessions. Besides these, there were various other minor duties to perform. About 4 P.M. the work for the day was generally finished, but of late years night rounds have been instituted; and an officer, after the work for the day, has to go out at late hours of the night to visit barracks and villages miles away from his quarters. If it happens to be a wet and stormy night, which is not infrequently the case, a drenching and the loss of a good night's rest may result.

Port Blair is now far different from what it was in those early days. There are now good roads, well bridged, over the whole place. It is usual for all residents to keep ponies, and many maintain dog-carts and traps as a means of locomotion. In addition to these, a rikisha is kept by some, and is found to be a very useful means of getting about. The convicts take these along at a good speed, and, unless checked, are liable to go too fast to be pleasant, or indeed to be safe. I well remember on one occasion, after the wedding of an officer of the garrison, the bride and bridegroom started in one from the Government House, followed by another in which sat the best-man. The party came to grief at a sharp turn of the road down the hill, all being upset. Beyond a severe shaking, fortunately no great harm was done.

The garrison of Port Blair usually consists of a detachment of the European regiment at Rangoon, three officers and about one hundred and fifty rank and file, a wing of a Madras native infantry regiment about three hundred and fifty strong, with three or four European officers; there is also a military police battalion about seven hundred strong, under a district superintendent and commandant, who is a military officer of the Indian army; and, lastly, a small corps of volunteers. So the peace of the settlement is well cared for by a sufficient military force, and order maintained by the fine body of military police, who are composed of men from Northern India.

The convicts are criminals from every part of the Indian Empire, transported for all kinds of serious offences against the law of the land: murder, attempts at murder, dacoity or gang-robbery, forgery, infanticide, and various other offences. Twenty years' transportation with good conduct usually results in release and return to their homes.

The males are all received at the settlement in irons; but if their conduct on the voyage down has been good, the irons are gradually removed after a short term of probation. The females are at once removed to the women's jail at South Point. Much could be written about the life of the convicts and their discipline after they are received at the settle-

ment; but full information on these subjects would necessitate reference to records which are not within my reach, and which, even if obtainable, would probably not interest the general reader. As a rule the convicts give little trouble to the officials, and are easily controlled by the efficient staff of officers, overseers, and other subordinate officials maintained by the Government for the purpose. Serious crime, of course, is not absent from a convict population comprising from eight thousand to nine thousand of the worst criminals from all parts of British India as well as from the native states. Murders are not infrequent, and a month seldom passes without one or two, sometimes more; and as an attempt at murder by a life-convict is also punishable with death, executions are frequent, and to see these carried out according to law is one of the unpleasant duties of a settlement officer. While I am writing on this subject I will mention a few instances of startling events which occurred during my residence at Port Blair.

One afternoon my boat was ready at the steps on Ross Island jetty, and my wife, myself, and children had just left our house to go across the harbour to Aberdeen for a walk, when, as we were getting into the boat, we heard cries of 'Murder!' proceeding from our house, which was near by. We hurriedly went back, considerably alarmed, to find that our ayah, or children's nurse, whom we had left in the house, had been attacked by one of our convict servants, and her throat cut with a razor. The villain had waited until we had left the house to carry out his design, which he had no doubt contemplated beforehand. He had been seized by the time we returned. Fortunately the woman was not fatally injured, and, after treatment at the hospital, recovered, and remained in our service for several years; but she bears the marks to this day. The cause of this attack was that the woman had entrusted some jewellery to the man to sell for her. He made away with the money and refused to pay her, and on her threatening to report the matter he made up his mind to kill her out of revenge. He was executed for this second offence, as he was a life-convict and had been transported for murder. On another occasion the wife of an officer was sitting in her room reading. Her child was playing in the veranda under the care of her ayah, the lady's husband being away from home. Suddenly a man, one of the convict boatmen or servants, ran up the steps, seized the woman, and tried to kill her with a knife (I think it was one of the dinner-knives) in the very presence of the lady. She behaved with great presence of mind, seized her child, and summoned help. The convict was secured, and was duly executed on the gallows not far off.

Attacks on officers of the settlement and other Europeans have occurred; though, fortunately, they have been rare. The chief commissioners have not escaped, for on one occasion an attack was made on one of these officials while some settlement sports were in progress, and his life was only saved by his helmet preventing the weapon from having its intended effect.

An officer of the settlement was one morning being carried in a *janpan*, or chair, up the hill at Viper Island. A gang of convicts were at work on the roadside, and as he passed one of the gang struck a blow at him with a *patoo* (a heavy iron spade with a long wooden handle, used for digging), hitting him on the head and cutting through his helmet. The wound fortunately was not serious, but there could be no doubt what the man's intention was. Here again a good helmet probably saved life. I only mention these instances to show that a settlement officer's life at Port Blair is not without danger, and it is the individual's own tact and official fairness which is his best safeguard. Of course, I do not mean to say that any amount of tact or fairness will prevent an attack, for a convict may make such an attack without any personal ill-feeling against the official. He may do it as a means of ridding himself from an existence he is unable to bear, or the man may be a fanatic who will kill or try to kill for simply killing's sake. To illustrate this I may note here one case, a particularly shocking one. In a large workshop on Ross Island some sixty convicts were at work one morning repairing boats, making oars from jungle-pine, and such-like employments. Suddenly one of the men, who was working beside two others, lifted up an adze and cleft one man's skull almost in two, and then cut down the man on the other side of him, killing both on the spot. Several of the men ran up to try and overpower him, but had to retreat for their lives. The murderer was at last overpowered and placed in custody of the police. When asked by a magistrate before whom he was brought why he attacked the poor fellows, his answer was that God told him to do it. He admitted that he had no ill-feeling whatever against the two men he had killed; in fact, he had not long before been in friendly conversation with them. It was really a case of homicidal mania.

FLOWERS OF KINDNESS.

A SONG.

There's many a flower that blows away in gladness,
Without a glance upon its beauteous bloom;
And still it grows without a trace of sadness,
And scents the room.

There's many a heart, by sorrow often shaken,
That beats serenely through the long, dark day,
And brightens all though feels itself forsaken,
From home away.

But still the future brings its gleams of glory,
And ne'er a seed of kindness goes astray;
And golden autumn, after summer's story,
Brings harvest day.

WALTER SMITH.

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A MIDLAND MEADOW OF ENCHANTMENT.

SOME time during the summer of the year 1819, a carriage, whose driver wore the livery of the Beaumonts of Coleorton Hall, county Leicester, might have been seen traversing the two miles of level road that connects the ancient market-town of Ashby-de-la-Zouch with the hamlet of Smithsby, now known by its abbreviated form of Smisby. Just before entering the hamlet, the carriage would cross the boundary-line which divides the counties of Leicester and Derby, the latter in its very first mile upon its southern side partaking of that undulating character which distinguishes it generally from its more pastoral and level neighbour.

Two or three sharp turnings of the road as it began to ascend between cottages and farmhouses led to an open space. Here, at the foot of the knoll upon which stands the church, the carriage stopped. A tall, spare man alighted, and at once proceeded to climb the rough, steep ground which conducted him by steps and gate into the steeper path of the churchyard. He walked deliberately, even slowly, for it might have been observed by the half-dozen villagers who watched the operation that he was slightly lame. At the church-door he was met by the sexton, who evidently expected the visit, for he had opened the door and was waiting at the entrance to the porch, keys in one hand and hat in the other, prepared to do the honours of the occasion. The stranger returned the salutation in a free and pleasant manner, the friendly nods which accompanied the words being more easily comprehended than the language.

The visitor paused before entering the church, and, with his face averted from it, gazed for some moments upon the fair, expansive scene which the mound disclosed. He removed his hat, the better to catch what breeze was abroad. The head thus bared revealed a remarkable shape. It was said of it that when present amongst a number of others representative of the most supreme genius of the day—though none could boast of being its peer—it could be covered by the smallest hat of the company. It ran high up from a broad, square brow like a sugar-loaf. The eyes were half-lost between the shaggy brows and high cheek-bones, but their power of observation was marvellous. That they appreciated the scene upon which they rested was evident from the sunny gleam they emitted as they took it all in.

Turning to the church, he examined its exterior, especially the tower, which bore then, as now, evidences of its fourteenth-century origin. Then, to the relief of the sexton, he went inside. Monuments of the Kendalls of Smisby manor-house at once arrested his attention, after examining which he startled the attendant by intimating his particular desire to go up the tower. The man opened his mouth as wide as his eyes at the dialect in which the request was made; but he got through the Scottish burr sufficiently to know what was expected of him, and he selected a key from his bunch and led the way through the little turret-door, up the dark, dusty steps, to the roomy, battlemented roof of the tower. Shortly afterwards the sexton reappeared below with a very satisfied look upon his face. After pouching and pocketing something with much deliberation and care, he went out into the churchyard, where he busied himself, turning an eye now and then to the top of the tower, and wondering not so much that the stranger from Coleorton Hall should want to go up as that he should not want to come down for a while.

'One of them writin' or paintin' gentlemen Sir George Beaumont was so amazin' fond of keepin' about him,' he reckoned.

If the reader will turn to Scott's *Ivanhoe*, Chapters VII. to XII. inclusive, he will know what magic was being worked that summer afternoon upon the top of Smisby church-tower by the 'Wizard of the North.' The oval meadow at the back of the farmhouse immediately below his eye became the scene of one of the most vivid word-pictures that even Walter Scott ever drew. To this day the meadow, known locally as 'The Broad Greaves,' preserves the natural outlines he describes, and which it bore when men came from far and wide in the reign of

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Cœur-de-Lion to participate in or witness 'the gentle and joyous sport' of the lists at Ashby. There still remains the broad, level field, with both sides ascending as of an amphitheatre, over whose graduated slopes the tall flanking trees throw a delightful shade, and through whose southern vista can still be seen Ashby Castle and Church. As the charm works that afternoon on Smisby tower, the meadow fills with people: prince, nobles, knights, squires, franklins, yeomen, and serfs jostle each other, and according to their degree crowd the pavilions, the seats of honour, or the common open spaces. The scene is full of gorgeous colour, of heraldic device, and the air is rent by the clarion note of martial challenge. We see the base John, pettish and mean in word and act, usurping feebly his brother Richard's office; the traitor nobles, whose impatience to stamp out everything English, typified here by the Saxons Cedric of Rotherwood and Athelstane of Coningsburgh, is scarcely restrained by the politic counsel of Waldemar Fitzurse; the Jew Isaac of York, the scorn of everybody, but bearing it all with 'a patient shrug' as long as he does not lose one crown of the many he has risked; the smug Aymer, prior of Jervaulx, trying to salve carnal indulgence with ecclesiastical precedent, the unction being always effective if in Latin; the Norman dames and maidens, with their affectations, their beauty dimmed by the Oriental grace and glance of Rebecca the Jewess and the stately purity of the Saxon lady Rowena. All these but fill in the background and middle-distance of that marvellous picture in which the haughty Templar Bois-Guilbert, the gigantic Front-de-Bœuf, the disinherited crusader Ivanhoe (knight of the unerring lance) and his errant ally the mysterious Black Knight (doughtiest of champions), and the intrepid archer Locksley, all move valorously in the foreground, exciting our breathless interest as well as admiration for the matchless art of their delineator.

The vision of Walter Scott that summer afternoon became very shortly afterwards the pages of fiction we know so well. In one of the retreats of the delightful Coleorton gardens, a moss-grown grotto still to be entered, the opening chapters of *Ivanhoe* were written. Add to this that, later, Wordsworth penned many noble lines in this calm retreat, with its fine views of Grace Dieu and Charnwood Forest—a fact in the literary associations of the Midlands too little known.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—THE ROOM OF THE BEAR-CUB.

JUDITH, who was no stranger to that house of mystery, first led me into the front room, where I had once awaited her; but the rays of light that came though the chinks of the closed shutters revealed nothing unusual. It was neglected and dusty, but orderly as before. The room behind was a bedroom, in disorder, with the bed unmade; but there was no occupant.

In eager search we ascended the stairs to the room in which stood the stuffed bear-cub, but found the door locked and the key gone. We looked through the keyhole, but could discern nothing. To our loud raps there was no response.

'We must break it open,' I remarked, seeing no other way; and drawing back, I rushed at it, throwing all my force against it.

Once—twice—I repeated the attempt, but in vain. At length, however, my love, in frantic haste to learn the truth, threw her weight against the door at the same instant as I threw mine, and with our combined efforts we succeeded in breaking the cheap lock from its fastenings, and the door giving way, we went head foremost into the long, old-fashioned drawing-room, furnished in faded green rep of a style long since out of date.

The one blind being up gave sufficient light, and next instant our eyes fell upon a scene which filled us both with horror and caused cries of dismay to break involuntarily from our lips.

Selby was seated in a collapsed position in an arm-chair, his head hanging listlessly upon his breast; while the hunchback Graniani, with hands outstretched and tightly clenched, lay face downwards upon the carpet behind the table.

I bent and touched their faces, one after the other. They were cold as marble.

Both men had evidently been dead some hours.

'But my father—my poor father!' wailed Judith. 'Where is he? He must be in this house! Let us search;' and she started off frantically from room to room, I following her in breathless amazement at this tragic discovery.

Yet although we searched the garrets and even the cellars, we failed to discover him. He was evidently not there.

Again we ascended the stairs to that room of horror where the two men lay white and dead, a ghastly sight indeed; and as we re-entered she suddenly complained of an acute pain in her left arm and a curious sensation in the head.

Singularly enough I experienced the very same symptoms in my left arm—very similar, indeed, to those I had felt after examining The Closed Book.

'Ah!' she shrieked, 'I know. I ran my hands along the rail on the stairs and felt a scratch. Look at my hand! Look—I—I'm poisoned!'

I glanced at her left hand, and saw a slight

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abrasion of the skin straight across the palm. Then I glanced at my own, and discovered, to my dismay, that I had received an exactly similar scratch.

'What makes you suspect poisoning?' I demanded quickly. 'Do you believe these men have died from the same cause?'

'Undoubtedly,' she answered. But on quickly examining the hands of the dead men I discovered no marks there. 'Ah!' she wailed, 'you do not know. I am doomed to die, and no power can now save me.'

I did not mention my own symptoms for fear of increasing her alarm, but merely said:

'If you really believe you have been poisoned secretly, I think I can give you something which may be of benefit. We must not, however, lose an instant, but must go to the nearest chemist's.'

'No medicine is of avail against this. I have fallen a victim, as I knew I must sooner or later. In half-an-hour I shall be dead,' she added hoarsely, gazing fixedly at the almost imperceptible scratch upon her delicate white flesh. 'Ah! why did I come to this house of death when I suspected—nay, when I knew too well—the doom of those who enter here?'

'Come, Lady Judith!' I cried quickly. 'Do not linger a moment. I feel sure that your case is not so utterly hopeless as you think. Come at once to a chemist's;' and taking her forcibly by the arm, I led her downstairs and out into the street.

There was no cab in sight, but I knew there was a chemist's in Theobald's Road, next door to the public-house where I had had refreshment on that first night of my return to London.

On entering the shop I seated her and quickly obtained a hypodermic syringe. Then, taking from my pocket the old green glass phial wherein the Borgia antidote was still hermetically sealed, I broke it open, half-filled the tiny syringe with the dark-brown fluid, and injected it into her left arm. It was, indeed, fortunate that I had kept it in my pocket instead of placing it in the case with the other objects.

'What is that?' she inquired; but, promising to explain all later, I administered to myself an injection of the precious compound.

She felt better almost instantly, she said, and I myself began to derive great benefit from it. The sharp pains in my limbs grew easier, and the drowsiness that had already come over me was dispelled. It acted like magic, and, whatever was its nature, it had, after lying concealed through three centuries, lost none of its potency in counteracting the effects of a powerful venom.

As we had descended the stairs my quick eye had detected a sharp steel point slightly protruding from the polished mahogany hand-rail. The colour of the wood was darker there, as though stained by some liquid that had been applied to the point from time to time. Was it possible that the steel point was actually envenomed with evil intent? It certainly seemed so.

Yet the mysterious death of those two men who had been my enemies was certainly not attributable to the same cause, for the skin upon their hands was quite uninjured.

I examined my own hand while I gave some fictitious explanation to the chemist, whose curiosity had been aroused by my actions. The skin was cut slightly for quite two inches across, like the scratch of a pin, and yet I had felt nothing until Lady Judith had directed my attention to it. The venom, whatever it was, had the effect of producing insensibility in the actual part lacerated. It was true that the little crystal bottle discovered at Threave had been stolen from Dover Street; but although the antidote had acted so successfully, I could not believe that the actual liquid from that bottle had been used to envenom us. There was some further and deeper explanation, for had not the woman I loved admitted that she was aware that those who entered that gloomy, dismal house were doomed, and that the sign of the bear-cub was synonymous of death?

Presently, when Judith felt better, we went forth again into the street. It was our duty to inform the police of the mysterious tragedy that had been enacted in Harpur Street, yet she pointed out that in the circumstances it would be far better to allow the discovery to be made by others. Some passer-by would undoubtedly notice that an entry had been made by the kitchen window, a search would be instituted for thieves, and the truth would then be revealed.

'But will you not now tell me all you know regarding that strange place and its inmates?' I demanded.

'Later on, when I am certain of what has happened to my father,' was her response. 'I shudder to think how near to death we both have been. You have saved my life, Mr Kennedy.'

'It was my duty. I, too, was envenomed by the same secret means. We might both have succumbed, just as those two men have done, had it not been for the fortunate circumstance of my possession of an antidote.'

'Ah!' she sighed, 'death comes sooner or later to those who visit that fatal house.' Then she added, 'Let us take a cab home. I'm unnerved by what we have just discovered, for it renders the mystery greater.'

'Is it, then, a mystery—even to you?' I inquired.

'Yes, even to me,' she answered, and then lapsed into a train of thought.

When, a quarter of an hour later, we entered the hall at Grosvenor Street, the footman handed her a telegram, which she scanned, and quickly handed to me to read. It ran as follows:

'Abbey treasure discovered at Crowland this morning by the rector and Kennedy's friends. Have been present at excavations. Arrive home at 4.30. Tell Kennedy.—GLENELG.'

'Look!' she cried in wild excitement. 'My dear father is safe after all! He has apparently been

helping your companions to search, and the hidden treasure has actually been discovered.'

I stood with the telegram in my hand, utterly staggered.

She refused to make any further explanation without her father's consent, and as it was then half-past three o'clock, I was compelled to await the Earl's return. In wonder whether any message had been sent me from my friends at Crowland, I took a cab to Dover Street, where the porter handed me a telegram from Walter also announcing the great find, and saying that he was returning to London with the Earl, and would meet me at Grosvenor Street.

Therefore, in hot haste, I drove back to Judith, and sat with her in the cosy little room she used as boudoir until there came a loud ring at the door, and the two men entered.

'Father!' cried Judith, springing up and throwing her arms round his neck. 'We are safe—safe at last!'

'Safe?' he echoed. 'How? What has occurred?'

'Both men are dead,' she declared. 'They are lying dead in that room at Harpur Street. Mr Kennedy broke into the place, and we have both seen them.'

'Dead!' gasped the Earl, gazing fixedly at his daughter. 'Who could have killed them?'

'Ah! who knows?' she cried. 'But I feared for you, knowing their deep cunning. Yet they have fallen victims, and you—who, they intended, should die—have escaped.'

'Really, Lady Judith, this is very extraordinary!' exclaimed Walter Wyman. 'Cannot you explain matters? Who are these men who are dead?'

'Selby and the hunchback,' was her reply. 'Ask Mr Kennedy. He will tell you.'

Walter then turned to me, and I briefly explained our gruesome discovery and our very narrow escape from death. He stood aghast, and then in turn told me of how they had recovered the whole of the abbey treasure, almost item for item as in the list given in The Closed Book. As soon as they had started excavating, aided by a dozen labourers, Lord Glenelg had approached, introduced himself, and, to their amazement, had rendered valuable assistance. At first, of course, they had been mistrustful, recollecting the midnight search of some weeks ago; but at last, assured of his lordship's goodwill, and that his interest was that of an enthusiastic antiquary, his assistance was accepted.

He had expressed a wish to Walter to meet me, and that was the reason the pair had travelled up to London, leaving the valuable treasure recovered in the hands of the rector, Fred, and Sammy Waldron.

'If, as you assure me, both men are dead, Mr Kennedy, I see no reason for any further secrecy,' exclaimed the Earl, turning his gray face towards me at last, and standing with one hand tenderly upon his daughter's shoulder. 'Judith would perhaps explain matters to you better than I can; but as she desires it, I will relate the facts as far as they are known to me.'

Her sweet gaze met mine, and I saw that she was breathless and nervous, as though in dread of the truth being told. Her face was white and attentive; and she half-clung to her father, as though relying upon his paternal protection. She seemed apprehensive, as if, even now, she would withhold her strange secret from me.

FRUIT-CULTURE ON SMALL HOLDINGS.

By J. M. Hodge.

THE present landward movement came prominently before the public in the days when Mr Joseph Chamberlain and Mr Jesse Collings were stumping the country with 'three acres and a cow.' Rural depopulation, associated as it is with the slum problem, has kept it before the public ever since; and social reformers of the practical type have been by example more than by precept leading the way back to the land. Sir Robert Edgcumbe, for example, in 1888 divided a farm in Dorset among twenty-seven small holders. Some years later Major Poore sold one hundred and twelve acres to thirty crofters or more in Wiltshire, who are now living in their own cottages on the land. Later still a few public-spirited men, with Mr Winfrey of Peterborough at their head, formed themselves into a syndicate for the purpose of acquiring land in Lincolnshire, and they have divided six hundred acres among two hundred tenants. Another syndicate bought three farms in Norfolk, and split them up into crofts. A Small Holdings Association has been formed in Surrey, and has bought an estate, a good part of which has already been sold. Three other associations have just been registered, and are prepared to purchase land when suitable opportunity offers.

While this movement has been going on in England, Scotland, unconsciously, has been developing in the same direction. It is true that less has been heard of small holdings in Scotland than in England, but fruit-culture has taken possession of the people in some parts of the country, and that industry is invariably leading to the creation of small holdings. The most typical, though not the largest, is the Blairgowrie district, on the last slope of the Grampians, looking down on the fertile valley of Strathmore. Fruit has been grown at Blairgowrie for many years, but the industry, as it is now known, began some twenty-five years ago, and it received

so recently as 1899 the impetus which has created the boom still raging. A small farm, extending to thirty odd acres, came into the market. A shrewd Scotsman, observing the tendency of the times, bought the farm. He at once began to lease it out in small holdings. One of the pioneers of the fruit trade, James Stewart by name, a cobbler who came from Atholl—and a very shrewd cobbler, too—was one of the first lessees. His holding extended to five acres. He made a calculation, and found it would be better for him to buy the land and pay the money over a period of years. It was in a way an original proposal, but compensation, under the Market Gardeners Compensation (Scotland) Act of 1897, was looming in the distance, and the landlord agreed. James Stewart bought his place at one hundred pounds per acre—then an unheard-of figure—agreeing to pay 5 per cent. on the money and clear the purchase price in six years. Before this transaction was completed the local authorities of four burghs required ground for an infectious diseases hospital, and he offered to feu to them two and a half acres at twenty-five pounds. They accepted his offer. He sold his feu-duty for seven hundred pounds. He had thus in a comparatively short time bought five acres for five hundred pounds, sold two and a half acres for seven hundred pounds, and had as profit the remaining two and a half acres plus two hundred pounds. Other two lessees bought ground on practically the same terms, and became their own lairds. Quite a number of leases were entered into, and the district was bidding fair to become the centre of small holdings, extending on an average to five acres, which the holders have found sufficient to maintain them—an acreage, by the way, totally inadequate when ordinary agricultural crops are grown. Just then there came a general awakening as to the seriousness of compensation claims under the Market Gardeners Act, and landlords refused to let land unless at exorbitant figures.

Things were at this stage when the estate of Drummellie and Essendy, three miles west from Blairgowrie, came into the market. A company was floated, and the estate, extending to four hundred and fifty acres, was purchased in the closing days of 1902. An experiment was then begun which has created widespread interest, and which may have far-reaching results. A neighbouring proprietor bought two hundred acres of the estate by the side of Marlee Loch, with the view of securing the rights to the loch. The company decided to divide the rest of the land into small holdings. The price was fixed at fifty pounds per acre. Working-men—though it was a purely business transaction, the company was anxious to create small holdings for working-men—could not buy land at this figure. But fifty pounds per acre, spread over ten years, is only five pounds per acre per year, which is much less than the rent of some of the fruit-land in Blairgowrie. It was arranged that a small cash payment should be made by purchasers at the date of entry—so that they should have something at stake—and that the balance should be paid by ten equal yearly instalments, interest at 4 per cent. being charged on the unpaid capital. This works out roughly at about six pounds per acre per year for ten years, at the end of which time the land belongs absolutely to the purchaser—not bad terms in a district where fruit-land is rented as high as twelve pounds per acre. Before many weeks had elapsed ninety acres had been disposed of to experienced fruit-growers. Before a year had gone the whole of the estate was sold in holdings ranging from five to twenty-five acres, with the exception of forty-five acres which the company would not sell, and a holding of sixteen acres, the lease of which does not expire till 1905.

To ensure the success of the undertaking—the estate is fully three miles from a railway station—two things were essential: the assistance of the company and co-operation among the purchasers. The company agreed to do as much of the horse-work as possible in connection with the laying down of the estate in fruit at the same figure that it would be done for in Blairgowrie, and although they came under no obligation, it is their intention to give assistance in connection with the cartage of manure from Blairgowrie and of produce to the station till a motor-car service is established. The obligations of the company have been so far implemented. Over thirteen hundred tons of manure have been taken out, and about one hundred and fifty acres of raspberries have been planted. More essential, however, than this was the co-operative arrangement for reaping the fruit harvest. The picker difficulty is one of the greatest difficulties in Scotland. The tramp class can be obtained, but they are very undesirable. My firm made an experiment last year. We erected suitable accommodation for pickers. The dormitories were fitted up with iron bedsteads and ordinary bedding. The dining-room was well lit and commodious. A superintendent was appointed. He and his wife lived on the premises. Three servants were engaged, who cleaned the rooms and served the tables. Three meals a day were provided, and the cost of board and lodging and medical attendance—fortunately not much needed—to each picker was six shillings per week. Eighty respectable girls came from Glasgow and Edinburgh, and thoroughly enjoyed the outing. The scheme was an entire success, and we are arranging for one hundred and twenty to come this season. A similar scheme has been decided upon for Essendy. But instead of one hundred pickers, one thousand may be required, and instead of each grower erecting houses for his own pickers, joint buildings are to be erected for all the pickers. The whole control of the erection and furnishing of the buildings and the securing and maintenance of the pickers is left in the hands of a general manager, who will proceed on the lines which we have found so successful. Each grower is to pay a share of the

expense according to the number of pickers required. There was the further question of the sale and despatch of the fruit. That, too, is to be done by co-operation. A salesman, engaged in the trade for years, and having acted in a similar capacity for another association from its inception till it had hundreds of tons of fruit at its disposal, was secured to sell the whole of the produce, his commission being 2½ per cent. on the receipts, which covers not only his salary but all his working expenses.

I have given the price of the Essendy land. I give now the cost of planting it out with raspberries, which is rapidly becoming the only fruit grown in the district. It must be kept in mind that the figures are average figures. Some of the land cost more and some less to work; that depended on the condition of the land and the nature of the last crop. It must also be kept in mind that raspberry canes were dearer last year than usual, and that the cartage of manure three miles adds something to the cost of planting. The canes are planted either in the autumn or spring. There is practically no return the first summer. In the following autumn larch posts have to be put into the ground, on which wires are supported, to which the canes are fixed:

Preparing the land, which includes ploughing, grubbing, harrowing, drilling, &c.	£1	6	0
10 tons farmyard manure at 10s. 6d. per ton	5	5	0
Carting manure to fields	0	6	0
7000 raspberry canes at 33s. per 1000	11	11	0
Spreading manure and planting rasps	1	8	0
200 posts at 5d. each	4	3	4
5 cwt. wire at 12s. 3d. per cwt.	3	1	3
Labour connected with the posting and the wiring	0	13	0
Total	£27	13	7

The laying down of an acre of raspberries thus actually costs over twenty-seven pounds. A good deal more has to be spent to keep the ground clean and buy implements before anything is reaped; and fifty pounds at least has to be spent before the acre becomes remunerative.

The question naturally arises, Will holdings pay where the cost of land and cultivation is as I have stated? The best answer will be found not in theoretical but in concrete cases. I take first the case of an allotment-holder in the Blairgowrie district, which seems to be specially adapted for the cultivation of the raspberry, just as other districts are specially adapted for the cultivation of other fruits. Without exception, the raspberry is grown more perfectly there than anywhere else in the United Kingdom or on the Continent. It is the unprecedented crops that are reaped which enables the raspberry-grower in this district, far away from his principal market in the Midlands of England, to compete with those more favourably situated farther south. The holder I refer to has an acre of ground, which he cultivates in his spare time. He has worked it for the last twelve or thirteen years; but my figures go back only to the year 1895. The return for every year since then is as follows:

Year.	Crop.	Price per cwt.	Gross Return.
1895	120 cwt.	31s.	£186
1896	105 "	16s.	84
1897	108 "	31s. 6d.	170
1898	63 "	38s. 3d.	120
1899	80 "	31s. 11d.	127
1900	70 "	20s. 5½d.	71
1901	68 "	20s. 3d.	68
1902	60 "	22s. 3½d.	66
1903	70 "	26s. 6d.	92

The total amount for these nine years has been nine hundred and eighty-four pounds. Half of this amount is a fair thing for expenses, which leaves as profit on the nine years four hundred and ninety-two pounds. I do not, of course, say that he would make twenty-four thousand six hundred pounds off fifty acres in Blairgowrie in nine years because he has made four hundred and ninety-two pounds off one acre. I have no doubt whatever that more fruit can be taken off a croft than off a large farm, because there is, as a rule, better cultivation and greater care on the croft than on the farm.

Now, take the case of a small holding. The one I am thinking of extends to 11 acres 24 poles. It was planted in 1898, and the result has been as follows:

Year.	Crop.	Price per cwt.	Gross Return.
1899	19 cwt.	31s. 11d.	£30
1900	149 "	20s. 5½d.	152
1901	612 "	20s. 3d.	620
1902	967 "	22s. 3½d.	1077
1903	730 "	26s. 6d.	967
Total			£2846

The net profit on this holding for these five years amounts to eight hundred and ninety-eight pounds. The expenses are therefore far more than half the gross return, but the first few years of a holding are the years when there is heavy outlay and small income. This holding is now making up leeway. Last year the gross return was nine hundred and sixty-seven pounds, and the expenses amounted to only four hundred and thirty pounds; so that it is merely a matter of time when the expenses from first to last will not exceed one-half the gross return. If the small holders at Essendy do as well as this holder has done—and he has done much worse than the allotment-holder referred to, and worse than some other small holders—they will clear the purchase price of their holdings in five years and have a substantial balance over, for it will be observed that the price of the above holding, extending to 11 acres 24 poles, at six pounds per acre per year for ten years—which is the price of the Essendy land—amounts to six hundred and sixty-nine pounds; whereas the profit on the holding at the end of the fifth year was eight hundred and ninety-eight pounds. The price on the Essendy basis was therefore cleared and two hundred and twenty-nine pounds to the good.

'VAIN THREADS.'

CHAPTER II.

JOANE looked already ten years younger, though whether that was to be altogether attributed to the Whittlebeach air was perhaps doubtful. Her complexion was tanned with the sea-air and sunshine, and there was a light in her eyes and a brightness in her manner which were new to them.

Mrs Elliot, who owed her complexion to art rather than nature, and always sheltered it from the sun and wind most carefully, complained that Joane was getting vulgarly brown.

'You will look quite a fishwife if you don't take more care,' she declared one day.

Joane laughed. 'I am tired of being careful. What does it matter if I 'm brown?'

'It does not look lady-like,' said Mrs Elliot in her old-fashioned phraseology.

Joane smiled and snatched up her hat. But Mrs Elliot, seeing she meditated escape, interposed as she was fond of doing, inflicting obstacles where none existed, for the mere selfish pleasure of checking other people's plans.

'I want you to go on with our book,' she said aggrievedly.

Joane glanced out of the window. Beyond the grassy edge of the cliff the sea glittered cool blue-and-white, while the old windlass stood up dark against its sheeny background.

'It seems such a pity to stop indoors,' she said. 'Wouldn't you like to sit in the garden?'

'Garden, my dear Joane! One might as well sit out in the street!' cried her aunt.

'Only there is no street to sit in. You would get the fresh air.'

'Quite enough air comes through the window,' said Mrs Elliot obstinately, and she leant back on her cushions as if too exhausted to argue.

Joane hesitated. A few minutes before she had seen her hero go down those rugged cliff-steps, and she had meditated strolling on the shore below. However, with a sigh of renunciation, she put down her hat and took up the book, and Mrs Elliot closed her eyes comfortably.

Joane read on—unconsciously monotonous—while the sea rippled gently in the distance and white-winged gulls skimmed over the water.

In the back regions Miss Cable's voice might be heard singing at her work.

It was very hard to stay indoors, Joane felt. Was she to spend all her life ministering to the whims of a selfish old woman who would have been far better waiting on herself?

But deliverance came when she least expected it—for this occasion anyhow. The little gray gate suddenly clicked, and Joane, looking eagerly, saw a fashionably attired lady approaching, and peering critically at the house through her double eye-glasses.

Joane recognised her as an old friend of her aunt's, a woman of kindred tastes and disposition.

She hastily roused Mrs Elliot, whose chin was resting on her neck, and the next moment Miss Cable announced 'Lady Bebington.'

'Oh my dear, how glad I am to see you!' said Mrs Elliot, rising with astonishing alacrity. 'But where did you spring from? I never expected to see a friend in this wretchedly dull place.'

Lady Bebington, after returning her friend's greeting, and shaking hands coldly with Joane, whom she did not like, explained her unexpected appearance. She was staying at Balbridge, a fashionable seaside town, and hearing that Mrs Elliot was at Whittlebeach, had driven over. Her carriage was waiting round the corner as her old coachman was afraid to drive any farther, and they seemed coming to the edge of the cliff.

Joane hurried out to hasten tea, and soon after, having poured out and done all that she felt was required of her, she left the two friends and the discussions of their several ailments and doctors, and such-like engrossing topics, and slipped out.

Down the cliffs she climbed, breathing more freely when she reached the shingle and was shut off from Sea View by the high chalky wall behind her.

For a little time, at any rate, she was free, and away from the constant irritation of Aunt Mamie's presence. She ran as lightly as a girl over the beach, with its little patches of intervening sand, down to the edge of the sea, where translucent white frills broke over the glorified pebbles and drew back, leaving little clusters of stiff foam clinging to the glistening brown seaweed.

Joane stooped down to dabble in the cool water, turning back her sleeves, and exulting in the unaccustomed amusement as a child might have done, running back when a bolder wave than the rest splashed her ankles and overflowed her neat tan shoes.

Presently the sound of a boat's keel grating on the beach made her look up.

At a little distance a boat was being run on to the shore. Its solitary occupant leapt out just as she looked. In an instant her heart began to beat rapidly, as the sight of no fellow-creature had ever been able to make it beat before. There was no mistaking the squarely-built, stalwart figure of Jim Cable; and at the same moment he recognised her and raised his sailor's cap.

Joane hesitated. Unless she made some advance *he* would not. Of course, they had not been introduced; but the difference in station would obviate the necessity of that; and, besides, since the morning

he had opened the gate for Aunt Mamie and herself, Joane had always smiled and bowed when she happened to pass him.

So, hastily pulling down her sleeves and blushing at her temerity, she made a step or two towards the boat. Jim Cable seemed to take a long time to ship his oars; but in answer to her 'Good-afternoon' he turned and faced her.

'Have you been for a row?' she said feebly, since the fact was self-evident.

'Well, yes, I've had a little turn, miss,' he replied in his deep tones. How refreshing it was to hear a man's voice after the feminine cackle to which her ears were accustomed!

'I've just taken her a little way. It's nice and cool on the water.'

'I expect so,' said Joane enviously. 'I love the water.'

He looked at her with added interest.

'So do I, miss,' he replied.

'What a nice little boat!' continued Joane, miserably conscious of the banal tone of her observations.

'She wants a bit of fresh varnish,' he said, eying the skiff critically.

'Do you think I could row her?' said Joane.

She lifted her eyes timidly to his as she spoke.

'Would you like to try, miss?' he said, answering her question by another.

For the fraction of a second Joane halted.

'Yes,' she said boldly.

'Get in then, miss, please,' said the sailor, in the unconsciously authoritative tones of one accustomed to command.

He held out his hand to assist her, and Joane thrilled at the firm, strong touch.

'You won't mind my coming too?' he said, getting in after her. 'For I don't think it would be safe to let you go all alone.'

'No! Oh no! I want you to come,' she said, and then she blushed.

'Captain' Cable pushed off, and the next instant they were floating deliciously on the little bobbing waves.

'Now,' he said, looking at his crew comprehensively, 'you won't be able to manage both oars, I fancy. Suppose I take one?'

'Very well,' said Joane. He could have taken both for all she cared, or laid them at the bottom of the boat and let it drift with the wind.

It was a delightfully daring enterprise altogether, and the only slight shadow on Joane's enjoyment was the thought of what Aunt Mamie would say if she could see her.

She was somewhat awkward in handling the oars, and required a good deal of instruction and adjustment, 'Captain' Cable sitting just behind her to effect the same.

'What force you put into your strokes!' she remarked presently, as the boat kept swinging round. 'I can't match them anyhow.'

'I was trying not to,' he answered awkwardly. 'But I think you are getting hot and tired. Shall I take both oars a bit? Or would you rather go back?'

'Go back? No, Captain Cable. I am only too glad to be out, so much of my time is spent indoors with my aunt, who is, or thinks she is, rather an invalid. It is lovely to be free.'

'It must be dull stopping indoors this weather,' he said compassionately; adding, 'But I'm not "Captain," miss.'

'I expect you will be soon,' she said confidently. 'Anyway, they call you so at Whittlebeach.'

He smiled in response to her swift backward glance.

'I've no right to it.'

'I'm not so sure,' she said. 'If brave deeds and —and heroism give a right, I should think you have it beyond question.'

'Nonsense!' he said, half-impatiently. 'I beg pardon, but I've done nothing out of the way. Have you ever seen the caves at Bingham?' he asked, with an abrupt change of subject.

'No. Is it far?' she asked eagerly.

'A couple of miles, not more,' he answered. 'Will you go?'

'What! now?'

'No time like the present,' he said encouragingly.

Joane looked longingly at the gleaming cliffs.

'I should like it,' she said dubiously; then with a laugh, 'Well, let us go. I may as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb.'

'We'll steer there right away,' he answered.

'But it is a long way. I hope you won't be tired of rowing.'

'Tired?' The sailor threw back his head and laughed. 'It would take something more than that to tire me, I hope,' he said. 'Why, once I was rowing, with brief intervals, for three days'—— He broke off abruptly, finding he had made an admission.

'Oh, that was at the wreck, then?' said Joane. 'Do tell me about it.'

'My sister will spin you any amount of yarn on that subject,' he said. 'But there's one thing I will tell you of, and that is the patience and pluck of the ladies in my charge, under privation and danger.'

'Oh, I would rather hear about yours,' she said naïvely.

He smiled and shook his head.

'I don't know whether you can swim,' he said presently, when they had progressed a little way in silence. 'Because, if not, I was going to warn you about the "Draughtways." There's never a summer but some visitor gets drowned there.'

'Oh, I heard my aunt's bath-chairman begin something about it one day,' replied Joane. 'Is it a quicksand?'

'Well, it's something of the sort, I suppose. The water working through makes the top move. It's a curious current caused by the water running from the lows back into the sea. Three hours each way —ebb and flow.'

'Well, I can only swim a little, and I am inclined to hug the shore,' she answered.

'If any one can't swim, and gets into the current I'm telling you of, there's no chance for him,' said 'Captain' Cable.

They arrived at the caves before long, and went inside to explore. There were some curious winding passages, and these were crossed here and there by fissures in the ground of varying depth, which, in the dim light, Joane had to be helped over.

At one turn they were in total darkness, and 'Captain' Cable had to strike matches to enable them to grope their way. Joane was half-frightened, and clung to the arm of her guide, begging to be taken into heaven's light and air again.

'It is very interesting,' she said, breathing a sigh of relief as her companion helped her into the boat. 'I suppose they were smugglers' caves?'

'Yes—that's about it, miss. There was a good deal of that sort of thing done on these coasts. It used to keep my father busy years ago. He was in the Preventive, you know.'

'I dare say he had some adventures in his time, then?' said Joane.

'Well—yes, he had,' said the sailor. And Joane found that, though obstinately reticent on his own deeds of prowess, he was quite willing to tell of his father's.

She listened with pleasure. The little expedition had made them seem like old friends already, and all too soon for her the cliff-steps, crowned by the windlass, hove into view.

Miss Cable was nailing up the creeper in the porch as Joane came up and paused to say softly, with a smile and a blush, 'I've been on the water with your brother.'

'You couldn't have been in better hands, miss,' was the prompt reply.

Joane felt ashamed of the momentary thought that Miss Cable would be pleased at her condescension, and hastened to add, 'He is teaching me to row.'

'He'll soon learn you, miss,' said 'Captain' Cable's sister confidently.

In the front parlour Joane found her aunt in a pleasing flutter of excitement. Dear Lady Bebington had only just gone, Mrs Elliot announced; but she had invited her old friend to come and spend a few days with her at Balbridge, and Mrs Elliot was to go on the morrow.

Joane endured a moment's suspense: was she included in the invitation? She fervently hoped not.

'It is rather tiresome,' continued her aunt doubtfully. 'Lady Bebington has only room for *me*. She hoped you would understand.'

'Oh, perfectly,' cried Joane with relieved promptitude. 'I quite understand.'

'There is an attic for Miss Macey,' said Mrs Elliot. 'Of course, I could not go without her as my maid. But it is awkward having to leave you here alone.'

'Oh, I shall be all right,' said Joane, trying to keep the overflowing satisfaction which the idea of solitude presented from showing too plainly in her face and manner. 'You need not think about me.'

'It is hardly etiquette,' murmured Mrs Elliot reflectively. But though she had made a god of propriety all her life, she was not prepared to sacrifice her own pleasure at its altar, and give up Balbridge and Lady Bebington's cheerful society. 'It will only be for two or three days,' she added extenuatingly. 'And you will be careful, Joane?'

Joane nodded reassuringly, reserving to herself the interpretation of the word.

By-and-by, when Mrs Elliot was sipping her 'night-cap,' Joane, who had been unusually conversational in the exuberance of her spirits at the nearness of freedom, happened to mention the 'Draughtways.'

'Dear me, how dreadful!' replied her aunt. 'Pray, who told you, Joane?'

'Miss Cable's brother,' answered Joane, half-regretting her inadvertence.

'Miss Cable's brother! When did you see him?' said Mrs Elliot, surprised.

'I went for a little row in his boat,' answered Joane, with that mistaken impulse which bids one forget caution and halloa before one is out of the wood.

'I hope you remunerated the young man,' said Mrs Elliot carelessly.

'Oh! I did not like to insult him,' said Joane.

'But it was treating him like an equal not to pay him,' said her aunt. 'I wish you'd check your democratic notions of equality, and remember—above all, remember—that your great-grandfather was a viscount.'

'I am not likely to forget it,' murmured Joane under her breath.

She was glad she had not got as far as the caves in her narrative.

THE PENAL SETTLEMENT OF PORT BLAIR IN THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS.

PART II.

THE Andamanese are a people whose origin is buried amongst the secrets of the past, and any attempt to guess this origin can only be conjecture. They are apparently a distinct race in themselves, there being nothing like them on the continent. They have been described as Oriental negroes of a low type. They are about five feet in height, with tufts of woolly hair on their head; clothing in their natural state they have none, and have to be provided with covering when they enter the stations of the settlement. They have canoes which they make by hollowing out the trunks of the forest-trees. In these they paddle about from one island to another, fishing, turtle-catching, and collecting the various other articles they require for their sustenance. The sea and forests produced all they required until the occupation by the British. Now they take kindly to most civilised articles of food and drink, particularly the latter, when they can get it. They are very fond of tobacco, and both men and women may be seen going about puffing clay pipes. They are a people not wanting in intelligence, and quickly pick up civilised ways. Some have been trained to act as boatmen in an officer's boat, and capital oars they make. Others have been trained as servants to wait at table, when they are smart and attentive, and acquit themselves well. The women have been tried as servants to ladies; but the experiment was not so successful, and one or two queer stories might be told of these attempts.

It is sad but true that these small and yet in many respects useful people are, as in the case of most savage races when brought into contact with civilisation, gradually dying out; and the time is not far off when the race will be extinct.

The sea about the islands abounds in fish of all kinds, from the dangerous ground-shark of large size to the sardine or sprat. On a calm morning fish of all sizes may be seen swimming about below the deep blue. They swim almost within hand-reach, but the least movement causes them to vanish. They afford good sport to the angler, and fishing is one of the favourite amusements of the soldiers, who may be seen intent on this peaceful pastime during the long mornings when parade is over and breakfast finished. The Government fishing-gangs supply the convicts and the general public with fish, and the price was, and so far as I know is, a rupee for sixty-four English pounds; taking the value of the rupee as it now stands at one shilling and fourpence, this would be four pounds of good fish fresh for the table for a penny. It was not necessary even to pay this, for with little trouble, using hooks and lines, I have often caught more fish in an hour than my family could possibly consume.

Much valuable timber exists on the islands, and as the forests have for some years been under the charge of officers of the Indian Forest Service, the most is being made of this source of revenue. The most valuable timber is obtained from a tree called the *padouk*. The wood of this tree is most useful for building purposes and for the manufacture of furniture, &c. There are many other trees the timber of which is also used for various local purposes. The supply of firewood, which in the past was so plentiful, is fast becoming a difficult question, as the consumption becomes greater, and carriage and towage will have to be provided. It is said that the difficulty will be met by the use of coal; but with so plentiful a supply of wood as the jungles can yield, it seems an expensive idea. Firewood in a settlement like Port Blair is an absolute necessity, and no doubt means will be found to keep up the supply. For some purposes coal might be found to pay better than wood.

Tea-planting was introduced some years ago, and the plant was found to thrive. The seed used was that obtained from Assam. There are two very flourishing tea-gardens, and the manufacture of tea is one of the principal industries of the place. Andaman tea is extensively used locally, and is exported for the use of our troops in Madras and Burma. I believe that some of the tea has been sent home, but I have not heard any report on the opinions formed of it by the London tea-market.

The Andaman Islands have at different times been subjected to severe storms, and the disastrous cyclones which have visited Lower Bengal and the coasts of India are said to emanate from these islands, gathering strength as they advance. I will give a description of one which visited the settlement itself in November 1891. I had been at home on leave, and returned to the settlement on the 29th of October, with my wife and eldest daughter. We had a very calm voyage across from Madras in the Andaman mail-steamer. The sea was as smooth as it could be, and there was no indication of the frightful storm which was soon to follow. We arrived at Port Blair, and had fortunately not time to unpack our boxes or settle down in our house on Ross Island. Our dwelling was situated on the extreme north point of the island, and was a wooden structure built on piles on land reclaimed from the sea, and only a few feet above its level, in a most exposed position.

On the night of the 1st of November the weather had changed, and the glass had fallen considerably. But this was not unusual, and no one thought that there was anything about to occur other than the

usual bad nights experienced at that time of the year. But about half-past ten the force of the wind became terrific, and the front windows of the house gave way, panes of glass being blown in with reports like small pistol-shots. We were driven out of this part of the house, and took refuge in the dining-room in the centre. The rain deluged the house, and we had to call up all our native servants and the men of our guard to hold on to our doors to prevent them from being blown in by the force of the wind, for it was now certain that we were in a hurricane. The ladies had to get upon chairs and tables to keep out of the water, the floor being flooded. The sea broke over the surface and swept the lower part of the house, and all our people who lived below were driven upstairs for fear of their lives. Indeed, it was the only refuge for them. Had they not come up there is little doubt they would have been washed away and lost in the sea, which was now about us on three sides, and only a few feet distant. About midnight there was a sudden lull. We were in hopes that the worst was over, and we moved into the south part of the house, which was comparatively dry and uninjured, thankful that we had escaped with our lives. A short time after—I think about 12.30 P.M.—the wind, which had been blowing from the north-east, changed round, and then we got the full force of the cyclone from the opposite direction. The storm was now more terrific than before. We heard fearful noises, and thought that there was a fall of large hailstones. This was caused by iron bolts, nails and screws, and stones which were carried against the house by the wind. No one dared to move out to see what was the matter, and all we could do was to hold on to the doors and windows as before, to prevent these from being blown in; for if this had happened, away would have gone the roof of the house, and there is little doubt that there would have been loss of life. The house was one of the oldest in the settlement, and how it weathered that fearful night I do not know. The two ladies behaved throughout in a most plucky manner, and hardly realised the danger. It was not until day broke that any one knew what fearful havoc had been done all over Port Blair.

At early dawn the cyclone had passed away, but there was still much wind and the sea was running high. I sallied forth from the house, and what a sight met my eye! A large corrugated building close to my home had been wrecked. The roof was blown off, and the sheets of corrugated iron and other material were piled twenty feet high against the coco-nut trees behind the house. Had this mass of wreckage struck our house it must have destroyed it and ruined everything within; the result to our property and ourselves could not but have been fatal. The roof of the chief commissioner's house had been partially blown off, and there was not a dry spot in the place. Several other officers' houses were in a similar state. The convict barracks and the native infantry barracks had also been severely damaged. The beautiful trees on the island had been destroyed, and the roads were impassable with the débris. The pretty gardens and grounds of which we were so proud, and which years of labour and care had produced, were ruined, and the whole island was a mass of destruction. The first thought was to go to the anchorage and see if our station guardship, the Indian Government steamer *Enterprise*, was in her usual position in the harbour; but, alas! she was nowhere to be seen. Proceeding to the north end of the island, we saw two masts projecting out of the water near the rock-bound coast of South Point, with a few men clinging to the rigging. While we gazed on this depressing sight they one by one dropped off into the raging surf. Later in the morning the harbour was full of corpses, the bodies of the ill-fated crew. The commander, the officers, the engineers, all were gone. I afterwards found the body of the former among the rocks on the east of the island. Of the crew, over eighty in number, only five survived, and these were natives (lascars and servants) who marvellously escaped death. They were rescued by some women convicts from the jail for females on South Point, directed by the overseer in charge of the place. The women behaved in a most gallant manner. Holding on hand to hand, they waded into the surf and safely brought to land the unfortunate fellows struggling for life in the waters. These women were very properly rewarded by being released and sent back to their homes in their native countries.

Most of the small steamers, lighters, and boats of the settlement were blown on shore or lost, and many of the crews perished. The loss of these craft was serious; and as the population, convict and free, on the other stations miles away depended on them for conveyance of their daily food, it can be easily understood that for months afterwards the carriage-resources of the settlement were strained to almost breaking-point.

On the mainland the loss of life was great. The convict barracks at several stations collapsed and buried the poor creatures beneath the ruins. Some two hundred were killed or injured, and the medical officers and the hospital staff had their hands full for many a day after.

In the pretty little church on Ross Island may be seen a tablet raised by the European community to the memory of the commander, officers, and crew of the *Enterprise*, who lost their lives in the cyclone of November 1891.

When the cyclone took place, as described, there was a large sailing-ship in the harbour, but she was securely anchored just above Chatham Island in the western half of the port. The captain of this ship fortunately suspected bad weather, and took all necessary precautions to make his vessel safe for the night. The measures taken and the position the ship was in, well sheltered by the surrounding high lands, enabled her to ride out the storm, and she and her crew escaped.

There was a wind-gauge on the roof of the

European infantry barracks, used to register the force of the wind, but this was destroyed by the storm, and no record was possible of the terrific strength of the cyclone. There was also a tidal observatory, with valuable instruments for recording the daily action of the tides. This was also destroyed. Some of the machinery was afterwards found in North Bay, over a mile away.

In a violent storm in the year 1844 two troop-ships were blown on shore on the east coast of Havelock Island, not far from the present settlement. These ships were the *Briton* and *Runnymede*. They had on board portions of the Fiftieth and Eightieth Regiments, now known as the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment and the South Staffordshire Regiment. These vessels were on their way to India, and although they were a few days before far out at sea, they met on this spot. The ships went ashore during the night, and when day broke the two vessels were discovered not far from each other. The soldiers behaved well, and after leading a Robinson-Crusoe-like life for some time, were eventually taken on to Calcutta. The men of these two regiments afterwards shared in the Sutlej campaign, helping to add the magnificent province of the Punjab to the Indian Empire.

From all this it is clear that the Andamans have been subjected to cyclones and violent storms in the past, but none appear to have been so disastrous as that of 1st November 1891.

Want of more frequent communication is one of the worst evils of residence in Port Blair. There is no telegraphic communication with Calcutta or Rangoon, and no news of the world can be obtained until the mail-steamer arrives. This is now more frequent than of old, but great events might still occur without the residents knowing anything of them for over a fortnight. Let us hope that, as wireless telegraphy is now an established fact, those who have to live in this part of the world will before long have the latest telegrams with their *chota hazri* (small breakfast). Port Blair is well placed for the introduction of the Marconi system, and no doubt when this is accomplished the place will be more favoured by visits from our men-of-war. The officers and men of the Royal Navy are always welcome at Port Blair, and during my time we more than once had a portion of the East Indian squadron in port. One of our gallant admirals will not readily forget his visit. He went out fishing in his gig, and was thus occupied when he hooked a parrot-fish. It had been taken off the hook, and the admiral was in the act of opening its mouth with his fingers, when the fish snapped off a piece of the top of his thumb, necessitating the admiral keeping his arm in a sling for some time.

The climate of Port Blair is what must be expected in the tropics. It may be said that there are two seasons only: one ushered in by the north-east monsoon, and the other by the south-west; the former being the dry season, the latter the wet. The thermometer registers a temperature ranging from sixty-two to ninety-eight degrees. When the wind fails during the north-east monsoon the heat is most oppressive, and produces a lassitude that is most trying to the European. As soon as the north-east wind comes in across the sea, which is usually about 10 A.M., the relief is great, and one breathes freely again. From October to the end of February is the best time of the year. The mornings are then delightfully cool, and life enjoyable. The rest of the year is stormy and rainy, with occasional breaks of fine weather, which are much appreciated. The rainfall varies in places, but averages about one hundred and twenty inches during the year. In the jungles it is no doubt far greater, owing to the dense vegetation. The climate of the settlement was malarious, and still is so in the jungles; but Port Blair itself is now as healthy as any place in the plains of India; and the headquarters station on Ross Island is particularly so. The European infantry and native troops enjoy the best of health, their hospitals seldom having any serious cases to be treated by the medical staff. The same may be said of the convicts and the rest of the residents. In fact, Ross Island is the sanatorium of the settlement, to which are removed all those whose health fails at the several out-stations round the harbour or in the interior, where they are much more liable to fever and other diseases caused by the influence of miasma and exposure to the dampness of the climate.

To those whose time is to be passed in Port Blair I would give the advice to keep their wardrobe in air-tight tin cases secured inside well-made wooden boxes, for the humid nature of the atmosphere and the moths and other insects soon play havoc with your 'Sunday go-to-meeting suits' and the dainty apparel of the ladies. *Note:* Do not neglect to place camphor-bags and peppercorns between the folds of all clothing put away during the wet season.

In giving names to the various convict stations round the harbour of Port Blair our native land has not been neglected, nor have the Andamanese been forgotten. If we begin on the north side of the harbour, there is North Bay, Perseverance Point, Hopetown, Command Point, Bamboo Flat, Shore Point, Homfray Ghât, Port Mouat, Garracherima, Aberdeen, and the three islands of Ross, Chatham, and Viper. There are several other stations; but these are sufficient to show that names of familiar places in England and Scotland, those of officers who have served in the settlement, and Andamanese names have been used in designating the different stations in the place. There are two large villages distinguished by bearing the names of a superintendent and a chief commissioner of the Andamans whose good work and great administrative ability, in my opinion, stand out as patterns of the British officer, men who have left their mark indelibly written in the annals of Port Blair. These villages are Stewartjung and Cadelljung. It was my good fortune to serve under the late Field-Marshal Sir Donald Martin Stewart and Colonel Thomas Cadell,

V.C. Their work is well known, and needs no eulogy from so humble a pen as mine; but from both I met with so much kindness that I cannot help mentioning their names here. I am glad to say that the latter is still hale and hearty. May he long continue to enjoy a well-earned rest from his thirteen years of labour in the Andamans and Nicobars! He never spared himself, was up with the lark, and was away from Ross almost daily before many younger men were awake.

There are no rivers in the Andamans; but broad creeks or lagoons run into the country for miles, studded to the water's edge with mangrove. These creeks afford useful communication by launches and boats, and for floating timber-rafts from the forests. Brigade Creek and Dunnyleaf Creek are the two most important within the harbour of Port Blair. It is difficult to describe the beautiful scenery around these creeks. They are fringed on both sides with mangrove, behind which the giant trees of the forest stand up in all their imposing height, with dense undergrowth below and adorned with beautiful orchids and other tropical flowers. Wherever the visitor may go he will find something to admire; and, indeed, it has been said that the scenery of Port Blair harbour with its islands resembles in many ways the Scottish lakes.

India has been called 'the land of regrets.' Well, all I can say is that I did not find it so, for I look back with pleasure to the many happy years spent in that beautiful land; and, if it were possible, I would gladly return and end my days there. As regards the settlement of Port Blair, where I and mine were resident so many years, I can only say that our recollections are of the pleasantest, and that when the day of our departure in 1898 came we left with regret a place where we had met with many good friends and had experienced so much kindness. When we first came home it was difficult to realise that our connection with the Andamans had been severed for ever; but family ties still bind us to the old familiar scenes, and we hope this may continue for as many years as we are permitted to enjoy life in our native land.

RAVELSTON DYKES: A DISAPPEARING EDINBURGH LANDMARK.

RAVELSTON DYKES are doomed. Already have breaches been made in the walls, and another old Edinburgh landmark will before long have passed away. And we are sorry for it. Not but that the confined walk between these long walls imparted a certain degree of restraint, yet it has impressed itself on the memories of most of the inhabitants of western Edinburgh. To the child the road was unutterably dreary, these same dykes barring the horizon save where the iron gates gave a circumscribed view of agricultural operations. Nor to the attendant nurse was the road without its dangers from 'cattle beasts' from Hallow Fair or the exercising horse from the meuse lanes of the town. This notwithstanding, to the older generation of those who have been wont to perambulate the road, the demolition of these walls must be a matter for regret. Before they pass into oblivion may it be permitted to recall some of the memories imprinted on their stone and lime?

The inhabitant of Edinburgh desiring to traverse the road follows the line of the modern Queensferry Street, formerly known as the Kirkbrae-head, between the lands of Coates on the west and Drumsheugh (or Meldrum's Heugh) on the east. Here, in a house 'in the village of Drumsheugh,' Lady Jane Douglas resided before her marriage which culminated in the famous 'Douglas Cause,' a contest for a dukedom, involving such a severing of the citizens of Edinburgh into two parties as had not been since the 'Douglas wars' of Queen Mary. In this house Lady Jane for two months sheltered the Chevalier de Johnstone, the A.D.C. of Prince Charlie, after his escape from Culloden; and when pursuit grew hot he had to pass a long summer day in the middle of a hay-stack.

Drumsheugh House, the residence of the Moray family, stood in the centre of what is now Randolph Crescent. Lord Teignmouth recounts how, when he breakfasted there in 1822, the demolition of the house, in obedience to a feuing-plan, had commenced, 'the din of the workmen sounding like the hammering of the lid of a coffin.' At the Kirkbrae-head Toll, which stood opposite the Baxters' house of call (now Mr Stewart's cab-office), where it had been removed from the end of the 'Lang Dykes' (now superseded by Princes Street), the road dipped steep to the old village of Water of Leith, where mills have stood since the days of David I. This ancient home of the Incorporation of the Baxters of Edinburgh still bears traces of their occupation in the sculptured stones built into the houses. When the Barony of Coates was left, the Water of Leith was crossed, and the Barony of Dean entered, the ascent on the north side being as steep as the descent on the south. Yet by this track the whole traffic to the north of Scotland had to pass prior to 1784.

The Dean estate had formed part of the patrimony of the famous family of Lindsay of the Byres, progenitors of the Earls of Crawford and Balcarres. Early in the fifteenth century Sir William Lindsay, by his marriage with the heiress of Sir William More of Abercorn, acquired the Dean property. For two hundred years the estate was held by the Lindsays, till in 1609 it was acquired

by William Nisbet. At the top of the hill stood the mansion-house of Dean till its demolition in 1845—Lord Cockburn lamenting—to make way for the Dean Cemetery, into the terrace-wall of which some curious sculptured stones from the old house have been built. This house was the residence of the Nisbets of Dean, who, in succession to the Napiers of Merchiston, held the hereditary office of Poulterer to the King, the 'poulterlandis' lying 'next to the town of Dean.' We gather from Dr Somerville that in the latter half of the eighteenth century the house became the residence of Chief-Baron Ord, who made the first attempt to cultivate pine-apples in Scotland in the garden of Dean.

Until the year 1645 the 'hieway gaitt and passage' led 'be the place and towne of Deane through the southsyde thairof, be the zett of Sir William Nisbet his place, zairdes, and planting thair, and by his teynd barne, and be the houss of his tennentes of Dean.' This road, 'whereby all men on horse and foot travelles and hes travellit,' proving 'verie hurtfull, noysome, and prejudiciall' to Sir William, he in 1645 obtained the authority of the Scots Parliament to close the old road to the south of the mansion-house, and to open a new way 'by going over at the east end of the toun of Dean, and going east and west at the back of the said place and toun of Dean, orchards, and yards on the north side of the same, in ane sufficient and large way, gaitt, and passage for horsmen and footmen, and for cairtes, slaides, loads, and otheres comeing, goeing, and travelling that way.' Thus was the beginning of the Ravelston Dyke Road formed two centuries and a half ago. Here the road was joined by the traffic over the Stockbridge, built in 1785, which came by the way of the present Dean Street, Dean Park Crescent, and the western portion of Buckingham Terrace. The last of the old Dean village has vanished, leaving but a memory of the visit of David Balfour to the abode of Catriona.

When, on a fine summer day near the end of the eighteenth century, the Antiquary and his younger travelling companion, at Mrs Macleuchar's laigh shop in the High Street, had procured tickets for the Queensferry Diligence or Hawes Fly, 'calculated to carry six regular passengers, besides such interlopers as the coachman could pick up by the way and intrude upon those who were legally in possession,' Sir Walter Scott had no doubt in view the old Queensferry Road, which after 1784 afforded the choice of somewhat easier gradients from the toll. This road led past old Sunbury House and by the bridge at Bell's Mills which carried the traffic for the Queensferry until 1832, when the now familiar Dean Bridge—the last work of Telford, who began life as the Eskdale stonemason, and found a last resting-place in Westminster Abbey—was erected high above the sleepy old village in the hollow, almost solely at the expense of Lord Provost Learmonth of Dean, with a view to the feuing of his property. The inhabitants of the handsome terraces and crescents crowning the valley and lining the sides of the Queensferry Road may be surprised to learn that the original feuing-plan laid down on the map by James Knox in 1821 shows the Dean estate even to Comely Bank laid out for 'villa residences,' each surrounded by its own garden and pleasure-grounds.

Bell's Mills took their name from Walter Bell, who about the year 1600 had been tenant there—probably of the grain-mill—the Waulkers and Bonnet-makers of Edinburgh having been served before that date at the adjoining waulk-mills, to the grief and indignation of their rivals in trade in the burgh of Canongate. The old bridge at Bell's Mills was superseded by the present high-level Belford Bridge in 1887. Leaving the waterside, the road climbs steep between John Watson's Hospital and the Orphan Hospital.

We have now arrived at the junction with the old road, which had crept along at the back of the yards of the lairds of Dean. Here we resist the temptation to follow the broad path, and turn westwards along the track which to generations has been known as Ravelston Dykes. This road traversed the moor known as Hieland Mure. Forming part of the Dean estate (which stretched from Deanhaugh at Stockbridge on the east to the march with Belmont on Corstorphine Hill on the west), the Hieland Mure lay 'between Ravelston on the west and north and the proper arable lands of Dean on the east and south.'

To the south, at the back of Watson's Hospital, we observe a conical ruin generally supposed to have been a 'doocot,' but which is in reality the remains of a windmill, said to have been used for bruising whins to serve as food for horses in the poverty-stricken days of Scottish agriculture. The mill gave the name of the Windmill Brae to the bank sloping towards the Water of Leith. In the haugh between the windmill and Bell's Mills the local Covenanters set up their standard on a spot still marked by a hawthorn-tree; and near the same place was the last Edinburgh duel fought in 1829—fortunately without serious consequences—between Mr Charles Maclaren, the editor of the *Scotsman*, and Dr Browne, the editor of the *Caledonian Mercury*, the *casus belli* being a difference regarding some fine art criticism.

As we move westward we come to the end of Skinner's Lane or Loan, a title apparently derived from Patrick Blair, skinner in Edinburgh, at one time tenant of Coltbridge Mill; but the name has had to give way to the more grandiloquent ones of Garscube Terrace and Coltbridge Avenue. This lane must have been a mere service-road to admit of a passage to the Coltbridge, which tradition loves to say was so named from a ferry-boat worked by a colt—surely an inappropriate motive-power. We are inclined to derive the place-name from the fact that it adjoins Coates, the bridge in Adair's map of 1680 being marked *Cotbridge*, while the neighbouring mansion is also spelled *Cots*.

The Skinner's Lane intersects the lands of

Murrayfield, originally forming part of the Dean estate known as Nisbet's Parks or the Easter and Wester Parks of Nisbet, lying respectively to the east and west of the lane. To the north of the road lies Blinkbonny, originally part of the Dean estate, and now belonging to Trinity Hospital. Murrayfield derives its present name from Archibald Murray, advocate, who acquired the lands about the year 1700. He was succeeded by his son Alexander, who was elevated to the bench with the title of Lord Henderland, and died in 1795, and his grandsons, William Murray of Henderland and John Archibald Murray (Lord Murray), the latter being also a judge of the Court of Session. Lord Murray died in 1859, and bequeathed Murrayfield to Sir Archibald Islay Campbell of Succoth.

The part of the dyke to the west of Garscube Terrace is now being cast down to make way for the wave of advancing villas rolling westward with irresistible force. The end of the Murrayfield park-dyke brings us to the road leading up from the Corstorphine highway, and within sight of Ravelston House on the north.

Ravelston in the fourteenth century had belonged to Sir William More of Abercorn, who, as already mentioned, had also been proprietor of the adjoining estate of Dean. In 1363 he endowed with his lands of Rayliston a chaplainry of the altar of the Blessed Virgin in St Giles', the contiguous lands of Craigcrook and Grothill having at the same time been mortified by other pious donors for similar purposes.

The old castle stood to the west of the present house, and bore over its doorway the date 1622 and the initials of the builder, George Foulis of Ravelston, goldsmith and *monetarius regis*, and his second wife, Janet Bannatyne (the daughter of George Bannatyne, after whom the Bannatyne Club was named). The laird of Ravelston was the son of James Foulis of Colinton. He was one of those chosen by James VI. 'as maist able and willing to mak the cunzie [coin] and cunziehouse to gang for the weill of the cuntrie and proffite of his majestie,' and was subsequently appointed master-coiner to the Mint. On his death in 1633 he was succeeded by his son George; and on the death of the latter in 1679, Ravelston descended to his eldest son, Sir John Foulis—handed down to posterity as a man who kept an account-book, which is reproduced in one of the most delightful of the volumes of the Scottish History Society. In his account-book the laird is reproduced as in the flesh. Those who would learn the life of a country gentleman at the end of the seventeenth century must turn to these quaint entries. From them we learn how much he paid for his clothes, even to the thread for 'helping' his velvet coat; 'to ye gardiner to get a new spade at ravelstoune;' for 'chopins of wine' and 'quarts of eall' which he consumed with various cronies at sundry taverns; for oranges with which he treated his lady-friends when he took them to the play; for 'drink-money,' which he bestowed on every conceivable occasion; and for a sheep's head for his valet to practise 'barbourizing' upon before he trusted the razor on his lairdly jaws. Sir John was married four times. His first wife was the daughter of Sir Archibald Primrose of Dunipace. Having in prospect that his heir in Ravelston, consequent upon his succession to the estate of Dunipace, would have to assume the name of Primrose, Sir John in late life acquired the estate of Woodhall in Colinton parish, which he settled on his second surviving son in order to preserve the family name. The good baronet died in 1707, and the succession to Ravelston passed to Sir Archibald Primrose, his grandson, who was executed in 1745 on account of his adherence to Prince Charlie.

In 1726 Alexander Keith, writer in Edinburgh, purchased Ravelston from Sir Archibald Primrose. He was succeeded by his son Alexander, a clerk in the Court of Session, who bought the estate of Dunnottar from the last of the Keiths, Earls Marischal, which family—notwithstanding the maledictions of Bishop Keith—he claimed to represent. His successor in 1792 was Alexander, his eldest son; and the old castle having been destroyed by fire a few years later, the new house was built. When George IV. visited Edinburgh in 1822, Alexander Keith was created a baronet, and he exercised on that occasion the office of Knight Marischal of Scotland, fitted out with Montrose's sword, lent him by Sir Walter Scott. The connection between Scott and the Keiths was a very intimate one. Sir Alexander Keith was born in the same house in College Wynd as that in which Sir Walter first saw the light. His mother was a daughter of John Swinton of that ilk, a kinswoman of Sir Walter, and from this intimacy arises the association between Scott and Ravelston. He was remembered as 'the sickly boy sitting at the gate of the house,' half-envying a poor mendicant at the door because 'Homer was a beggar.' One of his earliest poems—*Guiscard and Matilda*—he appears to have inscribed to Miss Keith of Ravelston; to his 'gay old grandaunt,' Mrs Keith, he lent at her request in her old age Mrs Behn's novels, 'curiously sealed up;' but her curiosity was soon satisfied, as she returned his Aphra with the remark, 'Tak' back your bonny Mrs Behn.' Scott loved the place, 'whose venerable gardens with their massive hedges of yew and holly he always considered as the ideal of the art,' and many of the features of the old mansions of Ravelston and Dean he used in reproducing Tully-Veolan.

On the death of Sir Alexander Keith in 1832 the baronetcy became extinct, and the estate passed to Sir William Keith Murray of Ochtertyre, by whose son, Sir Patrick, Ravelston was sold to his uncle, Mr Murray Gartshore.

And here, at the avenue gate, the road between the dykes appears originally to have terminated. Sometime about the end of the eighteenth century the road was continued northward and eastward to Blackhall, past the quarries which as early as 1511

had been let by the prebender of Ravelston, and from which at a later date the stone for building the Parliament House, Edinburgh, and Heriot's Hospital was quarried. Craigcrook—or Graycrook, as it was for a time named—is popularly supposed to have derived its title from the crook in the loop-road passing its gates. This derivation is, however, more ingenious than sound, as the road with the crook in it was not made for centuries after Craigcrook had been mortified to St Giles' by John de Allyncrum. And here we may pause to remind the reader that it was not until about 1825 that the improved Queensferry Road took its present course. The old road ran from Blackhall practically in a straight line to Mutton Hole (the modern Davidson's Mains), the part of the road which passes the Board School showing the old line. Here it joined the road from Leith, which was continued in a line bending slightly southward through part of the existing Barnton policies, and crossing the line of the present road, it met the road from Corstorphine near Parkneuk.

But we are wandering from our original path, and as we return to it we conjecture when these old dykes were built. As early as 1663 Lord Forrester of Corstorphine 'inclosed a great dale of grounds neir to the high way towards Corstorphine,' but found it necessary to petition Parliament regarding the state of the road, in which there were 'quagmires and other impediments,' whereby it was hardly possible in the winter season for horses, coaches, or wagons to travel, unless by breaking down the complainer's dykes and spoiling his whole enclosures. This state of matters continued practically unabated till the middle of the next century, and it appears to have been some time after the passing of the Turnpike Road Act in 1751—which made such a difference on the highways of Scotland—that the road between Ravelston Dykes was modernised. It is not till James Knox made his excellent map in 1812 that we find the road laid down in its present lines; but from the unreliability of older maps, it may be that the dykes are nearer two than one hundred years old.

But the road between the dykes is a means to an end—the ascent of Corstorphine Hill and the view from Rest-and-be-thankful, the parting-place of David Balfour and Allan Breck Stewart. Of the many aspects of Edinburgh, surely this is one of the most beautiful. From the hill can be seen such a panorama as is not often given to man—the contrast of one of the most picturesque of towns with a fertile country, sea alternating with land, plains with hills. Even if we obey Professor Syme's injunction to Dr John Brown when enjoying the prospect from the farther side of the hill—'John, we'll do one thing at a time, and there will be no talk'—can we refrain from thinking? As we stand here, there is recalled that August day in 1650 when the Scottish army under Leslie was drawn up 'from bewest Curstorphin meadow to the west along the Bray-syd,' opposed to Cromwell issuing from his camp at the Gallachlaw, far on the horizon beyond the Braids. It was from the slopes of the hill that the hungry army — nicknaming the place 'Curst-starvin'— besought the bailies of Edinburgh 'to send out Bread and Chees or other Meat,' and urged them to 'ply the Lord and his throne with strong prayers and supplication for us and his caus.' Nor was this the last time that armed men passed under the shadow of the hill, for towards Corstorphine in 1745 rode Colt's dragoons, vainglorious, to meet the Highland host, only to return shortly a disorderly rabble—ending in the *Canter of Coltbrig*.

For more peaceful associations we have only to turn northward, where nestling amid the trees lies Craigcrook, which afforded a title to a volume of Gerald Massey's poems. For a time the residence of Thomas Constable, where he must have been visited many a time by Scott, Craigcrook is ever to be linked with the occupation of Lord Jeffrey and the brilliant company which assembled round him there. He took possession in 1815, and like previous occupants found it necessary to add to the keep, which even then possessed three staircases. During thirty-four seasons he passed the summers there, enjoying not only its solitude but the society of all the personalities of note of the time. Lord Cockburn tells us that here, 'with the exception of Abbotsford, there were more interesting strangers than in any house in Scotland.' Here Charles Dickens visited Jeffrey on more than one occasion. Nor had Thackeray been far absent when—as the author of the immortal *Rab* recounts—walking westward with two friends on a Sunday evening, they saw the north-west end of Corstorphine Hill lying in the heart of the pure radiance of the setting sun. There a wooden crane used in the quarry below was so placed as to assume the figure of a cross lifted up against the sky. As the great novelist gazed he 'gave utterance, in a tremulous, gentle, and rapid voice, to what all were feeling, in the word "Calvary!"' But notwithstanding the temptation to ponder on many another memory raised by the district at our feet, the twinkling lights of the town warn us that we must retrace our steps and leave the road between the dykes to the meandering lovers, alas! too soon to be deprived of another secluded walk by the ever-widening borders of the city.

AN EVENSONG.

O HONEY-LADEN breeze of evening! stay,
Sweet with the scent of dewy rose and pine,
And bear with thee fond messages of mine
To where my love lies dreaming, far away,
Asleep, beyond my sight.

O golden-throated nightingales!—your song,
Rich with unspoken melody of words—
Sing her good-night. Dear, tender-hearted birds,
Say that we twain shall not be parted long,
But meet at morning light.

J. S. REDMAYNE.

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'THE ISLES OF DESTINY.'

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CHAPTER I.

WEARY he had gone to the war; weary he returned.

At least in the brunt of battle he had hoped to lose that tired, critical sub-consciousness that was his second nature. But after the first shock he found even the 'suspense of danger' became familiarised, and in the concrete proved to be more an ugly than an ennobling sensation.

Likewise, after the first shock, he had made the discovery that men are as hide-bound by convention in the arena of mortal combat as in the lap of dalliance. There was one attitude for all, as uniform as their uniforms themselves—a stern, phlegmatic pose, which may have been a disguise, but which became as wearisome as perpetual khaki after a time. To maintain a certain standard of coolness and courage, that was the acme of their endeavour, and the result was the machine-made behaviour aforesaid.

Of course there were some who had failed to reach that standard. Christopher's thin lip curled as he thought of them. Better the most conventional of automatic habits than such a type of originality.

But as he drove along the moorland road on this late September evening the trend of his reflections gradually lightened; the morose, discontented expression vanished from his face. In all his world-wide wanderings he thought he had never beheld anything so weirdly fantastic as the scenery of these ultimate isles. Land and sea and sky seemed to be conspiring together to form a sensational phantasmagoria for the traveller's eye.

The after-glow of a fiery sunset still lit up the western horizon, from whence diabolical shafts of light spread like giant tentacles across the neutral sky. In the foreground flat, melanic promontories darted tongue-like into the green water, forming a naked menace to the tide, and all the vacant sea between was overhung by a pall of smoky cloud. On either side of the road sad wastes of heather melted into the dusk, unbroken by tree or dwelling of any kind.

Everywhere was the desolation of a sea-ravished land.

And this was Madge's home—Madge the tender, the gentle! How incongruous it seemed! Truly nature laughs at law; but there was no doubt about her parentage. All the rapture of filial affection had been in her voice when she spoke of her beloved Hebrides in the old days, and she had proved the sincerity of her enthusiasm by returning thither, like a homing bird to its nest, the moment her husband's death left her free to make a choice. That was a year ago, and Christopher was curious to discover whether she had yet tired of the experiment.

How surprised she would be to see him, and how glad! He had had her last letter when in the hospital at Bloemfontein, and the doctor's pronouncement that he was to be invalided home following almost directly, he had resolved to answer it in person by a surprise visit to Uist.

All through the long tedium of the voyage the thought of her delight at his unexpected arrival buoyed him up, but now that his journeyings were nearing an end, impatience had overmastered his pleasant anticipations.

'How much farther is it to Tanera?' he asked his driver, a sad, dark-visaged native, for the third or fourth time.

'It will be three miles,' returned the man, softly shaking the reins as if he looked upon the question as a reproach to the pace.

Only three miles! Christopher's eyes scanned the road eagerly to try and discover behind what knoll or ridge of the moor the house could be hidden.

As he did so his gaze was arrested by a woman's

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figure that had loomed suddenly out of the dusk about a hundred paces ahead.

She was clad in a coat and skirt of some rough homespun material, and had a tam-o'-shanter pulled down low over her raven hair.

Even at that distance the free, lithe grace and independence of her stride aroused Christopher to a vague admiration.

So might the daughters of the sea-kings have walked in the days of Somerled. But as the trap drew past her and she turned her head for a brief instant towards them, the glimpse he caught of her face sent a jarring shock of memory through him. Where had he seen her before, and why should the sight of a woman's perfect profile framed in the lone dusk of the moor repel instead of attracting him?

'Who is she?' he demanded abruptly of the driver.

The man shook his head.

'She'll be staying at Tanera,' he said in his subdued, mournful tones.

Christopher's brows contracted. The possibility of other visitors at Tanera had not entered into his calculations, and for some inexplicable reasons the thought of sharing its hospitality with this stranger was repugnant to him.

What right had a woman to be at once so beautiful and so unwelcome? It was absurd to imagine that he had seen her before; and yet, if he had not, how account for the unpleasant familiarity of her features?

For the remainder of the way he cudgelled his brains to discover the key to the mystery, but in vain, and the excitement of arrival temporarily banished the annoying incident from his mind.

CHAPTER II.

THE house was very much what he had expected—a square, bleak mansion set down amidst a wilderness of sand-dunes, seaweed, and brown bent; but the interior amply compensated for its untoward aspect.

Not a creature was in sight as he entered unbidden into the wide, low-raftered hall, hung with trophies of the chase and warlike implements of the patriarchal era; and for a moment he hesitated, uncertain how to proceed. Then the glow of firelight through a half-open door on the right hand attracted his attention, and limping softly on his invalid shoes, he made towards it. The small interior was fitted up as a study, and there was Madge herself seated at the table, her head in her hands, poring over a map of the Transvaal.

To Christopher it seemed almost like a fairy tale that he should have come in upon her at this very moment; and yet he was conscious of a distinct sense of self-reproach for the deception he had practised upon her. The unconscious pathos of her attitude appealed to him strangely. How much of anxiety he might have saved her had he but denied himself the pleasure of this surprise!

As he stood there, leaning on his crutch, his thin, brown face alert, a remorseful smile warming his usually cold, gray eyes, she looked up.

'Christopher!' she gasped; and then the deathly pallor of her face frightened him, and forgetting the precarious condition of his wounded leg, he hobbled forward eagerly.

'I wanted to surprise you—I'—— and Madge's hands came to his support only in time to prevent him from falling.

'Christopher,' she cried again, clutching his arms hard, as if still suspicious of a supernatural visitation, and laughing the while for very joy, 'I am so glad, I can hardly believe it is true.'

Not a word of reproach for all the long weeks of waiting; but then she would not have been Madge if she had allowed an ulterior thought to destroy the perfection of such a moment.

'I had been writing to you,' she went on, pointing to the littered table; 'and there—there's the flag over the hospital where you ought to be, and here you are instead; and oh, Chris, the poor leg—is it better?'

'It wants rest,' said Christopher, with an uneasy laugh. 'So it's come to you to get it, Madge. The doctor in town said I must lie up for a couple of months at least; but when I told him I was *en route* for the Hebrides he said I couldn't have chosen a better spot to be buried alive in.'

'The same rude Christopher as ever,' said Madge, in her fond, motherly fashion. 'I used to think of you lying in hospital, Chris, with your hair grown long and hanging down over your eyes, and your gaunt cheeks, and your cross, discontented mouth.'

'I was cross,' he assented, laying his head back against the chair into which he had sunk. 'The nurses, God pity them! looked on me as a sort of ogre, I think.'

'Poor boy! he takes such a lot of understanding,' said Madge, sitting down beside him.

'And he has only got one friend in the world that does understand him,' said Christopher, putting out his long brown fingers and giving her hand a sudden, hard squeeze.

'I pictured you changed by the war,' she went on softly; 'but you're not a bit. You're the same discontented, tired, cynical old-man boy as ever.'

'It was more disappointing than most things,' he growled. 'I wonder when I am going to experience a really satisfying sensation, Madge?'

As if in answer to his question, the door opened, and the girl of the moors appeared on the threshold. The keen autumn air had touched her pale skin into a fine glow, and the brilliant blue of her eyes contrasted oddly with her masses of raven hair.

Christopher started forward in his chair with a muttered exclamation, conscious again of that dis-

agreeable thrill of memory with which the sight of her had previously inspired him.

But as she stood hesitating whether to come forward or withdraw, Madge rose, and crossing over, laid her hand affectionately on the girl's arm. 'I was so happy, I forgot all about you, child,' she said, with a little laugh. 'My boy has come home.—Christopher, this is Norma.'

'You passed me on the moor,' said the girl, extending her hand frankly as Christopher staggered to his feet. 'I wondered who you were.'

'Yes,' he returned stiffly. 'You must have thought me very boorish not to offer you a lift, Miss'—— pausing as if for enlightenment.

'MacAlan,' interpolated Madge.

'MacAlan!' Christopher started; the haunting likeness which had so troubled him was explained at last.

The vision of a boyish face, pallid and terror-stricken, had risen before him; a pair of blue eyes turned inwards with fear; black hair clotted and damp on a white forehead; and a crouching six foot of khaki behind the shelter of a stone wall, while a captainless company swarmed up the kopje against a hail of Boer bullets. MacAlan, the coward—MacAlan of Barra—this must be his sister. Well, he hadn't been allowed another chance of disgracing himself, the hound, thank God! His men had seen to that; and a bullet from behind had been the regiment's tribute to his valour. And this girl, how much did she know of the truth? Christopher wondered. But ignorant or not, the fact remained that she was of the coward's breed. His antipathy had not been so reasonless as he supposed; and with all her fine, proud air, the stigma was upon her as well.

He had no idea how plainly his distaste was written upon his face until the girl's voice broke in upon his reverie.

'Please do not blame yourself,' she was saying. 'It is the fashion in these parts to ask for a lift; nobody ever thinks of offering one.' And before Christopher had time to make reply she turned and with perfect self-possession left the room.

'Poor Norma!' began Madge impulsively the moment the door had closed upon her. 'Her twin-brother was killed at Asanlaagte ten months ago.' There was the faintest accent of reproach in her tone, but Christopher was still too much occupied with his own reflections to notice it.

'None of us thought she would recover from the blow,' Madge continued. 'But in some mysterious way the glory of his death seemed to compensate her for his loss.'

Christopher gave his wry smile.

'So much the better for her,' he remarked, letting himself down awkwardly into his chair as he spoke.

'Ah! you don't understand,' said Madge, no whit perturbed by the sarcasm. 'You would require to have been born a Scotsman of the Isles to realise the length that pride of race can take you, and poor Neil possessed all the best and noblest attributes of his line, as his death proved.'

'Ah yes, as his death proved,' echoed Christopher, leaning back in his chair, his face inscrutable.

'What a strange coincidence it would have been if you had met him out there!' added Madge presently.

For a moment Christopher hesitated. A decision of some sort had to be arrived at in the next few minutes. Should he confess his acquaintanceship at once or take shelter behind complete unconsciousness? He was bitterly rebellious against the situation in which an unkind fate had placed him. To have to listen perpetually to the extolling of the coward, and have his emotions see-sawing all day long between pity, admiration, and repugnance, was an outlook too disagreeable and troublesome to contemplate, and all the harmony of his home-coming seemed to be destroyed. Suddenly a way out of the difficulty presented itself to him.

'I did meet MacAlan once or twice,' he confessed, trying to appear oblivious of the surprise with which Madge had received his statement. 'But,' laying his long, nervous fingers on her arm beseechingly, 'I would rather not talk about the war more than I can help. So if you love me, Madge, don't set that girl on to asking me questions. I had only the merest acquaintance with her brother, and have nothing to tell her about him. I suppose she is staying here?'

'Yes,' said Madge. 'She often comes to stay with me. Of course, I won't let her trouble you, and next week Eric Forsyth will be here, and will take her off our hands altogether.'

'Quite a party,' grumbled Christopher. 'Just because I looked forward to having you to myself.'

'And so you shall,' said Madge cheerfully. 'Four is a more sociable number than three. And now I am going to see about your room.'

But on her way upstairs she tapped at Norma's door and entered. The girl was seated at her window, looking idly out over the darkling sea.

She was very pale, and her eyes had a strained, questioning look in them as she turned them towards the door.

'Yes; he knew him, but only very slightly, dear,' said Madge, translating their unspoken meaning. 'And I have come to ask you to deny yourself a little, and not mention Neil's name to him—for a time at least. We women cannot understand what their experiences have been out there, and Christopher feels things differently from most men.'

'Yes, I understand,' said Norma quietly. 'Perhaps some day he will speak to me of his own accord.'

'I am sure he will,' agreed Madge. 'And you remember what I have always told you about him?' she added wistfully. 'He has never known what it was to have any one of his own loving him or

taking an interest in him, and others—women, whose love wasn't worth having—have spoilt him. So, between the two, he has become cynical and discontented.'

'He has a beautiful face,' said the girl dreamily. 'But I think it is the saddest I have ever seen.'

'Perhaps there is happiness waiting for him in the future,' said Madge softly, as she left the room.

WHO GOES FIRST?

EVERY one knows that in the scale of general precedence for men, dukes come before marquesses, marquesses before earls, earls before viscounts, viscounts before barons, barons before baronets, and baronets before knights; but it may not be so generally known that these grades of rank come as far down on the scale as the nineteenth, twentieth, twenty-second, twenty-fifth, twenty-ninth, fifty-first, and fifty-fifth places respectively.

The members of the Royal Family, down to the nephews of the reigning Sovereign, hold the first six places; and, after them, the Archbishop of Canterbury has the highest precedence in the scale of social gradation. He is immediately followed by the Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain (eighth) and the Archbishop of York (ninth); but the Prime Minister, to whom these dignitaries owe their positions, has no place whatever on the scale, nor has the First Lord of the Admiralty, the President of the Board of Trade, the President of the Local Government Board, the Postmaster-General, the Under-Secretaries of State, the members of the House of Commons, the Viceroy of India, or the Governor-General of Canada.

The representation of parliamentary boroughs before the Reform Bill of 1832 does not bring out in sharper contrast the changed conditions between two given periods than the scale of precedence does, but it supplies a striking analogy. For instance, places which had been insignificant villages or non-existent in the reign of Henry VIII. were large centres of population at the beginning of the nineteenth century, while important towns of the Tudor period had become villages or even hamlets in the Hanoverian. Similar revolutionary changes have taken place in the social, and especially the political, world; while the scale of general precedence remains virtually the same as fixed in the sixteenth century.

A few of the outstanding landmarks in the history of England and of the British Empire illustrate and explain, in a most vivid way, the chief anomalies. When James I. ascended the English throne in 1603, the only foreign possession held by England was Newfoundland, and that only in name. India and Canada were not won until the middle of the eighteenth century, when the foundation of the Empire on a solid basis was really laid.

The Tudors were absolute kings with most obedient parliaments, and the Stuarts lost the Crown in consequence of their endeavouring to continue the personal autocratic monarchy of their predecessors; hence the representatives of the people were not likely to receive, and did not receive, any recognition in the scale of general precedence. The Speaker of the House of Commons, however, ranks next to a baron—that is, he is thirtieth on the scale; while the Secretaries of State, who originally owed their appointments directly to the Crown, come thirty-sixth. The 'Juncto' Ministry of 1695 is usually regarded as the first Cabinet, while Sir Robert Walpole was our first Prime Minister proper; and these facts account for the greatest anomaly—the omission of all mention of the Premier and Cabinet Ministers, other than Secretaries of State and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the scale.

There was no need for a President of the Board of Trade in the reign of Henry VIII., still less for a Postmaster-General. In those days the real executive power resided in the Privy Council; hence the high positions on the scale of the Lord President of the Privy Council (eleventh) and of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal (twelfth). While present-day Under-Secretaries of State are unrecognised, Privy Councillors come forty-first on the list.

The Lord High Chancellor owes his exalted position on the scale not to his being head of the judicature, but to the fact that in the sixteenth century he represented in his person the joint offices of Justiciar and Chancellor of the Middle Ages—that is, he was Prime Minister *de facto*. The Lord High Treasurer was then also a great officer; hence his coming tenth. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is now directly responsible for the handling of the national purse, comes as low down as forty-second on the scale.

The Lord High Constable of England (fourteenth), the Earl Marshal (fifteenth), and the Lord High Admiral (sixteenth) were also great officials in Tudor times; while the commander-in-chief, field-marshals, and admirals of the fleet of our day have no places as such on the scale. As a matter of fact, a standing army was not constitutionally established until the reign of William III. and Mary.

The Lord Great Chamberlain of England comes thirteenth on the list, and the officers of the royal household rank seventeenth, eighteenth, thirty-second, thirty-third, thirty-fourth, and thirty-fifth.

At the bottom of the scale come esquires (sixty-second) and gentlemen (sixty-third). Heralds and lawyers are agreed that 'gentlemen' are those who, by inheritance or grant from the Crown, are entitled to bear coat-armour.

All the clergy except bishops (twenty-eighth), all lawyers except judges (forty-seventh), and all officers of the army and navy, from field-marshals and admirals of the fleet downwards, are left out in the cold. The Church, law, army, navy, diplomacy, and learning have scales of special precedence, confined to their own respective spheres, determining the ranks of their members; but such are wholly ignored in the scale of general precedence.

The question is, of course, not so vital; but, from the facts submitted, many will be of opinion that there is as great a necessity for reform of the scale of general precedence to-day as there was for parliamentary reform in 1832.

The scale of general precedence for women necessarily presents fewer anomalies than that for men: duchesses come immediately after the wives of the Sovereign's nephews, and are followed by marchionesses, countesses, and so on downwards to gentlewomen. The wives and children, it may be added, of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord High Chancellor, or the Speaker of the House of Commons do not participate in his substantive—that is, official—rank, but only in his personal rank, whatever it may be.

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XXXIX.—CONTAINS LORD GLENELG'S STORY.

THERE was a long and painful pause.

'Eight years ago I was living with my wife and Judith at the Villa Caracci, in the Val d'Ema, close to Florence, and first met the hunchback Graniani, or Fra Francesco, as he was then called, for he was a monk at the Certosa Monastery at Galuzzo,' said Lord Glenelg in a hard, strained voice. 'He came to beg alms of me. Our conversation ran upon books and ancient manuscripts, and I found, to my surprise, that he was very well versed in the study of palæography. Discovering that I was a collector, he invited me to the monastery one day, and there exhibited the treasures of the library, including a very remarkable manuscript Arnoldus. Away at Sienna there lived an English friend of this hunchback, named Selby, of whom he often spoke. One afternoon, when visiting the Certosa, I was introduced to this man, and found him to be a person whose past history was somewhat shady, and who was living in Sienna in strict privacy. It struck me from the first that the fellow, like lots of others one meets in Italy and elsewhere, had got into some trouble in England, and lived abroad to avoid arrest. On several occasions we met, and I could not help suspecting that there was some extraordinary bond of friendship existing between that hunchback monk and my dark-faced, oily-looking compatriot, who lived the life of a hermit, sometimes in Pisa, at others in Sienna, and frequently in Rome.

'My wife sometimes gave alms to Fra Francesco; hence the lay brother was a constant caller, and was in the habit of bringing us in return presents of grapes, figs, and salads from the monastery garden. I, too, became interested in him, for his knowledge was several times of great assistance to me in my palæographical studies in the Laurenziana Library and the archives of the Palazzo Vecchio. So, gradually, his connection with the adventurous Englishman passed out of my mind.

'After about a year a crushing blow fell upon me. I had been into Florence one morning making some researches in the archives, and on my return discovered my poor wife seated in her little salon quite dead. She had, it seemed, received Fra Francesco in the hall, he having called with a present of grapes, and she had given him a few lire. The grapes had been taken to the dining-room, and she had gone straight to her own boudoir, and must have there expired without being able to call assistance. The medical examination was a searching one; but it was found that death was due to sudden heart failure. Fra Francesco explained at the inquiry that my wife seemed in her usual health when she had given him alms, and that she had told him to call again on the following Monday. Selby was in Florence, and called to condole with me on the day my poor wife was interred in the English cemetery. After that Judith and I became wanderers, travelling about hither and thither across the Continent. People believed me eccentric because I had closed Twycross and my town house here, and preferred life in hotels with constant change.' He sighed, adding, 'But they knew not that I travelled with one fixed object; that often when my friends supposed me to be thousands of miles away I was living here in secrecy, going forth only at night for fear of recognition. The object of this you will see later.'

'Ah, yes!' cried Lady Judith, her face a trifle paler; 'an object that is now happily accomplished.'

'My dear daughter here was but a girl when my wife died,' went on his lordship, speaking in that mechanical, reflective tone that he had used all along, and relating a painful history only from a sense of duty. 'For the first three years she was, on and off, at a convent at Angers, and then, as my companion, lived a life of continual change—an existence which has happily ended this very day. Well, I need not describe our weary wanderings, our swift movements from one city to another, nor our constant subterfuges for disguise. It is sufficient for me to come to these present days.

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'By careful inquiries and personal observation I was aware that Fra Francesco had, about a year after my wife's death, been forced to leave the Order owing to irreligious conduct, and that both he and the man Selby—who, I had discovered, was a chemist of considerable ability, and had been lecturer at one of the London hospitals—were in possession of some profound secret. The pair travelled together very frequently, staying at the best hotels, such as the Langham in London, the Chatham in Paris, the Métropole in Vienna, Shepheard's in Cairo, the Métropole at Monte Carlo, the Grand at Rome, and houses of the first order in Bombay, Sydney, San Francisco, and New York. Indeed, the pair made a world tour, and, strangely enough, in several places where they went some person of affluence, man or woman, expired suddenly, the doctors attributing death to the same vague cause as that of my poor wife's disease—heart failure.

'Thus my suspicion became confirmed that this unfrocked monk and his shady companion had actually discovered some secret poison which, like the venom of the Borgias, while defying detection, could be used in the same subtle way and with the same deadly effect. The suspicion had been aroused by my discovering among my dead wife's papers a note written to her by Fra Francesco just prior to her death, which showed that she had, by some means, become acquainted with their secret discovery, and knew the reason of the death of a small landed proprietor named Bardi, whose estate joined that of the Villa Caracci. It was undoubtedly because of this discovery of their dastardly crime and fear of denunciation that my poor wife was secretly assassinated.'

'Then you have watched these men for seven years?' I exclaimed, in utter amazement at these revelations.

'I have,' was his hard answer. 'I followed them everywhere, secretly noting how ingeniously and unsuspectedly they dealt death and were gradually enriching themselves without any fear of detection, for they were clever enough never to be associated with the actual fatality. Indeed, they could so regulate their poison, whatever it was, that death would occur almost instantly, or, if they so desired, not for several days; robbery, of course, being always the motive. Under a dozen aliases they made their dastardly progress, striking death in seven different instances within my own knowledge, without compassion or remorse.

'Among the persons who fell their victims were the well-known stockbroker Clement Harrison, of Wall Street, New York, whose sudden death in Paris you will probably recollect; a woman named Blacker, maid to the Duchess of Cornwall, from whom they stole a quantity of diamonds which the unfortunate woman had in her keeping in the Hôtel Métropole in Vienna; a banker named Lefevre, who died suddenly in his offices in the Boulevard Haussmann; and a Polish prince named Lebitski, who expired mysteriously at the same hotel as they were staying in at Sydney.

'I enumerate these just to show you the progress of their atrocious crimes. From the last-named victim they obtained at least thirty thousand pounds in cash and securities; and yet, although I felt absolutely certain of their guilt, I was utterly powerless to denounce them, because never once had there been the slightest suspicion of poisoning. Indeed, in several cases, in order to satisfy the police, a post-mortem examination was held, and all idea of poison utterly set aside.'

'Then you dared not denounce them,' remarked Wyman, listening as eagerly as myself to this extraordinary story.

'True. I felt assured that I was in possession of the startling truth; but in no case was there the slightest evidence that either of the men had anything whatsoever to do with the victim's death.

'Two years ago, however, the pair acted in a manner which, for a long time, puzzled me. They suddenly separated while in New York, Selby returning to Liverpool, and Graniani taking a North-German boat to Genoa. They were evidently in possession of considerable funds; but both were sufficiently clever not to show it. Indeed, neither of them had ever betrayed signs of affluence, Graniani usually posing as a deformed man of easy circumstances, and Selby as his paid companion.

'On parting from his accomplice, Selby spent a month in London, and then went out to India for the cold weather, staying with a military friend in Bombay. Nothing, however, occurred, although, with Judith, I had followed him. The meaning of this latest move confounded me until about a year ago, when he returned to London, rented that house in Harpur Street, and took a comfortable flat for himself in Walsingham House, Piccadilly. He engaged as his housekeeper at Harpur Street a strange-looking little old lady named Pickard, and spent about half his time there, apparently in strictest seclusion. With Judith's aid I watched that house carefully and continuously,' went on the gray-haired, rather sad man, 'and was not long in coming to the conclusion that a stuffed bear-cub was being placed in the window at certain times as a secret signal to some passer-by; but although I exerted all my ingenuity, and spent days and nights in that gloomy street, I utterly failed to discover its meaning. At last, after all those years of watching, I resolved to again approach this malefactor in order to entrap and unmask him. It was this sole motive that prompted me to take part in the conspiracy—to learn the truth and rid society of the terrible danger. One night, therefore, I followed him from Walsingham House to Daly's Theatre, and having seated myself in the next stall, feigned to suddenly recognise him. At first he was puzzled to recollect who I was, but quickly remembered, and then we at once became friendly. Probably he anticipated that through

me he might obtain introductions to certain wealthy men who might become his victims, and with that object gave me his address at Piccadilly, and invited me to call. I went, notwithstanding the great risk I ran. For aught I knew he might defeat me with that secret and terrible weapon which none could withstand, and certainly he would have done so without compunction if he had known how many years and how much time and money I had spent in tracking him down. But we became on friendly terms, and you may well imagine the care I was constantly compelled to exercise in order to conceal my knowledge of his years of travel and his dastardly crimes. Each time we met, either here or at his cosy flat in Piccadilly, I knew not whether he might suspect and attempt to kill me by his secret method. In the old days in Italy he knew of my love for codexes and manuscripts, and he also being something of an authority, our tastes ran in similar lines. Indeed, it was upon this study that I feigned to cement our friendship. I entertained him once down at Twycross, showed him the whole of my collection, and more than once went with him to Sotheby's to give him the benefit of my knowledge regarding his purchases, for he himself was forming a small collection. During all this time, of course, he made no mention of the house of mystery in Harpur Street.'

'Yours was certainly a dangerous position,' I remarked. 'He would undoubtedly have poisoned you had he suspected.'

'Most certainly. Like his unscrupulous companion Graniani, he would stick at nothing. A dozen times he could have killed me if he had so wished. He and his accomplice had, I feel convinced, recovered—from some old manuscript in the Certosa, I believe—the secret of the Borgia cantarella. One afternoon he came to me here and told me in confidence of a most important palæographical discovery made by his friend Fra Francesco, who, he added, was no longer a monk at the Certosa, that monastery having been dissolved by the Italian Government—which was, I knew, the truth.

'The manuscript was nothing less than the noted Arnoldus of the Certosa, which had fallen into the hands of the Prior of San Sisto at Florence, and had been purchased by an English collector—yourself. Graniani had missed securing it, believing that it was not the treasured volume of the monastery, but a smaller and less valuable copy that he knew had been in the library. After it had been purchased by you, however, he discovered, to his chagrin, that it was the great Arnoldus itself, the book that contained some strange things in English written by an English monk named Lovel, who had ended his days at that famous monastery. Many strange and remarkable secrets were, he said, in that record—secrets regarding Lucrezia Borgia, her life, and the whereabouts of her jewels, all of which Fra Francesco had read years ago when, as a lay brother, he had had access to the manuscript. He was now about to obtain possession of it and send it to England, so that the statements it contained might be investigated and verified.'

'They stole it from my house at Antigniano,' I said quickly. 'An Italian woman named Anita Bardi was the thief!'

'I know. Old Mrs Pickard went to Paris, met her there, and carried it to Harpur Street. That night Selby examined it alone, reading through the record; and afterwards becoming seized by extraordinary pains, he was compelled to send for a doctor. He showed me the manuscript at Walsingham House next day; but we examined it with gloves, for he declared that the vellum leaves had been envenomed. Afterwards it mysteriously disappeared from Harpur Street.'

'It passed again into my possession,' I admitted, explaining how I had invoked the aid of my police-friend Noyes.

'Selby had not finished copying the whole of it; hence our miscalculation of the spot at Threave,' his lordship explained. 'Of course, when Graniani returned to London and their scheme to obtain the treasure was placed before me, both myself and Judith announced our readiness to assist; first, in order to obtain the secret of that mysterious house in Bloomsbury; and, secondly, to obtain sufficient evidence to convict the men of their dastardly crimes. As participators in the conspiracy we were at length admitted there, and found it a gloomy, dismal place. The sign of the bear-cub still puzzled us, and the reason of Selby's secret visits there were equally inexplicable. Judith did all she could to unravel the mystery, acting with utter fearlessness, although well knowing that at any time, if the faintest suspicion were aroused, she would fall the victim of secret assassination just as her dear mother had done.'

'It was to avenge her that I acted as I have done through it all,' declared Judith. 'I was determined to learn the truth about that pair of fiends, and to unravel the mystery of that house with its secret sign. You sought of me an explanation of my conduct. Yet how could I give it without telling you the strange, tragic, and remarkable story which my father has just related? I promised you that you should know some day, and you have now heard the truth.'

'I understand,' I replied; 'but not everything.'

'Ah, no! you do not know everything,' she sighed, stretching forth her hand towards me. 'When you do, you cannot forgive.'

'Forgive! What?' I cried. But her father hastened to calm her emotion.

'Yes,' she went on hoarsely. 'You may as well know at first as at last that I became implicated in the terrible secret of that house. At Selby's suggestion I invited there to luncheon a friend of his, young Leslie Hargreaves, a wealthy man who had met and, I believe, admired me. He went to Harpur Street to meet me and have luncheon on the

very day you detected me at the window; but half-an-hour after his return to his chambers in Shaftesbury Avenue his valet found him dead, and notes to the value of nearly five hundred pounds known to have been in his pockets were missing. I suspected the intention of those men, and yet I actually allowed the sacrifice of his life! I shall never forgive myself for that—never!'

'But you were in ignorance of their real intention?' I said, excusing her. 'Hargreaves was Selby's friend, you say. If so, you surely had no idea of treachery, inasmuch as you were friendly with these men, and they never sought to harm you.'

'But I ought to have been wary,' she wailed. 'I ought to have saved his life. My offence is unpardonable before God—as before man!' And she covered her white face with her hand, sobbing in bitter remorse.

I bent towards her, and there, before her father and Wyman, strove to comfort her. What passionate, consoling words I uttered I know not. All I was conscious of was that she had at last utterly broken down. Wyman frankly and briefly declared that the reason of his antagonism towards her had been because of her strange movements and her refusal to explain to him certain things of which he had made inquiry just as I had done. And then, when I assured her that I forgave everything, and that in the circumstances she was not culpable in the unfortunate death of young Hargreaves, she raised her head, smiled at me happily through her tears as I told her of my love, and there, before Wyman and her father, declared that she reciprocated the passion that was consuming me.

Then I knew she was mine—my own sweet love. Her eyes had filled with tears, and she wept silently. She was thinking of that long and terrible past, and of how she and her father had at last avenged her mother's death and defeated the villainies of that dangerous pair of assassins. I knew it well. I held her tiny hands without uttering a word, for my heart was too full.

CYPRESS AND MYRTLE.

By Lady Napier of Magdala.

CRASH! bang! as the disagreeable Swiss maid we had somewhat hurriedly engaged before starting on our travels flung open shutters and window at an early hour one morning.

The strong white light flooded the room, its shafts penetrating into every corner, and half-blinding owl-like eyes blinking and sleep-filled.

How she creaked about the room, how endless were the duties she invented as reasons for lingering before she thumped down the tray with the *café-au-lait* on the table and presented the welcome view of her free and independent Swiss back, with the neat bow of her white apron-string in the middle of her flat waist, in the doorway! At last! A clutch at a voluminous wadded gown, and a rush to the window; for there was a clear after many days' rain, and the outlook from an eyrie on the Fiesole hill was not to be missed on such a morning.

A sky of crystal purity, after the depressing, soaking days we had come through—for it can rain in Florence, as it can also 'blow and snow.' In fact, the 'sunny Italy' constantly alluded to in envying terms in letters from England is a sad misnomer as far as Florence and its environs are concerned during winter months. There are, however, practically just two winter months—December and January—for in February spring makes itself felt. Flowers are rushing into being in the *poderes* (olive-woods). Purple anemones poke their delicate faces shyly through the grass on sunny banks, the spears of the bulbs shoot up strong and sharp, and varieties of little blossoms of the buttercup and aconite order make spots of gold among the green. The year awakes.

March is supposed to 'go mad' by the Italians; and of course there is the *tramontana* to be reckoned with in winter and early spring—the *tramontana*, beloved by the Italians, loathed by the stranger within their gates. But there is usually the alleviation of a brilliant sun when the *tramontana* blows, and there are always sheltered corners to be found, where, in the company of the lizards, his rays may be revelled in. From such corners it is possible in warmth and comfort to sit and gaze over the plains, where the olives are converted into a sea of shimmering silver and the cypresses bend and groan and squeak.

On the morning, however, of which we write there was neither rain nor *tramontana*. Florence lay at our feet, veiled in a semi-transparent amethyst haze. Brunelleschi's great dome, with Giotto's tower, and all the lesser campaniles and towers, stood up through the mist, delicately touched in by the fiery fingers of the sun as he climbed the sky. The Arno, like a broad golden ribbon, wandered into the soft blue distance westward through that fairest of vales towards the hills. The walls of many villas shone ivory-white, cream, and rose, among the ilex and olive trees, the cypresses striking bold notes ('of admiration,' said a friend), and of strong colour. All around lay the quiet hills of Fiesole, sleeping in the sunshine, and far away gleamed the snows of the Carrara Mountains and the Apennines. It was intoxicating in its beauty and in the exhilarating quality of the crisp air.

The jingling bells of a cart on the white road below, the crack of the *contadino's* whip, and his

shouted '*Via!*' to his long-suffering mules, with their tassels and splendid orange-red draperies, accentuated the fact that this was indeed Italy. The bells of San Domenico rang out for a mass —San Domenico, rich in memories of Savonarola and Fra Angelico; and there was the dim old monastery nestling among the olive-trees just as it was in his day. And, indeed, the key to the charm of much that the eye rests on in this enchanting land lies in the fact that it is as it was *then*—as in the days when Savonarola wept, spent himself, and agonised for his beautiful, sinful Florence; when the despots ruled, and might was right, and art flourished and poets sang; the days of the Renaissance, the Medicis, the painters, the gorgeous pageants, the splendid throngs, the foul rottenness beneath the glittering superstructure.

'*Ma!*' as the Italians say. 'It is now that concerns us,' says the electric tram, as it squeals and rumbles round the corner and strikes a hideous note of modernity and utilitarianism. It was too much! The dream was cut short, the window closed, and the services of the sour-faced Helvetian requested. Her ill-concealed sneers at short skirts and thick boots must be ignored and brushed aside as a small drop in the ocean of content contained in the contemplation of the coming walk on this delectable morning. A heavy moisture lay thickly on all vegetation, the artichoke-leaves looking as though they had been carved out of turquoise and studded with diamonds under the gray-green shade of the olives. The *contadino* who farms the *podere* was cutting great bunches of white stocks, grown in pots, and narcissus for the market, and swept us a splendid and smiling bow as we wished him 'Good-morning.' A dirty white cat prowled about under the rose-bushes; and a distant blackbird gave forth a suppressed and terrified little song, not checked in this instance by a cruel shot as is usually the case, close-time having set in. Close-time, however, is but scant protection in this fair land where law is often but a name; and there is an unpleasant side to a sojourn here which will have to be reckoned with unless the safety of the stranger is considered more than it is at present.

Robbery with violence is far from being unknown, not only in unfrequented highways and byways, but in the open street. Not many days since the English colony was horrified by hearing of an attack on a well-known elderly lady long resident in Florence. She was pursuing her way in broad daylight, between four and five in the afternoon, from the *palazzo* of a friend to her own dwelling. As she passed along the Lung Arno a man clutched at the bag she carried on her arm. With great courage she resisted; but the cowardly brute knocked her down, wrenched the bag from her grasp, and made off. A passer-by helped her to rise, and impressed upon her that she had been most unwise to resist the thief, and that she was most fortunate, as he might have used his knife on her!

Another case will illustrate the growing danger, and this time a native was the sufferer, in the person of a *contadino*. Hearing a noise in his hen-house at night, he rose, to find his hens tied by the legs and the thief in the act. He managed to secure him, and gave him in charge to the police. The *guardia* asked, 'Has he stolen any of your hens?' 'No,' said the man; 'but he was in my hen-house, and in the act of tying my hens' legs.' 'Then, if he has not stolen your hens, you have nothing to complain of, and no case,' said this shining light of the law.

The foregoing are but a sample of the cases that have come under the notice of the writer; but the danger is real and growing, and all agree that the present police protection is wholly inadequate to cope with it; and though the attractions of Florence and its environs are immeasurable, personal security is by no means concomitant with a residence here, and is becoming more and more doubtful.

Socialism and anarchy are rife, and the fear of the knife a paralysing element with officialdom. When interviewed, the officials shrug their shoulders, smile deprecatingly, and ask what they can do with thirty policemen where sixty would be insufficient.

Pause, therefore, ye who would invest capital in the purchase of enchanting Medici villas or lease *appartamente* in historic *palazzi*.

'VAIN THREADS.'

CHAPTER III.

'WELL, miss, if, as you say, you want a good long walk, why not go to Overing Church this evening? They have service there during the summer months.'

'Is it quite easy to find?' asked Joane, interested.

Miss Cable put down the tea-tray for a moment to give more implicit instructions with the aid of her finger-pointing.

'Your best way would be to go along the cliff-path till you get to the Gap; then you have to turn inland and follow a field-path. Then go down a lane, and you see the church in the distance. No, it's not hard to find.'

'I'll go,' said Joane quite eagerly. 'I love exploring.'

Miss Cable smiled respectfully and withdrew with the tray. 'I think you will enjoy it, miss,' she observed when she reached the door.

Joane got up and walked to the window. She was beginning to get a little tired of her own un-

diluted company, and inclined to try and draw Miss Cable into conversation when she brought her meals.

For Joane was left 'monarch of all she surveyed.' Mrs Elliot and her companion had driven off the previous morning in Lady Bebington's carriage, Miss Macey sitting with her back to the horses, though it always made her feel ill; but distinctions must be observed. Nothing had happened at the last moment to prevent the departure, as Joane in her anxiety had feared. They were gone, and she had till Wednesday at least to enjoy being her own mistress. She had taken long rambles by sea and shore, scrambling over her meals and being out all she could; but yet she was not quite satisfied, and began to fear that, like all much-desired boons, her holiday was going to prove disappointing.

The time was passing just the same as if it were being taken full advantage of; almost before she could look round her aunt would be back and the old dreary routine would recommence.

She felt restless and unsettled. She had inhaled the scent of 'Captain' Cable's tobacco, heard his measured footfall, and caught distant glimpses of his stalwart figure, but that was all; and it was partly to walk off her undefined disappointment that Joane desired the expedition to a distant church that evening.

She determined to start in good time, and very soon, in her Bond Street hat and dainty garments, she set forth. She did not look up as she closed the gate; though, as the Cables lived at the back of the house, there was small chance of any one seeing her if she had. The path led along the cliff plainly enough. The sun was shining on the sea's broad expanse; its gentle wash against the beach below sounded soothingly. Joane walked briskly though the evening was warm. She was angry with herself for having given a thought to the sailor, and her self-love was hurt. Although he was beneath her in station, he had evidently not been flattered by her notice.

She felt sorry for her friendliness. Perhaps Aunt Mamie was right. She ought to have remembered the difference between them.

For some way the path kept a safe distance from the edge of the cliff, but at a sudden turn it changed and ran to within a couple of feet of the brink, and the cliffs grew jagged and serrated, leaving at places still less space between the narrow path and the edge.

On the other hand was a corn-field which was protected by a fence, so there was no getting farther inland.

Joane stood still, aghast. She had never had a good head for climbing, and the abrupt ending to her safe road struck her with dismay. Again and again she measured the distance between the zigzag edge of the cliff with her eye, and her heart sickened. She could never get up the courage to pursue it. But what could be done? To go back meant to give up the chance of the expedition, and to give it up when she must be more than half-way to the church! It was too disappointing. She glanced despairingly at the fence, which just here was of high park-palings with nothing to catch hold of as a support, and then back at the shimmering, restless sea so far below, and she shuddered. It was in vain she apostrophised herself as weak and foolish. She could have cried with vexation. There was nothing for it but to turn back ignominiously.

She turned abruptly and came face to face with Jim Cable.

He had walked lightly on the grassy path, and the noise of the sea grating on the shingle had deadened his footsteps.

Joane started, and for just a moment could not speak.

He raised his cap and was passing on when, in desperation, she lifted her eyes appealingly. 'I can't get on,' she said.

'Tired, miss?' he replied cheerfully.

She shook her head. 'No, not a bit; only it is very stupid of me, but I can't—I daren't go along that path so near the edge. It makes my head swim to think of it; and—and yet I want to go to Overing Church—and'——

'Why, let me help you,' he said promptly. 'Overing Church? That is just where I'm steering for.'

'Is it?' Joane was ashamed of her voice. It betrayed the exultant joy she was feeling.

'Take my arm,' he said quietly, just as Joane imagined he would have encouraged any of his poor frightened passengers when the ship was going down and there were only a few minutes to get to the boats. She took it. Such a fine, strong arm it was, in that blue-serge sleeve.

'Now, shut your eyes,' he said, 'and trust to me.'

She obeyed, and they moved on.

'Is it far like this?' she asked once.

'No, not much farther,' he answered cheerfully.

She would not have cared if it had extended all the way to Overing Church.

'There, now, look,' he said.

Joane opened her eyes. The path had got a more reasonable distance from the edge; but before them yawned a wide ravine, stopping all farther progress straight ahead.

'This is the Gap,' he said. 'Now we must tack about and starboard the helm.'

The smiling country stretched inland. Their way led through a field of beans, the delicious odour of which scented the air with sweetness. Bright scarlet poppies flaunted among their gay green leaves, and little brilliant pimpernels with wide-open eyes gave promise of another fine day on the morrow. Oh, how beautiful it all was! How fair the world was when you got away from fashion's narrow round and into the heart of the country! Joane had never realised it so before. She walked

on. With a blush of recollection, she withdrew her arm, and they went on together.

'I don't want to inflict my company upon you, miss,' said the sailor a little awkwardly; 'but I could be a guide.'

'Oh, don't go. I like to have you,' she answered naïvely. 'And—and—please don't call me miss. You are quite as good as I am.'

'Miss—I mean Miss Elliot!' he exclaimed, reddening.

'Well, so you are. You are some good in the world; you have saved lives, and given an example of bravery and devotion; and—yes, I will say it, Mr Cable—and here am I, no use at all to any one.'

'No, no, Miss Elliot, you must not say that. Why, what would the old lady—I beg your pardon, I mean your aunt—do without you?'

'Oh, she could manage as well without me as with me if she chose,' replied Joane. 'But don't let us spoil this glorious evening talking about my dreary lot. Let me forget it while I can.'

The sailor glanced at her concernedly. 'I am sorry if you're not happy, miss,' he said simply. 'It is a bit dull for you, I expect.'

'Dull is not the word,' she said.

'But perhaps—well, most likely—I suppose,' he went on rather awkwardly, 'you'll be married one of those days.'

Joane shook her head. 'Oh no, I shall never be married,' she said decidedly. 'I have neither money nor beauty, and the men in society I meet with do not work to support a wife; they look out for a wife with money to support them in idleness.'

'That's not a very manly way of going about it,' answered the sailor indignantly.

'No, it's not. But they are not manly. They are poor, effeminate, luxurious, self-indulgent creatures, not worthy of the name of men, whose only object is pleasure, and who have never had a serious thought or worthy aim in the whole course of their existence. No; sooner than marry such a one as I described,' said Joane passionately, 'I would wed the labourer who works in the fields, and who at least fulfils the Divine command of earning his bread in the sweat of his brow.'

Jim Cable flushed, and seemed as if he were about to speak, but refrained; and Joane, colouring at her own vehemence, hastened to change the subject.

'I believe I can catch a glimpse of the church tower,' she said.

'Yes, you're right,' replied her companion, looking in the direction she indicated. 'You'd make a good "lookout," Miss Elliot.'

Joane smiled happily, and they went on along the stony field-path, which soon afterwards ended at a stile. Joane's cavalier assisted her over this and down some steep steps into a lane—a shady lane, with high banks on either side, and hedges where wild-rose and honeysuckle bloomed.

Then came a turn in the road, and a village green, a pond, and the red-brown tiled roof of the church hove into view.

'Let us sit together,' whispered Joane shyly as they passed through the lichgate side by side.

'With pleasure, miss,' he replied; and the next minute they were in the musty-smelling porch, with the 'Table of Affinities' in faded gilt letters facing them, and a narrow blue-baize door on their left.

Jim Cable pushed this open and revealed a flight of steep wooden stairs.

'There's a nice, quiet seat up here,' he said softly; and Joane, her heart beating fast at the novelty and adventure of it all, followed where he led. The stairs soon took an abrupt turn, and they were in a little oak gallery where the organ stood.

'Captain' Cable evidently knew the geography of the building. He ushered his companion into a tiny square pew, flanked by the organ on one side and the wall of the stairs on the other. There was just room for them both to sit, and, though in the rather dusty corner they were screened from observation, they had a good view of the body of the church below.

Joane had a very dim idea of the service. She knew that they knelt alone together on musty matting hassocks and held one Lilliputian hymn-book between them, his brown thumb and her white one holding the opposite pages; and by-and-by the old vicar began his drowsy sermon, and it grew dusky in the loft-pew, and presently some one dropped a book with a resounding noise, and Joane started in alarm, and the sailor caught hold of her hand reassuringly, and—and she grew hot at the remembrance of it—and kept it in his firm clasp till the sermon ended.

Oh! it was not like anything that had ever happened before. Joane, with fast-beating heart and lowered eyelids, tried to realise that it was herself at all. What would Aunt Mamie say? What would the shade of the great-grandmother—at whose entrance into the village church all the rustic congregation had been wont to rise and do obeisance—say? She was a renegade Joane Elliot, and unworthy of her august ancestors.

The sermon ended. The last hymn was given out. Slowly, mournfully, its plaintive strains rang on the air:

> **Brief life is here our portion,**
> **Brief sorrow, short-lived care.**

It brought the tears to Joane's eyes. Brief life! Oh, why should people not enjoy the little span they had? Why should false barriers and man's vain traditions spoil it for them?

It was darker now, very dark, in the little, hidden-away pew, and the two heads had to be brought very close together over the tiny hymn-book.

Then the rustic congregation shuffled and clattered

down the aisle, and Joane and her companion groped their way down the narrow, dark stairs, through the blue-baize door with its dull brass nails, into the scented evening air outside. Past the sunken gravestones with the nettles and long grass growing between them, and their worn inscriptions long ago effaced by scales of golden lichen, they emerged into the dusty lane.

'There is another way home,' said the sailor, pausing a moment outside the lichgate, 'through the wood; but it's a bit longer. Which will you go?'

'Through the wood,' faltered Joane so faintly that he had to bend his head to hear.

'This way, then,' he said. They soon left the few tumble-down cottages, and a little brisk walk brought them to the wood.

The weather-beaten, blue-painted gate clanged-to behind them with a sound as if some of its bars were loose, and then their feet were on the soft, moss-grown path, and Jim Cable took Joane's hand boldly and slipped it through his arm.

She said nothing. It was no doubt the manner of courtship in his class of life, and she liked it. It was sweet to feel herself taken possession of and mastered.

Oh, if it were only a dream which could not last, and if there must be a cold awaking on the morrow, let her dream while she could!

. . . . . .

'I wondered what had become of you, miss,' said Miss Cable as Joane entered the parlour at Sea View, where her cold supper was awaiting her. 'I began to think you'd got lost. But you look all the better for your long walk. I have never seen you with such a colour since you've been here.'

Joane made some incoherent remarks about the beauty of the scenery, and then Miss Cable lit the lamp, and she sat down to the table. But it was impossible to eat, and as soon as she was alone she got up and patrolled restlessly about the room. With the return to Sea View, and the sight of Mrs Elliot's belongings scattered about, came the recollection of all the conventionalities with which she was shut in. Chill doubts as to the advisability of her evening's adventure came creeping over her in the inevitable reaction from her former abandon.

She tried not to think, and taking up, one after the other, the few books which, at her request, Miss Cable had unearthed from her modest library that afternoon, she tried to turn her attention to their contents. But they were not engrossing: *The Wide, Wide World*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Sinner Saved*, and an old edition of Bloomfield.

It was while glancing at this last, her eyes wandering aimlessly over the brown, damp-spotted pages, that some words arrested her attention. They were in the address to a spindle used by the poet's mother, and ran thus:

> We spin vain threads, and dream, and strive, and die,
> With sillier things than spindles in our hands.

Vain threads! Yes, that was what her life had been hitherto: spinning of vain threads which left nothing to show for it.

What was all the narrow round of social etiquette in which her days were passed but a spinning of vain threads? What would it be but that to the end?

She flung the book from her with its self-accusing lines, and walked over to the window. The cool air, sweet-scented from the mignonette-bed beneath, came in refreshingly. The sea's gentle murmur sounded like a benediction.

Overhead the stars were coming out, and the majesty and solemnity of the night was over all.

How small, in the face of the grandeur of nature, seemed the trivial class-distinctions man had made! How unworthy of serious consideration! And yet old habits and considerations are hard to break, and are apt to be clung to even after we have proved their worthlessness. Vain threads indeed! But all too strong is their entanglement.

MEMORIES OF A SUBMERGED CLASS.

By T. H. S. Escott.

N the year that he had finished *Kenelm Chillingly*, and newly arrived from Paris, where he had collected material for his next novel, *The Parisians*, Bulwer Lytton, after his evening practice, was chatting with some visitors, who happened to include the present writer, in the great drawing-room at Knebworth. The immense amount of work, both in reading and writing, continued by him to the close of his life is to be explained by the strictly methodical disposition of his time. Whether in his Hertfordshire home, in London, at Paris or Torquay, he seldom saw his house-guests, and never his local visitors, till the evening. He remained invisible before the dinner-gong sounded, or was seen but fitfully as he crossed a passage, wrapped in a dressing-gown. A little after 7 P.M. (magnificently groomed, in evening-dress of the most fashionable cut) he came forth from the hands of his valet to meet his guests in the saloon. After the meal we all adjourned to the drawing-room, in whose centre was a large and most comfortable divan or lounge. This formed the host's throne till the hour for retiring. Here he smoked the longest and largest Turkish pipe most of us

had ever seen. Between the puffs he often answered questions, and more rarely volunteered a remark. Such county acquaintances as wished to approach the Squire of Knebworth—which, like Disraeli in Buckinghamshire, it pleased him to pose as—were received in audience after dinner or not at all. One of these gentlemen, on the occasion now recalled (the business part of the interview concluded), happened to take out from an ornamental bookcase, which he had been examining, one of Lord Lytton's novels, absently (and, as it seemed, in rather an interrogative tone) repeating aloud its title—*The Last of the Barons*, or *The Last of the Tribunes*, I forget which. In a moment Lytton aroused himself and rejoined, with some feeling in his voice, 'Yes; and if things go on as they are in France and England I shall try yet to write the Last of the Squires.' The caller who elicited this literary threat seemed to be one of the novelist's maternal relatives (whom, rather than the Bulwers, Lord Lytton facially resembled), a country gentleman in the home counties, whose house stood somewhere between Brocket and Hatfield. Theatrically fond of display in his person and in his private life, the author of *The Caxtons* was the soul of prudence and thrift in all matters of expenditure. The gentleman whom he addressed might apparently have sat for the portrait of Hazeldean in *My Novel*. With his house in Queen's Gate and his guests in Hertfordshire, Lytton affected to think he might be outrunning the constable and suicidally disregarding the economies becoming small landowners when agricultural times were bad. The same wholesome advice to the same class might have been detected in the very earliest of his domestic fictions. The Uncle Jack of *The Caxtons*, who has exhausted himself and impoverished his family by his open-handedness, may be taken as representing a small squire who has tried to live with territorial plutocrats or company-promoting capitalists.

That tendency has limited itself neither to Bulwer Lytton's county, to his own epoch, nor to any one part of the three kingdoms. When, many years ago, I made my first pilgrimage to the stock-sight of tourists at Rome, the Tivoli of to-day, Horace's villa belonged to and was inhabited by a small landed proprietor of the middle-class, who combined the simplicity of a peasant's life with a scholar's refinement and a bachelor's eye for comfort. He had, however, a little family, whom he was training up to his own yeoman-like existence. In the course of time the frugal father was succeeded by a son who lived on a larger scale. The building and the orchards to which the Roman poet had welcomed Mæcenas, and which their modern possessor had inherited from a long line of middle-class ancestors, began, with other property, to be encumbered. The last time that I visited Tivoli, I suppose some half-a-generation ago, Horace's villa seemed a fragment of spectacular antiquity, a sort of Mecca for American and British trippers, in the hands of a care-taker, like Shakespeare's cottage at Stratford-on-Avon. The whole place had become the property of a Paris financier named, I believe, Lambert, who talked about erecting, in full view of headlong Anio and snow-clad Soracte, a château, no doubt after the newest Champs-Elysées pattern.

Something of the same fate may be said to have overtaken the Hertfordshire home of the Lyttons, inside which the most variously accomplished of Victorian littérateurs uttered his warning remark. The Bulwers, before intermarrying with the Hertfordshire Lyttons, had been settled in East Anglia, formerly not more famous for its breed of turkeys than of squires. These country gentlemen, whose convenient but modest mansions were surrounded by a few acres of park, or rather trimly kept grazing ground, flourished in their own quiet fashion till the close of the nineteenth century. The province near to the Bulwers' native Norfolk—Essex—contained till the autumn of 1903 a characteristic representative of that old school. Thomas Kemble of Runwell Hall came into this world just a twelvemonth in advance of Wellington's victory at Waterloo, in the year which witnessed the first conjunction of the English and Prussians in Holland, followed by their defeat before Bergen-op-Zoom. That, too, was the year of the first Peace of Paris, and of the State visit paid to the Prince Regent at the Brighton Pavilion by the allied Sovereigns; the year in which the burning of Washington was avenged by the overthrow of the English expedition on Lake Champlain. Shortly after this the Treaty of Ghent brought to a close the second war between Great Britain and her transatlantic kinsmen; but the ports which it was one of the objects of that war to open were still closed. Kemble of Runwell had not begun to cut his teeth when the Liverpool administration passed the Bill prohibiting imported wheat while the cost was less than eighty shillings a quarter. In that epoch of high prices, high Toryism, High Churchmanship tempering something like Court paganism, the squire of Runwell was brought up to believe that to put away three bottles of port after dinner without turning a hair and to ride straight as a die to hounds during a forty minutes' run without shirking a fence was the distinctive mark of an English gentleman. The nobler articles of that creed he continued to practise till well into the last decade of his existence, although a feeling of duty to the British constitution in Church and State interfered with the three-bottle performance. An abstemious liver in many convivial companies, this grand old man of East Anglia, with his memorably handsome face, his brain and his body both made on the same big principles, never missed a meet of the hounds, a day at the Chelmsford market, or a day on the Chelmsford bench. His local importance and shrewd, business-like aptitudes brought him many requests to enter Parliament. But since representative government had been completed by the Grey Reform Act of 1832, Mr Kemble held politics to have become

impossible for an English country gentleman. The new wealth, he said, had ruined the old acres. The aristocracy of wealth, attracting in an alliance suicidal for the latter the aristocracy of birth, might yet go near to ruin the country.

The death of the Essex worthy nearly coincided with that of the daughter of a House which had been for generations synonymous with squirearchal rule in western England. The mother of the Somersetshire baronet Sir Alexander Hood, promoted in 1903 to be Chief Whip at St Stephen's, the widow of the third Sir Alexander Hood, was the daughter of the head of a whole dynasty of West Anglian squires. With old Sir Peregrine Acland of Fairfield disappeared an historical monument in the shape of a man. Born in a station titularly above the east-countryman Kemble, this Somerset squire resembled his Essex contemporary in the sturdiness of his principles, the kindly stoicism of his character, and the simplicity of his life. Fielding's friend Ralph Allen of Prior Park, Bath, was Squire Allworthy's undoubted original. With less reason probably, another member of the Allen family has been identified with Sir Roger de Coverley. But for the period in which he lived, Sir Peregrine Acland might have given Addison the idea of the character. Sir Peregrine, like Kemble of Runwell, hunted almost to the last. He had always avoided London as much as possible for economical reasons, though one at least of his ancestors had been a personage in the political circles of St James's and Mayfair—had, indeed, in 1812 helped to found Grillion's Club with the object of bringing together in friendly intercourse the leading members of the two parties in the State. Avoiding the expense of a town house, Sir Peregrine lived in modestly feudal state in his family house set in a park slowly sloping down towards the Bristol Channel. An instance of that nerve which seemed as strong at eighty as it had been at eighteen is worth mentioning. He was sitting at the head of his table, at a New Year's Day dinner; suddenly one of the guests, a military officer of distinguished appearance but of loose habits, sitting a few paces off from his host, said excitedly to him, 'Sir Peregrine, sharpen your carving-knife, for one of us must die; let us toss up which it shall be.' The overhearing ladies began to faint, sink on the floor, or rush panic-stricken from the room. Only the aged baronet remained perfectly calm. Beckoning his butler to him, he whispered, '*Delirium tremens*. Colonel —— would like to go to his room.' Quiet was immediately restored, and the dinner continued as if nothing unusual had happened. A tenants' ball followed, opening with a quadrille, which Sir Peregrine did not walk through, but, with his housekeeper as partner, danced scrupulously in every step as if he had been the 'little boy' whose days were passed in solitary waltzing in Mr Turveydrop's academy.

To-day the old Acland house, Fairfield, is inhabited, if at all, by an agent, the entire property having passed to the Acland-Hoods of St Audries. A like process, if often for very different reasons, is going forward on the small demesnes without number in different parts of the United Kingdom. Those who know Morland's paintings of country life are familiar with a scene that may be briefly described. It is a September evening; the master of the manor house in the foreground has just returned from a morning's shooting, accompanied by his single gamekeeper and a boy. The results of the day's sport are spread out on the lawn before the squire's wife and children. They consist of a brace or two of partridges, a rabbit or two, and perhaps something else. A pretty flush of pride mantles the lady's face as she gazes admiringly on the proofs of her husband's prowess. As for her little son and daughter, they dance in an ecstasy of delight round the spoils of the paternal gun. The sportsman himself looks with a certain complacency and modest pride at the trophies of his skill, as who should say, 'Yes, it is indeed a wonderful bag; but to patience and cunning of aim nothing is impossible.' While a country member, Disraeli in the House of Commons was once taunted with the servility of his constituency and their decline in patriotism since the days when Hampden was escorted to Westminster by a body-guard of yeomen from the vale of Aylesbury. 'The honourable gentleman asks me where are those three hundred Buckinghamshire freemen to-day. Why, Mr Speaker,' came the retort, 'where should they be but in Buckinghamshire itself? And they still return in him who now addresses you a constitutional member to the House of Commons.'

If in a similar strain it be inquired where, in the twentieth century, is to be found the gunning squire on the modest but not unpicturesque scale painted by old-world artists, an analogous answer to Disraeli's could not be given. Neither amid the Chilterns nor under the Cotswolds, amid the Somersetshire Quantocks nor in any other nook of the United Kingdom, does there survive the manorial marksman whom Morland loved to depict. As for his latest descendant, he has lately pulled down the plain, comfortable old Tudor mansion which sufficed for so many generations of his predecessors; he has constructed a staring brand-new château, as he calls it, something between a millionaire's detached villa on the Thames and the new Great Babylon Hotel in Grosvenor Square, in emulation perhaps of a regiment of the Semitic capitalists whose encampments somewhere in the neighbourhood glitter with gold and marble under the noontide sun. Just at present this latter-day representative of ancient but not great territorialists is much occupied. At last his good lady's wish is to be realised. Royalty has actually promised, when visiting some sporting Israelite in the next county, to come and shoot the coverts that were the pride of Morland's squire. Here, then, is at least one, and probably the most significant, explanation of the fact that the country gentlemen of the old school typified by those already mentioned, a Kemble in

the east or an Acland in the west, might be counted perhaps on the fingers of one hand, at most of two. The most characteristic specimen of the order that two generations had known, Joseph Warner Henley, disappeared from St Stephen's during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Two others of the same class had preceded Henley into retirement—one the grandfather of the nearly unrewarded officer who held his own in the recent war so gallantly at Kimberley against the enemy without and Mr Cecil Rhodes within; the other the Cornish baronet Sir Charles Sawle. Both the latter and his Devonshire colleague, Trehawke Kekewich of Peamore, socially and politically belonged to the breed of men who created representative government.

Before the town M.P.s came into existence the shire-knights, with themselves as its inspiration and its backbone, had organised the House of Commons. They were seldom or never men of great wealth, whether arising from land or from commercial ventures. But being of good descent, they were in natural sympathy with the smaller peers of the Upper House on the one hand, and were favourably regarded by the trading representatives at St Stephen's on the other. Some of the Stuart kings, conscientiously concerned for the morals of their parliamentary subjects, discouraged the commoners from bringing up with them from their 'several countries' their wives and children for the Westminster session. For centuries after this the elected of the people seldom made a domestic exodus from their provincial homes when the Houses met. The senator himself of the personal variety just mentioned had a bedroom in Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, near to the University Club, or in some contiguous thoroughfare. His family might come up to town for a little shopping, or for a visit to the opera or the theatre. If so, they stayed with friends or at an inn—unless, indeed, they were accommodated with a 'shake-down' beneath the roof where paterfamilias lodged. Even to-day the successor of this old-world M.P. may be without a town house in a fashionable quarter. But unless he be without wife and daughters also, he will not save much. The polite system which his earlier predecessor knew was comparatively small and select; its London amusements lay within the narrow limits of the season; beginning in the spring, they were all over before the end of summer. In the twentieth century some kind of metropolitan programme is in full swing all the year round. The society papers have brought the remotest wives and daughters of Arcadia into touch with the smart, Americanised, shamefully extravagant capital on the Thames which has replaced the British Babylon of our forefathers. The town house of the Palmerstonian M.P. often stood in Bloomsbury or in one of the streets off the Strand. If the senator of King Edward's reign can afford any establishment in the capital, feminine pressure probably will not be wanting to procure the substitution for the old-fashioned tenement of an expensive flat in a desirable district. That accomplished, the popular representative is committed to a course of expenditure likely to encumber permanently the family acres. As a fact, this is what has been going on since the middle of the Victorian era.

One of the consequences is the decimation of the smaller squirearchy, which never flourished more at Westminster than during the fifty years following the first Reform Act. It is the old story of the competition between the earthen and the brass vessels. Some country gentlemen, enriched by mining royalties or by commercial transactions, have successfully held their own through all vicissitudes. When resources of this sort have been wanting, one of two things has been apt to follow. The more prudent, if not refusing entirely to be Parliament-men, have known London only as a frugal bachelor may know it. The less cautious, after a limited period of exuberant display, have been overtaken by the long night of inevitable eclipse. That experience is not confined to those parts of the kingdom associated with the very representative country gentlemen already spoken about in detail. Not only on both sides of the Tweed and of St George's Channel is this movement in progress, but it exists throughout Europe, and especially in those countries whose social life, as in Hungary, is closely assimilated to our own. The manor house has passed into the hands of the lawyer or banker. Its normal occupants, his clients, are at some English watering-place where rent and education are cheap, or in some French or Belgian country town.

About all this there is nothing new or perhaps permanent. In 1846 the gentlemen of England in and out of Parliament were said to be ruining themselves and entailing calamity on their descendants by the speculations which preceded the railway mania, and particularly by high play at London clubs. In the year just mentioned Sir Robert Peel appointed the committee which inquired into the gaming practices and resorts of the day. The building at the northern end of St James's Street which used to be Crockford's within the memory of middle-aged men, has since been known as the Wellington Restaurant and as the Argus Club. To-day it is the Devonshire Club. Under Lord Palmerston's expert chairmanship, this committee of the last century started its investigations from, and centred them round, Crockford's. That institution soon afterwards disappeared. The evidence taken revealed an amazing state of things—a craze for all sorts of speculation quite as widespread and ruinous as that which some censors declare exists to-day.

Witness after witness in his examination testified to the havoc and poverty that hundreds of county families might, with too good reason, attribute to the palace of play whose windows looked out on the central point of Piccadilly. Through their own

recklessness and folly the country gentlemen in all parts had no doubt been heavily hit. They or their sons profited by the lesson. Whatever in the way of position had been lost was recovered. While Prince Albert lived, the squire whom Morland knew and painted remained as representative and puissant a personage in the Victorian House of Commons as he could not but be till the aforesaid J. W. Henley took his well-remembered corner seat for the last time, and in his guttural Midland accent declared, 'Sooner than this measure should pass, Mr Speaker, I would lie on my back all day in a field and call "Fudge."'

> Brewers and bankers, men of hideous omen,
> Enormous fellows with immense abdomen,
> Flashy directors with their diamond rings:
> Such is the sum of our six hundred kings.

The quotation, which comes from the late Mortimer Collins, is worth preserving, because the lines graphically, as briefly, depict the transformation of the Westminster interior since the squirearchal era.

Disraeli delighted in playing the lord of the manor at Hughenden. Occasionally, in the long vacation, he would run up to London without divesting himself of his bucolical costume. It then required the combined pressure of the dukes of his party to induce him to substitute an ordinary suit for the blazing knickerbocker costume which, with a many-coloured waistcoat, formed his idea of the dress of 'the fine old English gentlemen, all of the olden time.' Later in his life, during the dandified dining-out period that immediately preceded his death, the statesman accommodated his ways and his toilet to the fashionable financier's model. Politically, the leaders by whom he was followed proved as indifferent as Disraeli had begun to be to the mere country gentleman at St Stephen's. Sir Stafford Northcote, though born into their number, was soon trained into the official pure and simple. The same might be said of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. In other cases where, like Mr Henry Chaplin, extra-territorial means have enabled the squire to be a sportsman, he has merged his identity in that of the fashionable London set. Like, in this respect only, to Lord Randolph Churchill, the Premier of 1904 prefers the provincial palaces of millionaire hosts, whether in or out of Parliament, to the rural homes of the country gentleman as they still exist in fiction, and which till the Edwardian epoch had not quite vanished from social or parliamentary life. From the analogy of the Peelite period and the extant text of the Crockford committee report, one might argue that if it be less in evidence than formerly, the territorial class here spoken of has only itself to blame. Perhaps even now it is learning the folly of its ways, of overbuilding, overspending, and overliving generally. If so, the present term of comparative obscurity for the lesser lairds on either side of the Tweed is not likely to be lasting. Adversity may have among its 'sweet uses' the salutary power of teaching the later representatives of the historic stock that made the British Parliament those lessons of prudence, self-discipline, and self-respect which, if bitter at the time, will be to the learners' abiding profit hereafter.

THE SONG OF THE CLOCK.

The autumn leaves fall to the ground,
The starlings flock for flight;
The day is o'er, and gather round
The closing shades of night.

Another hour, another day,
Another summer's sun
So stealthily have stole away,
Dame Nature's duty done.

An old arm-chair before the fire,
The daylight on the wane;
The light and warmth of day expire,
And silence seems to reign,

Except the never-ceasing clock.
It seems its only care
Is always hoary Time to mock
By living on for e'er.

Dost thou live on unceasingly?
What art thou, awful thing?
The timepiece seems to answer me:
'Then, hear the song I sing:

'Thou hast the gift of mortal breath,
But I a greater power.
Thou livest on from life to death,
But I from hour to hour.

'And thou art bound by love and hate,
And every mortal tie.
To thee the hour comes soon or late;
The hour itself am I.

'The hour can sever heart from heart,
And love from love sublime.
The hour from time can never part;
Thus ever I am time.

'That time can crush thou knowest well;
Thou livest on a sea,
And thy life's bark a cockle-shell,
With weeds of misery.

'The weeds will swamp thy little life;
Thou never more shalt sail
Through puny storms and petty strife
That sank thy bark so frail.

'And out of all such cockle-shells
Has time built up the chalk,
When God, thy Maker, only dwells,
And Spirits only walk.

'Thy time will come, or right or wrong,
And this thou well dost know:
It may be short, it may be long;
But time alone can show.'

The autumn leaves are falling fast,
Withered, brown, and sere.
All—aught of life—will only last
To do its duty here.

C. J. L. G.

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TALKS WITH GIRLS.

LETTER-WRITING AND SOME LETTER-WRITERS.

By KATHARINE BURRILL.

IN one of Mrs Hester Chapone's letters to her niece she tells her, 'To write a free and legible hand, and to understand Common Arithmetic, are indispensable requisites.' They may have been in 1773; I doubt their being so in 1904. We have turned the Common Arithmetic into Higher Mathematics, but what has become of the 'free and legible hand'? Gone, I fear, for ever. We are so accustomed to the appearance of 'Crooked-backed "C" and Tumble-down "D"' that when we do receive a really beautifully written letter we are full of delighted and respectful admiration. I once heard the Modern large, square, slightly backwards-inclined writing described as Gothic! Frequently the expressions used are Gothic also, though I sometimes wonder if even barbarians would express themselves so hideously. 'We are trying to get up a dinner and rather want you to come,' strikes me as hardly being a very felicitous way of inviting any one to dine with you. Do we ever in this Telephonic, Telegraphic age hear the old-fashioned word Penmanship? Do we take up our 'Elegant pens' and indite 'elegant epistles'? No; we hurriedly wriggle a stylograph out of some place of concealment, give it a shake, and scribble a few words on a 'Letterette' or a 'Letter Card.'

I do not know whether children are taught to write letters. They certainly ought to be. Things have changed so much since I was a child that I feel positively patriarchal. When we gave a children's party we laboriously wrote out the invitations ourselves, and the guest equally laboriously answered it herself. Now the mother seems to do all the family writing. No wonder she invests in Juvenile 'At Home' and 'Dance' cards. I particularly remember the misery I endured, being an inky child, when I answered an invitation. But one thing was so clearly impressed upon me that I have never forgotten it. I was to say 'accepts with much pleasure,' and on no account write 'has much pleasure in accepting.' Personally I preferred the latter, it looked more imposing; but when each time I attempted it the letter was torn up and I had to embark on another, I soon took to 'accepts.' I am sorry to say that people constantly use 'accepting;' it always gives me a shock when I see it. They could not have spent sad hours with ruled lines, a fine pen ('down strokes thick, up strokes light, pay attention!'), trying to avoid blots and smudges, gloomily convinced that, however well you wrote, it would have to be rewritten. It was infinitely more trouble to the governess or parents than if they had written the letters themselves, but an incalculable benefit to a child.

I need not say how important it is to impress on the tiniest child the absolute necessity of at once answering an invitation. There are dear, delightful, charming people in the world who do their level best to wreck your dinner-parties by never letting you know, till the very last moment, whether they intend to honour (?) you or not. If you are fairly young and of a forgiving disposition you ask them again, taking care to enclose an addressed post card or a prepaid telegraph form. But should you be elderly and punctilious in small matters of etiquette, you will not invite the charming and forgetful guest again. When people tell me (as if it was something to be proud of, too!) they never write letters I feel rather sorry for them; they must lose a great deal of interest and pleasure. I would rather add to life than take away from it, rather grow new branches than lop away everything and leave a bare trunk. The leaves and branches protect the trunk from the wind and the storm. No one can keep her friends who does not occasionally write letters. Many people are aggrieved when they do not receive letters; but if you want them you must write them. Puck must have been thinking of Wireless telegraphy when he offered so obligingly to 'put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes.' If we cannot quite compete

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with Puck, we can still twist a rope of letters that will bind us to friends in all parts of the world. It is such a mistake to entirely lose sight of people; even when they leave the Old Land for the 'young gay countries north an' south,' we can still keep in touch with them. They are not so very far away.

> Why, Dawson,
> Galle, an' Montreal—Port Darwin, Timaru—
> They 're only just across the road—

and there are plenty of mails. The dullest little spider can sit at home and spin a web whose gossamer filaments will catch the rays of the sun in every clime. Should a strand break and be lost, Madame Spider can set to work and spin another. But oh! how very dull it must be never to spin any threads at all, to have no outlook or interests but our own small concerns! Make life full, as full as it can hold; for pity's sake do not grow morbid and self-centred. When you do write letters do not let them be wails of misery, all about yourself, your troubles, and how greatly you are misunderstood. I cannot bear a 'misunderstoodite.' I believe children *are* misunderstood, because we great big blundering giants of grown-ups cannot see with their eyes, our stupid ears are closed to the silvered music nature and life play for them, and we are too apt to forget we were once children ourselves. Only it does not do to dwell on their misunderstoodness. Youthful tears are quickly dried—'Those happy, happy days, when I was *so* miserable.' What tears we have all shed over Humphrey Duncombe! I should be sorry to think there was any one who could read of 'Humphie' making his will, of 'Humphie' falling asleep, without a good big choking lump in her throat; yet really he was quite a happy, healthy, naughty little boy. Perhaps it is in his very ordinariness that the charm lies. He was misunderstood; he stands as the type of misunderstood childhood for all time, yet he certainly enjoyed himself thoroughly playing cricket with the footman, or riding his pony. The thoughts of youth may be long long thoughts, but their minds are very easily distracted to something else. The 'misunderstoodites' of maturer years will not allow their minds for one moment to be taken off their own troubles. They are the Gummidges of existence. It is pleasant to think of, but hard to believe, that at the Antipodes Mrs Gummidge became a sensible, cheerful, useful member of society. I wonder if people are thinking of Mrs Gummidge when they advocate Colonial Emigration for our superfluous women. Oddly enough gloomy Gummidges are rather fond of writing letters. Depressing ones generally. People should always try to write cheerfully. Pretend to be cheerful; pretence makes practice, and practice makes perfection. Even if we have personal misfortunes to chronicle, let us mention them as cheerfully as possible.

'ABBOTSFORD, *29th December* 1825.

'MY DEAR JANE,—You will be sorry, I think, to learn that the cause of my silence has been sudden and severe indisposition. None of my misfortunes happen like those of any one else, for I always break down at the top of my gallop, and when I least expect it. So I was in a manner shot dead on Christmas Day, within half-an-hour after dinner, mince-pies in my very throat. The pain was very great, but it proves to be what is called a *chronic* disease, which learned word means, I believe, it is not a disorder which one immediately dies of, but only which, if it visits you frequently, renders life little worth having. But, as our friend Dr Dickson would say, shall we receive good at God's hands and shall we not receive evil?'

The above extract is from a letter of Sir Walter's to his eldest son's wife; it strikes me as fairly illustrating what I mean. There is no complaining, no grumbling; there is even a 'bit joke' about the mince-pies, and there are none of the dreary medical details that now-a-days people are so fond of inflicting upon you. The last sentence is grand. After all, are we always to receive good? Never to see the 'frowning providence' behind which the 'smiling face' is hidden? As the quaint old hymn says:

> The thorn and the thistle around me may grow,
> I would not lie down upon roses below.

It is wonderful how taking no notice of them induces thorns to disappear. Cultivate them by grumbling, water them with self-pity, and you will soon find yourselves shut in by a prickly hedge. Will any one risk the scratches to dig you out? One of our greatest actors, who said he had no time to read, was asked, 'But then how is it that you know everything if you never read?' 'Ah,' was the reply, 'you see, I was born educated.' I really think some people are 'born educated;' certainly there are born letter-writers. What delightful, witty, sympathetic letters some people write!—not always the cleverest people, but they happen to have the knack of putting things in an amusing way. Oh, that art of 'putting things,' what a gift it is! I am always rather sorry for non-writers if they are obliged to write a letter. By the expression of their faces they might be going to write with their heart's blood instead of ink. They writhe and frown and groan, begin once, twice, three times, and oftener; each time casting the offending sheet of paper on the floor. By the end of an hour they are sitting in a sea of note-paper, like a plucked goose in the centre of its own feathers. They are more exhausted than if they had done a hard day's work. Sometimes the results are surprisingly good, for the one-letter-per-month correspondents know few long-winded sentences and no 'lang-nebbit' words. They write as they speak—the greatest charm of all—and YOU fill in the punctuation, while the wearied Scrivener rests after his labours.

I think long letters are rather a mistake. 'Brevity is the soul of wit;' only please remember Brevity is not the soul of affection, and your family wishes

more than three lines with 'love to all' and 'great haste' as a wind-up. Some young people never write at all unless it is to ask for something. They write to 'Father' for a five-pound note, and to 'Mother' to 'please send my pink chiffon at once; there 's going to be a dance.' These pleasing requests are generally on Picture Post Cards. Father professes himself quite pleased with a motor-car standing on its head, and Mother says how very pretty Marie Studholme is (though she never heard of her before!), and neither of them—Bless them!—will own how much they wish there had been letters. How good they are, these dear Fathers and Mothers! Truly they give loaves of bread every time and never a stone; and the young things swallow down their gifts and never say thank you. I do not know who was the first person to invent Picture Post Cards; I fancy that, like many other things, they hailed from Germany. To be just, the German ones are the most beautiful; many of them are really pictures. But there is little doubt the picture post card has slain the last remnant of letter-writing that was left among us. We cannot stand up against battalions of views; against armies of Rotary Company photographs of everybody from Crowned Heads and Archbishops to the newest chorus girl. Post cards are certainly interesting when sent to you from foreign places, or when they chronicle public events; but you get very sick of post cards all picture when you are really longing for a letter. When people tell you they have no time to write letters, you may be quite sure they are very idle. Busy people always have time to answer letters. If you wish an answer at once, write to a busy man who is up to his eyes in work; you will get an answer by return. Write to a woman who lives in the heart of the country with nothing to do; you are lucky if your questions receive an answer under three weeks. Then her excuse will be, 'I was so busy.' Nobody in the world is so extremely occupied as the person who does nothing. Women had time to write letters in the Seventeenth Century; wonderful letters they were, too. Will any one ever write again such beautiful letters as those written by Madame de Sévigné? Alas! I fear not. A few years ago a volume of Love Letters was published that compare but ill with the real Love Letters written in 1654. Dorothy Osborne would have had but scant sympathy with the Englishwoman's 'How it rejoices me to write quite foolish things to you!' It must undoubtedly have rejoiced her, because she writes the foolish things so often. 'Plain sense but seldom leads us far astray;' winsome Dorothy's feet rarely stray from paths of level-headed common-sense. The unfortunate Englishwoman never brings up in Plain Sense Road at all. She is for ever straying here and there in flowery meadows; she may have been all very well as what Rawdon Crawley calls 'his inamorato,' but she would have made a very tiresome wife.

Dorothy writes: 'When do you think of coming back again? I am asking that before you are at your journey's end. You will not take it ill that I desire it should be soon.' There is more deep feeling in the 'I desire it should be soon' than in pages and pages of 'Dearests' and 'Beloveds' and 'Come to mes' and 'Cannot live without yous.' If 'Mild Dorothea's' expressions seem rather stiff to our modern ears (save us from the Englishwoman's terms of endearment!), it is better to begin with 'Sir' and 'Yours' and end with a happy marriage, than cover pages with sugary kisses and—end in nothingness. We know, once she was married to her William, 'Mild Dorothea' wrote in a very different strain. From the Hague in 1670 she writes to 'My Dearest Heart,' and finishes her letter with 'I am my best dear's most affectionate D. T.' We are glad to know, though she herself hardly dared to hope 'the conclusion should prove happy,' that it did, and that they spent forty years of harmony together. We also know Sir William was 'all that was good and amiable among men,' his Dorothy 'a good wife' and justly esteemed by her friends and acquaintances. As for the letters so full of common-sense and delicate wit, can we not read them for ourselves?

> So men may see what once was womankind
> In the fair shrine of Dorothea's mind.

Will the maidens whose minds I hope are also 'fair shrines' try and write as sensible love letters as our dear Dorothy? When writing to the 'best Dear' do not let your pens run away with you; do not, like Mr Bingley, allow your ideas to 'flow so rapidly' that you have 'not time to express them;' the lamentable result being that the 'letters sometimes convey no ideas at all to my correspondents.' On the other hand, avoid Mr D'Arcy's words of four syllables; no wonder his letters were long! The Rev. William Collins' letters have become proverbial. When we do not call a letter of thanks for a visit 'a board and lodging,' we call it a 'Collins.' His letters are monuments of politeness and civility. Give poor dull Collins his due; if obsequious, he was nevertheless civil. I have my doubts whether it is quite polite to stay with people, enjoy their hospitality, and then take no further notice of them till you write next year hinting you are to be in the neighbourhood. I am told it is no longer smart to write and thank friends for your 'pleasant visit.' Is there a day coming when smartness and rudeness will be synonymous terms? It seems to me it is generally the best born who are the best bred. Where Tommy Snooks writes no word of thanks for a week end, Lord Tomnoddy thanks you for having him to luncheon. I believe politeness is still fashionable and civility still 'good form.'

Always acknowledge a present at once. If '*Bis dat qui cito dat*,' you give a hundred times in pleasure and gratitude when you write at once. When a person takes the trouble to give you a present, the least you can do is to be properly grateful. Children, however small, should not be allowed to play with a toy or a doll till it has been duly acknowledged.

Start this early enough, it becomes such second nature that you could not read a book given to you for ten minutes unless you had already sent thanks for it. People who are lazy or ungrateful really give themselves in the end much more trouble getting out of *why* they did not write, than merely writing a few lines of thanks. The sooner you write the shorter the note need be. Another thing, always immediately acknowledge money; it may be sent to you for a charity, or you may have the luck to receive a tip, or—this is unlikely—some one may pay back what she borrowed from you! In any case write if possible by return of post. Business letters must of course be answered at once, especially if you are applied to for the character of a servant or anything of that kind. How the dawdling, dilatory people hash up one's time! What opportunities are lost not only for the want of a horse-shoe nail, but for the want of a little energy and a penny stamp!

THE CLOSED BOOK.*

CHAPTER XL.—BY WHICH THE BOOK REMAINS OPEN.

UT *passons.*

I have perhaps related this strange episode of my eventful life at too great a length already. Yet you, my reader, may pardon me when you recollect that from out that musty envenomed volume, The Closed Book—which may be seen by you any day in the Manuscript Department of the British Museum, placed by itself in a sealed glass case—there came to me both love and fortune in a manner entirely unexpected.

Of the love I have already spoken. As to the fortune, we found the law of treasure-trove as elastic as all the others. You no doubt read the other day of the sale of the Borgia emeralds to the wife of an American millionaire through the medium of Garnier the well-known jeweller in the Rue de la Paix, Paris, and of the high price paid for those historic gems.

If you evince any curiosity regarding the treasure of the Abbey of Crowland, you may, if you search, discover the altar and certain other objects exposed to view in the British Museum. Two chalices, an alms-dish, and a quantity of loose gems remain, by amicable arrangement, at Crowland as Mr Mason's share; while Fred Fenwicke, Sammy Waldron, and Walter Wyman have, of course, all equally participated in their great find. The bulk of the treasure is, however, still in my possession, and I placed aside one casket of ancient jewels intact as a gift to Judith on our marriage, the promise of which she gave me with her father's free and willing consent.

As regards the mystery of the house at Harpur Street, I telegraphed that same evening to Noyes, to whom we related the whole story, first obtaining his pledge that none of us should be dragged into the double tragedy that had taken place.

For the first time in his life the genial, well-trained police inspector betrayed absolute amazement; then, thoroughly practical, he left us hurriedly, hailed a cab, and drove away.

Next day the papers were full of the mysterious discovery, but neither press nor public ever knew the real secret of that house of death. Indeed, not until a month ago, after most exhaustive inquiries, in which the chief intelligence at Scotland Yard was engaged, did Noyes declare to us that the house had been used constantly by Selby during the nine months of his tenancy as a place in which to invite people, and, if it suited his purpose, to administer poison with an ingenuity unsurpassed.

One day he took me to the house in secret, and there showed me how murder had been brought to the perfection of a fine art. Not only did he explain the steel point in the polished hand-rail that had so nearly caused my own death, but he showed me a similar hollow point cunningly concealed in the door-knob of the drawing-room, which, on being turned, ejected the deadly venom like a serpent's tooth; an umbrella with a similar contrivance in its wooden handle; as well as a silver match-box which, being well worn, showed that it had been long carried in the vest-pocket, and probably well used!

London regarded the death of Selby and the old Italian hunchback as one of its many mysteries, especially as the medical evidence failed altogether to prove foul play. Our theory, however, coincided with that formed by Noyes and certain other high officials of the Criminal Investigation Department. It was that Anita Bardi, daughter of one of the early victims of the dastardly pair, having been in the employ of Judith as maid for several years, and travelled with her, had had an opportunity of watching the movements of the poisoners, and also overheard the suspicions entertained by Lord Glenelg and his daughter. She then determined to seek her own revenge, and with that in view had, by his lordship's consent, followed Graniani to Leghorn, and assisted him to obtain possession of The Closed Book. I subsequently discovered that old Nello had been in her father's service; therefore through him she had been able to get the book, and had afterwards returned to London with the same object as Judith and her father—namely, to defeat and unmask the assassins. The warnings she had given me regarding Judith were, as the latter afterwards admitted, purposely uttered in order that I should dissociate myself from the dangerous affair. Being an accessory in the recovery of the case containing the Borgia ring and phial, she

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had undoubtedly possessed herself of them, had met both men on their return from their fruitless journey to Crowland, and had killed them by the very means they had themselves employed against others, afterwards locking the door, escaping from the house, and flying back to Italy.

This theory, indeed, has been proved to be the correct one by a letter, bearing no address and posted in Venice, since received by Judith.

The reason Graniani returned from New York to Italy two years before was evidently in order to search for the missing Arnoldus, known to have been sold with other volumes from the Certosa library and passed from hand to hand. Father Bernardo, who is now one of my best friends, was entirely innocent of the conspiracy, and has since told me that the reason he endeavoured to obtain repossession of The Closed Book was because of Graniani's allegation that evil would befall its possessor and—very Italian—his offer of a greatly increased price on behalf of an American collector. The hunchback had evidently followed me from Leghorn to Florence, and suddenly discovering the manuscript to be the actual Arnoldus, urged the prior to cry off the bargain and sell to him. Anita Bardi's visit to Father Bernardo was on a false pretext, because she was, of course, assisting Graniani at Lord Glenelg's suggestion.

Lord Glenelg has, as you know, recently returned to public life; but the secret inquiries instituted by the Commissioner of Police revealed the extraordinary fact that in no fewer than eight well-proved cases where there had been inquests regarding sudden death during the period of Selby's residence in Harpur Street, the deceased was known to have visited that house of mystery immediately prior to his or her death. And if these eight cases have been satisfactorily proved, how many others may there not have been?

After a long search Mrs Pickard, the wizened old woman whom Selby had engaged as housekeeper, was found, and from a statement made by her to the police it seemed that the poisoner had an accomplice named Brewer—evidently the fair-bearded man who had assisted him in the assault on the valet Thompson, but who never came to the house. It was his duty to watch outside for the sign of the bear-cub in the window, and then follow home persons who had been decoyed there, in order to ascertain that death really overtook them, and that they could not return and make an accusation.

The sign of the bear-cub was the signal that some person had been secretly envenomed, and that a watch was necessary—a startling fact of which certain high officials at Scotland Yard are now well aware.

Happily for the personal safety of society, the formula for the manufacture of the venom has died with its discoverer, Graniani, and his accomplice; while the fact that the little crystal bottle of Lucrezia Borgia was found by the police empty in the grate of the front attic at Harpur Street, together with the poison-ring—now also in the British Museum, by the way — is sufficient evidence that the few drops of the fatal compound of the Borgias which we recovered are now also lost for ever. The missing folio of The Closed Book—which, however, contains nothing of great interest—I have since discovered in the library of Trinity College, Dublin.

And of Judith—my heart's love—now my wife? She is not a woman of fulsome words. She has proved her love for me by deeds by the side of which the eloquence of language pales. To-day, sweet, fair-haired, and full of tender grace, she is seated beside me as, in the rural quiet of our country home, I conclude this strange chronicle of our unconventional meeting and our mutual trust. Here, as I write, the sun shines across the old-world lawn, where the high box-hedges cast their long shadows; the mist has vanished; the fruit-trees are decked in their bright-green and snowy blossom; and the day, like all our days, is one of cloudless happiness and blissful peace.

Judith has made me what I am; for whatever I have been, whatever I have done, since the day we were wedded man and wife, I am her work and Love's.

THE END.

PROTECTION OF TREASURE BY ELECTRICITY.

ONE of the greatest stores of treasure in the world is contained in the vaults of the United States Government at Washington. In the Treasury Building, as it is called, a large quantity of the paper-money of the country is completed and prepared for circulation; but in addition to this, notes which are issued by the national banks in exchange for bonds of the United States are stored in a compartment which contains literally over a million dollars' worth of them. At all times the quantity of gold and silver coin of various denominations is so great that its weight represents several tons. The silver is kept in a number of vaults, but the supply of gold coin is divided between two compartments.

To protect the treasure from robbery, the Government has employed a force of armed watchmen, a number of whom are continually on duty. Each man is assigned to a certain patrol. Every time he makes the circuit he presses the lever of an instrument which records his movements and the time when the lever is pressed. This is called the watchman's time-detector, and is used to keep a *check*, as it might be called, upon his movements; but, in addition to the watchman, the doors leading

to the treasure-rooms are fastened with locks which can only be opened at a certain hour. They are called time-locks for the reason that they are provided with clockwork which is set to permit the bolts to be thrown back only at stated intervals.

Although no robbery has ever occurred at the Treasury except through employés, the authorities have decided upon a different means of protection, and have completed a system by which the electric current is the principal safeguard. Experts say that it would be absolutely impossible for a person to touch one of the doors or the inside surface of the walls of the vaults without an alarm being given at the various police stations of the city as well as the guard-room of the Treasury, so effectual is the safeguard devised. It is arranged in this way: The inside of the vaults were first lined with hardwood compactly joined at every corner. Upon the outer surface of the wood was laid a thin coating of what is known as tinfoil, which is one of the best conductors of electricity known. To the tinfoil was attached what would appear to the ordinary observer to be very fine netting composed of wire of a very small mesh and polished until it appeared as if plated with silver. The ends of the wire were carefully joined together with solder, which is known to be another excellent conductor of the electric current. Over the netting another lining of wood and tinfoil was placed, so that it is thoroughly protected from the air as well as from the possibility of any one tampering with it.

Thus not only the walls but the floor and ceiling of each vault have been completely enmeshed with wire. To the netting is connected what is called a feed-wire, the whole being so arranged as to form a perfect electric circuit. The feed-wire extends to the power station in the building, and by its means an alternating current of electricity is transmitted through the network, the current being varied three times in every interval of five minutes; consequently the treasure is practically surrounded by what might be called a sheet of electricity. But the conductors are so delicately arranged that, as already stated, if one merely touches the woodwork on the inside of the vault, or attempts to open one of the doors during hours when the vaults are intended to be closed, an alarm is given so quickly that the watchmen could reach the place from which it was sent within actually less than two minutes from the guard-house. Each vault is provided with duplicate alarm to avoid any possibility of one becoming disarranged and failing to perform its duty. If for any reason the electric current should be cut off, this is also announced automatically in the guard-house, the police stations, and in the engineer's room of the power station. With the electrical system the treasure will be protected by three methods: the watchmen (who will continue to be employed), the time-locks, and this invisible monitor.

The vaults at the Treasury are considered among the best ever made for the protection of treasure; but robberies of banks which have recently occurred in the States show that burglars have tools with which they can successfully penetrate the hardest steel. Actually, orifices no larger than the size of a pin-hole have been large enough to allow of the insertion of the points of tools with which the metal can be bored, and a charge of explosive inserted, thus forcing open the side or door. Successful robberies have occurred where nitro-glycerine has been forced into a tiny crack with an air-pump and then ignited. Recently, however, electricity has been used with remarkable effect upon vaults composed of the heaviest steel. It was a test of this kind which so alarmed the Government representatives that they finally decided upon using the same force to protect the treasure. An experiment was made with a safe-opening device which merely consisted of a coil of wire, an electrical socket, and a point composed of carbon. The expert in charge of the test connected the wire with that furnishing the lighting current in one of the Treasury apartments, fastening the socket in place of one of the incandescent lamps. Turning on the current, he applied the carbon point to the surface of the mass of steel on which the experiment was to be made. Within twenty minutes the heat had melted a hole through the metal to a depth of over three inches—a space large enough for the insertion of the hand and wrist without difficulty. Had the steel formed the door of a vault, the hole could have been made beside the lock and the latter removed or broken on the inside so as to allow the bolts to be withdrawn immediately.

'THE ISLES OF DESTINY.'

CHAPTER III.

A WEEK had gone by. To all outward seeming Christopher's expectations of a peaceful time had not been disappointed. Life at Tanera was grandly simple, and came nearer to his ideal than anything he had before experienced. Madge's companionship alone was sufficient to ensure his contentment, and though she was far too wise a woman to appear to give herself up to his entertainment, she managed to bestow a good deal of her society on him nevertheless. From his first introduction to her when still a cadet at Sandhurst she had supplied a blank in his life, and now after ten years the mutual affinity was still there, strengthened rather than diminished by the passage of time. The one drawback to his complete happiness was Norma. The mere sight of the girl was enough to stir up a sub-

conscious warfare within him—admiration for her beauty contending against a passionate horror of what that beauty recalled. It seemed impossible for him to separate her identity from that of her dead brother, and in his most forgetful moments the coward would suddenly peep out of her eyes, or the pallid face of the craven eclipse her radiant charms.

His resentment against this uncomfortable condition of affairs found vent in the frigid coldness with which he treated her—though all the while angrier far with himself than with the innocent cause of his contentions. Madge was plainly mystified. The enigma Christopher's character presented to the world had always been a clear page to her, but for once she had to own herself baffled. Prejudiced and inconsistent as she knew him to be, her impartial judgment could discover nothing in the girl to which the most fastidious could take exception. Beautiful, of proud lineage, with a heart as free and loving and gallant as that of Darthool herself, and a mind as pure as the breath of the four winds that had cherished her, she was the very prototype of all that a man of Christopher's superlative fancy might desire; and yet, instead of falling down and worshipping before her shrine, as Madge had first been inclined to fear that he would do, here was this world-weary cynic, this discontented, over-nice, difficult-to-please young man, regarding her protégée with disapproving eyes, and if not actually hostile, certainly aggressive in his demeanour towards her.

Happily for the girl herself, she appeared oblivious of his adverse looks; but even Madge never realised what it cost her to sustain this pose of indifference.

Her experience of men was naturally limited, and it would have been hard for any woman to know Christopher without coveting his regard.

The miracle is that she was able to disguise her hurt so admirably; but two things aided her in her efforts—one, the instinctive sympathy of the physically whole for a disabled fellow-creature; the other, the fact of Christopher's connection with her dead hero. For these two reasons she forgave him much, and her pride did the rest.

She had taken Madge's premonitory warning literally, and not only avoided all mention of the war, but also refrained, as far as possible, from obtruding herself upon the solitude of the pair. To Christopher it seemed sometimes as if she was hardly aware of his presence.

Certainly his advent had had no effect upon her life, and though when in his company she was always ready to do his behest, her service was only such as she would have rendered out of common humanity to any one in the same helpless condition.

By degrees her rôle, so cleverly yet withal so naturally sustained, began to have its due effect. Christopher was piqued—her indifference galled him; it was the first time any woman had ignored him, and the salutary nature of the treatment was proved by the manner in which he rebelled against it.

The fresh wholesomeness of the girl, her independence and glorious sanity of body and mind, aroused an impotent jealousy within him which found vent at last in half-veiled taunts levelled at her Amazon-like propensities. From earliest infancy she had been bred to the use of the gun and the rod, and at this time took especial pleasure in any forms of out-of-door exercise which enabled her to absent herself from the unwelcome company of her fellow-guest.

But that her womanliness was unimpeachable even Christopher could not deny, and the fact only tended to increase his irritation.

. . . . . .

The crisis came one evening when she had remained out much beyond her usual hour. It had been a day of tributary winds and uncertain sea; but towards dusk the storm asserted itself, and the hunger of it in the chimney seemed more fateful and foreboding to Christopher's ears than all the screaming of the enemy's shells in the long campaign that lay behind him. When Madge rang for the lamps she was astonished to see how pale and harried he had grown.

'What a melancholy sound the sea has to-night!' he began at once, as if in excuse for his altered looks. 'I wonder it doesn't get on your nerves sometimes.'

Madge only smiled. It would have been useless to attempt to explain to him at such a time how dear and home-like to her ears was that very noise of the waters he condemned.

'Shall I sing you something?' she volunteered, and went at once to the piano.

Her voice had always held a peculiar charm for him; but to-night the dirge-like accompaniment from the shore destroyed his pleasure in it.

The song she chose, too, was one of exile, the boat-song of the Canadian crofters banished long since from their native isles, and the sad wistfulness of the words swept away Christopher's last vestige of control:

> 'From the lone shieling and the misty island,
> Mountains divide us, and a world of seas;
> But still the heart is true, the heart is Highland,
> And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.'

'Do you mean to say you are not anxious, Madge?' he burst out the moment she had finished. 'I never knew Miss—that protégée of yours—so late before. It is all very well to counterfeit Diana, but she might have some consideration for your feelings.'

Madge rose from her place at the piano and came over to him.

'You forget Donald is with her,' she said quietly. 'He is the best boatman in the Isles—"Captain of the Fords," they call him. Would he be likely to risk such a reputation?'

'Pah! an old man,' said Christopher. 'He boasted

to me himself only yesterday that he had been fifty years in the Tanera service. Of course, it 's nothing to me personally,' he went on, with a strenuous attempt at indifference ; 'only it isn't pleasant for a man to feel that he is tied by the leg when a woman —any woman—is in danger.'

'If you were twenty times yourself you could do nothing,' said Madge, wisely concealing her surprise at his anxiety. 'They never say in what direction they are going, and—— Oh, you naughty girl ! where have you been all this time ?' giving the lie to her previous composure by the glad haste with which she sprang to her feet as the door opened and the truant herself appeared upon the threshold.

'I couldn't help it,' cried Norma, laughing and penitent at once. 'We went all round Orra Head, and the wind was against us coming home.'

To Christopher she seemed the very personification of youth and vitality as she stood there, and an unreasoning rebellion against his own helplessness surged over him afresh.

'Don't you think you are somewhat too venturesome ?' he said with his most exaggerated drawl.

At the sound of his voice she turned quickly in his direction.

'That depends, I suppose, upon what you consider a risk. We were in no danger to-night ; and if we had been, it was worth it,' the zest of her late enjoyment still lingering in her voice.

Once again Christopher had to own himself worsted.

There had been a hint of contempt in her reply that was especially galling to his pride, coming from her, and Madge heaved a little sigh as she saw the tell-tale frown gather upon his brow.

'I can confess now that I am always nervous when she is out like this,' she began the moment they were alone again. 'But I don't like to put a stop to her expeditions. She has been doing it all her life, and enjoys it so thoroughly. I shall be thankful when Eric is here to look after her.'

A longer pause than usual followed her words.

'There are other kinds of dangers,' remarked Christopher succinctly at last.

'Ah, I know what you mean, worldly-wise man,' laughed Madge. 'But as they are practically engaged, I feel I am only helping on a good work by allowing them to go out alone.' She took a little triumph in stating the fact.

At all events Christopher should see that he was singular in his dislike of her protégée, if he really did dislike her.

'Who is this Forsyth ?' he asked abruptly.

'He is Lord Glencoridale's only son,' explained Madge. 'Their family bought Luaig from the MacAlans two generations ago when they became too poor to live in it themselves. Norma and Eric have been brought up together, and I can safely assert that his allegiance to her has never wavered, though for various unselfish reasons he has put off his declaration—first her youth, and then Neil's death ; but he has made up his mind at last, and that is the real object of his visit. There, I have let you into the secret, though you don't half deserve it.'

'And behold ! here is the Amazon translated,' murmured Christopher below his breath as Norma entered the room again.

The transformation was indeed complete, and in her simple white muslin it was hard to believe her the female Nimrod who had gone out of their presence a short time before.

Christopher, as he lay watching her, found himself speculating vaguely as to which of the fashionable town-bred women of his acquaintance would have carried off the homely garb with such distinction.

But the girl herself was quite oblivious of his scrutiny.

She had seated herself, with an utter absence of self-consciousness, in the full glow of the lamplight, and, chin in hand, appeared to be absorbed in the contemplation of Madge's rapid fingers manipulating her knitting-needles.

Presently, in response to a question from the older woman, she launched into a graphic description of the day's adventure, interspersed with so many pictorial allusions that Christopher felt himself living in a sort of unwilling rapture with her through the experience, inhaling the salt nectar of the breeze, and thrilling with the inspired restlessness of the true rover as he passes from one penultimate isle to another in search of the undiscoverable.

'We are going out again to-morrow, Madge,' she concluded, with the sweet lilt of pleasurable anticipation in her voice more eloquent of worship to the understanding ear than all the creeds ever compiled. 'I promised Donald to have one more day with him before Eric comes.'

A cynical smile flitted across the dark face in the window as she spoke ; but when a moment later, impelled by the attraction of his gaze, she turned towards him, Christopher was lying with shut eyes, a more bored, discontented expression than usual on his thin, monkish face. A cowl or a casque, thought Norma to herself, either would have suited him admirably, but which would have been best adapted to his peculiar temperament she was puzzled to determine.

OUR LITTLE NURSE.

OUR little nurse! Yes, she was small, but strong and very capable; kind and gentle to those who really deserved and needed kindness and gentleness, but she could be very severe and stern when necessary.

She had been trained at one of our public hospitals, and at the time I am writing is a dresser at a free dispensary in the suburbs of one of our large cities.

Let us look in on her. It is Monday morning, and there are nearly a hundred patients waiting to be treated. About half of this number are medical cases, with which our nurse has nothing to do, except sometimes to give a kind word of encouragement to those who seem to need it. The rest are surgical cases, many of them very slight, though there are a few serious ones.

The staff consists of one doctor, one dispenser, and one dresser.

The doctor's time is limited, and is so thoroughly taken up with medical cases that he leaves all but very serious surgical cases to the little nurse, well knowing that she is to be fully trusted.

What is her first case? A pretty little boy who has upset a kettle of boiling water over his arm. Very kindly and gently does nurse do the dressing, all the time chatting away so brightly to him that before it is over he is smiling up in her face, and at last seems unwilling to go.

Then come several cases of no particular interest. Then a woman brings her child of about five years old, and says she has been run over by a milk-cart and terribly injured. Our little nurse at one glance decides that the child has not been terribly injured, and on examining her, finds only two or three slight bruises. She turns at once to the woman and tells her that the child has not been run over, that there is nothing the matter with her, and that she ought to be ashamed of herself for wasting nurse's time in this way. In connection with this case, a respectable tradesman called to see nurse next day, and informed her that his cart was supposed to have run over the child, and that the mother had sent in a claim for twenty pounds damages. He went away happy on being told that the child was uninjured.

What next? A great, strongly built navvy comes next, suffering from a deep cut in his arm. Nurse makes him sit down, and after cleansing the wound, tells him it must be sewn up. The man turns pale at this, and at the first stitch cries out, 'I can't abear it; I can't abear it.' Nurse tells him not to be a baby; but the next instant he slips off his chair on to the floor, and as he will not get up, the operation has to be finished down there. As he is going out nurse requests him to remember, the next time he comes in, that he is a man.

A child is next, two years old. The poor little thing has fallen and cut its head badly against the fender; but our nurse detects something besides this, and turning to the mother in great wrath, she says, 'You have been giving this poor child gin.' 'Well, there, I do give her a drop sometimes to keep her quiet, she do cry so,' said the mother. 'If you continue to do that you will kill the child and be guilty of murder,' says our little nurse; at which the woman was fairly frightened, so much so that the next day she sent a friend with the child as she dared not face nurse again.

What next? Oh, this is a pretty little girl nurse had as a patient some time ago. She has brought a nosegay for her dear nurse, which is gratefully accepted.

Next comes a man from the gasworks; he has a badly cut hand, which our nurse dresses. At this dispensary those who can afford it are charged the actual cost of the dressings. In this case the man has to pay twopence-halfpenny. He tenders threepence. Nurse cannot give change, and asks him to search his pockets for a halfpenny. He cannot find one, so, coming close up to her, he says in a loud whisper, 'Tell 'e what, nuss, you can keep that there halfpenny for yourself,' and out he goes.

More children, who get kind words and gentle treatment from the little nurse. Then a man with a long cut on his arm. He has evidently been drinking, and nurse tells him of it. He denies it at first, but admits he did call at a 'pub' on his way to keep his spirits up. The wound looks angry and unhealthy, and nurse tells him he must not drink anything stronger than water till it is healed. 'All right, miss,' he says, at the same time winking at the few remaining patients. This is not lost on nurse, and when she has done dressing the wound she very solemnly says, 'I have only one thing more to tell you, and that is, that you will certainly die if you drink anything stronger than water before that wound is healed.' This frightens him, and he goes away considerably sobered.

A great, powerful navvy has been waiting some time to have a crushed hand dressed. Nurse noticed when he came in that he was drunk; but she has learned to endure this if they are fairly quiet. But this man begins to make coarse remarks about her, which after a time become unbearable. He is six feet two inches high, and broad in proportion, and our nurse looks like a child beside him; nevertheless she calmly walks up to him, points to the door, and orders him to go and never come inside the place again. For a moment it looks as if murder might be done; but nurse's calm, steadfast face is too much for him, and he turns and goes without a word, while the remaining patients look on with amused faces at the victory of mind over matter.

And now the patients are all gone, and beyond getting things ready for the next day, our nurse's

duties are over. So she hopes; but looking out of the window, she sees a policeman half-carrying a man to the door. It is a serious case. The man had been playing football, and jumping over some spiked railings after a ball that had gone out of bounds, he fell and spiked himself badly in the side. The doctor is gone, and the telephone informs nurse that he is not at home; so she must do what she can without help. The policeman is still standing at the door, and nurse wants help. She tells him he is no use standing there doing nothing, and that he must come and help her. This man would not hesitate at any time to go in for a street-fight against long odds; but the dressing of a bad wound is quite another matter, and he does not like it. However, our little nurse is too many for him, and for the next quarter of an hour he is her most obedient servant. The patient is sent home in a cab, as he will not go into the hospital, and is advised to let a surgeon see to the wound as soon as possible.

So ends one day's work. Perhaps another time I may tell you more of our little nurse's experiences.

'VAIN THREADS.'

CHAPTER IV.

'THEN you'll forgive me, Miss Elliot?' said 'Captain' Cable hoarsely. 'I shouldn't have dreamt of speaking, though I loved you from the first moment I set eyes on you, if I hadn't known you weren't happy.'

'I have nothing to forgive,' said Joane falteringly. 'You have done me great honour in asking me to be your wife, but'——

'But there is too great a difference between our stations?' said the sailor. 'There is; but I would do my best to make you forget it.'

'I am sure you would,' said Joane. 'I do not doubt you could make me happy; but I see difficulties.'

'You mean getting your aunt's consent?' he hazarded.

'Oh, I should have to do without that,' she said, with a faint smile. 'But there is a good deal to consider in taking such a step. May I—will you let me have a little time to think it over?'

'Of course I will, dear,' he said promptly, bringing a heavy hand with kindly force upon her shoulder to emphasise its assurance. 'Take two or three days if you like, but let me know as soon as you can.'

'I will,' said Joane.

They were standing on the rock-strewn sands, and looking out on the sea, which sparkled in the soft sunshine. It was Joane's last day of liberty; this evening her aunt was returning to Sea View.

The day before, 'Captain' Cable being out for the day, she had asked herself to tea in the back-parlour with Miss Cable and her mother. The little festivity had not been quite a success. Miss Cable—although she had prepared a sumptuous tea, with plates of cut sausage and ham, very different from the Barmecide's feasts which Joane was accustomed to partake of in state—seemed nervous and ill at ease. Her mother, a neat, white-haired old lady with a widow's cap, who sat in a big chair by the fire, was rather oppressed also, and looked as if she could not quite understand why the 'drawing-room lady' should wish to have tea with them.

Joane did her best to be friendly and amiable; but she, in her turn, was reacted upon by the mood of her hosts and depressed by the furniture of the room. It was philistine in the extreme. The plush brackets, scriptural coloured prints, tradesmen's almanacs, common ornaments, and white-crocheted antimacassars, even the framed memorial cards, awoke Joane's antagonism, and made her question how she would ever be able to accommodate herself to such surroundings if Jim Cable should ask her to marry him, as had seemed imminent last night.

It was not much better when the old lady summed up her courage to talk, and started anecdotes of the great people with whom she had lived in service when a girl. 'I was a good servant,' she said at last, 'and I'm not ashamed of it.'

Miss Cable did not appear to altogether relish her mother's reminiscences, and turned the conversation on to Jim and his prowess, a subject which she intuitively felt would be more agreeable to the visitor.

But here again the old lady broke in. 'Ah, Jim's a good son,' she said proudly—'a good son, and always has been; and they say "a good son makes a good husband."'

She doubtless made this assertion in all innocence; but Joane found her cheeks flaming, and springing up with an incoherent observation that she had letters to write, she hastily took her departure.

Next day she had purposely kept out of 'Captain' Cable's way; but, as he was equally determined she should not succeed, it was hardly surprising that he presently ran her to earth along the sands, and then, after a few preliminary remarks, came right to the point and asked her to be his wife. And Joane, with the remembrance of the back-parlour and all its atrocities fresh in her mind, and with the consciousness that her aunt with all her worldly wisdom would be back directly, had shrunk from the vision of happiness which had opened before her, and was possessed by tormenting doubts as to the advisability of accepting it. She walked slowly homewards, angry with herself at her own weakness and that such minor considerations as social position and barbaric adornments should be able to weigh with her against a good man's love.

Mrs Elliot and her 'maid' returned before long in Lady Bebington's carriage; the former tired and cross that her luxurious visit had come to an end; the latter more genuinely tired, but only too thankful to have escaped from the insolence of Lady Bebington's servants.

'You have got on all right, I suppose, Joane?' said Mrs Elliot languidly, after a disparaging glance round the room, which she declared seemed so small and shabby after Balbridge. 'The people of the house have been attentive?'

'Oh yes,' said Joane promptly, turning away to hide a smile. If her aunt knew all she would think one of them had been too attentive!

But Mrs Elliot was not anxious to hear what her niece had been doing; she was better pleased to relate all the gay doings of which she had been a partaker, 'As far, that is,' she added cautiously, 'as my health would permit;' and Joane had smiled again, for she knew under such conditions her aunt's health was most expansive.

. . . . . .

Next morning there was a commotion at Whittlebeach. A gentleman from London had been bathing from the sands and got into the 'Draughtways.' 'Old man Gatley's boy Tom had seen him, and he saw "Captain" Cable come along the cliff, pull off his coat, and jump in after him, and then he had run to his father's and got help.'

Joane's heart seemed to stand still when she heard the startling news. For a moment the sunny cliff-path on which she was standing, the blue sky, and the equally blue sea below swam before her, and she clutched the old windlass for support. The next, with a determined effort, she dragged her feeble limbs along the cliff till she came to the group who were looking fearfully down from its height to the treacherous sea beneath.

'Poor fellow! bad job if he gets drownded now within a stone's-throw of his home—after all the dangers he has been through and all,' a woman was saying as Joane came up.

'"Captain" Cable's not—not'—— gasped Joane; her stiff lips could say no more.

'He went to rescue this gentleman,' replied the woman. 'Old man Gatley's boy see him jump in.'

'But is nothing being done?' said Joane hoarsely. 'Is no one trying to get them both out?'

A fisherman now came up shaking his head. 'They're gone to fetch the "creepers" [grappling-irons] now, miss,' he said; 'but ten to one if they get him out. Sometimes they're washed up miles away and days arter.'

'Oh, this is dreadful!' cried Joane, wringing her hands. 'Do they ever come out alive?'

'If they don't struggle and just float,' was the reply. '"Captain" Cable'll be saved like enough, for he can swim.'

'Unless the gentleman drags him under,' said another man ominously.

Joane could bear no more. Breaking from the group of portentous faces and shaking heads, she ran down the cliff-path to the beach. A man and a boat were just about to put off. Joane rushed frantically to him. 'Are you going to try and rescue him?' she cried, panting. 'Let me come with you.' Without waiting for a reply she clambered into the boat.

'Well, I was just going to row a bit. Like as not "Captain" Cable's floating with the current. I've known 'em float four mile away.'

'You think there's a chance?' said Joane eagerly. 'You don't think he's in that dreadful "Draughtways," do you?'

The man moistened his palms and pushed off. 'If he is they'll creep for him directly; but he will be as dead as a herring.'

Joane shivered. 'And if he floats?' she faltered.

'Or if he's got presence of mind to throw hisself on his back and go with the current he'll be all right. We're getting in the current now; it races four mile an hour.'

'But couldn't he swim to shore?' said Joane.

'He couldn't as long as he's in the current,' said the man. 'But we'll catch him up directly, if so be he's alive and floating.'

'Oh, row quicker! row quicker!' cried Joane feverishly. 'Haven't you another pair of oars, that I might help?'

'You set still,' rejoined the boatman gruffly, scenting a reflection on his oarsmanship. 'We can't go no faster than we're going. Any one would think "Captain" Cable was your sweetheart to hear you,' he answered scathingly.

'He is,' returned Joane with tearful pride. There was no doubt in her own mind about her feelings now. Oh! if he were only spared to her she would not hesitate to give him the answer he desired, and acknowledge him before the world.

'Fust I've heerd on it,' said the man disbelievingly, and he eyed his companion curiously.

Joane took out a sovereign from her purse. 'You shall have this,' she said, 'and double this, if you pick them up alive.'

'Right you are, miss,' said the man more amiably, and he bent forward over his oars.

Joane looked round. Two more were setting out, and her heart grew sick as a dark group, probably armed with the awful 'creepers,' were about to follow. An exclamation from the boatman made her turn her head quickly.

'There's summat ahead,' he said.

Joan gasped. 'Where?—where?' she sobbed. 'I can't see anything, the sun's so bright.'

The man nodded his head over his shoulder. 'Just afore "Deadmen's Gap,"' he replied.

'Oh, don't stop rowing—go on! I see now very faintly in the distance. For God's sake, row faster!'

'All right, miss; don't fret yourself. If it's the "Captain," he's all right; you make your mind easy. Why, a lady floated all the way to Bingham t'other week from choice.'

A little cheered, Joane strained her eyes on the dark object before them. They got gradually nearer. They were going quick enough in reality,

but to her tense anxiety it seemed the distance scarcely altered between them. She shut her eyes; perhaps it would seem quicker if she did not look.

'Hallo!' exclaimed her companion.

'What?—what?' She looked eagerly.

'Why, there's two on 'em,' he replied. '"Captain" Cable 's all right.'

The boat gained on them rapidly. Yes, there was no mistake. 'Captain' Cable was swimming on his back with one arm, and with the other supporting a man's head above the water.

'Jim!—Jim!' cried Joane in an ecstasy of joy.

'He can't hear ye,' said the boatman; 'his ears are under water. He sees us, though;' and he stretched out an oar.

'Captain' Cable grasped it. Joane sprang forward with a desperate desire to help, but her companion waved her back.

'You sit still,' he shouted fiercely. 'Do you want to drown the lot on us? Keep the boat steady if yer can.'

Thus adjured, Joane tried to obey, while the boatman, leaning over, dragged up the unconscious form of the rescued man, and laid him, wet and dripping, at the bottom of the boat. Then 'Captain' Cable climbed in himself and sat down, shaking the wet out of his hair and eyes.

'All right, mate?' said the boatman laconically.

'All right,' replied the sailor. 'I hope this poor chap is. He struggled so at first I thought he would send us both to the bottom; but when he fainted I got on easier.'

'Swounded,' said the boatman, after making inspection of him. 'I've got a drop of hollands in my locker. You'll neither of you be the worse for 't.'

'Jim!' cried Joane. She came over while the boatman was stooping to look for the cordial, and took her lover's wet, cold hand in hers.

'Why, Joane,' he cried, 'I did not notice you at first. I can hardly see, and feel a bit dizzy with the water in my ears. How came you here?'

'I came to help to save you,' she sobbed. 'They said you were drowned.'

'Bless you! I've got as many lives as a cat,' said the sailor, his teeth chattering. Then, watching the efforts at resuscitation rather anxiously, 'Don't choke him, George.'

'Bless you! this won't choke him; he's a-coming to already,' said the boatman, reaching for a piece of tarpaulin, which he threw over the recumbent form. —'Here, miss, you come and hold his head up.'

Reproaching herself for her indifference to the stranger, Joane left her lover's side and did her best to follow the boatman's rough-and-ready instructions, with the result that by the time they reached the landing-place the gentleman had shown himself beyond dispute to be alive.

'And they've been "creeping" for him all for nothing,' remarked the boatman, shipping his oars rather aggrievedly as he ran the boat up among a faintly cheering little crowd.

Tragedy is so acceptable to the lower orders that it is doubtful whether the sight of the two who were supposed to be drowned, one walking, the other being supported up the beach, was not a little disappointing.

Joane distinguished Miss Cable among the spectators, and she saw her take her brother's arm; then she emptied her purse to the boatman and hurried away.

Mrs Elliot, very much perturbed, was seated on the sofa, being fanned by Miss Macey, who looked really upset. She greeted Joane with a torrent of reproaches. 'Where have you been? One would think you were one of the vulgar herd, going off in a boat without a hat after that young man. I am surprised at you.'

'They're saved,' cried Joane, sinking into a chair. 'Jim—"Captain" Cable's saved the gentleman who got into the "Draughtways," and we picked them both up. Oh, I am so thankful—so thankful!' and she burst into a passion of tears.

'Miss Macey, my smelling-salts,' gasped Mrs Elliot. 'I wish Joane would control herself. A scene like this tries my nerves so. If disagreeable things must happen—like people being drowned close to one's doors—one does not want to hear more about it than one can help.'

'But they're saved,' said Miss Macey tearfully.

'I really think you must be mad, Joane,' continued her aunt, with acrimony. 'Letting yourself go like this, and all for a common sailor. You must be mad!'

'Perhaps I am,' said Joane, smiling through her tears. 'All I know is, through God's mercy my dearest is alive again, and my lost is found! Is it any wonder if I am beside myself with joy?'

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It was the evening of that eventful day which had begun so ominously. The sun was calmly sinking to rest on the smooth sea. The front parlour at Sea View was ruddy with its parting glow. Mrs Elliot, with a spot of red on either cheek that was not lent by the sunset, sat bolt upright in her chair, an awful personification of offended dignity. Miss Macey stood in the background with a glass of sal-volatile, and Joane was confronting her aunt, pale but determined.

'I said you were mad this morning,' Mrs Elliot was saying bitterly, 'but now I am quite sure of it. To think that your great-grandfather was a viscount, and here are you talking of marrying this fellow, this Cable.'

'My great-grandfather,' said Joane, 'according to all traditions, was an old reprobate. My husband that is to be, is a man any woman might feel proud of. Oh, Aunt Mamie,' she cried, her voice softening, 'what do all these little distinctions matter? God made man and woman in the beginning equal, helpmates for each other. All the foolish barriers of rank and station have grown up since, to the deterioration of the race. I care for none of them now. No; my Jim is a hero, a man whose life is

worth a hundred of the poor, contemptible society men who have never made any one the better for their existence; and I can never thank God enough for giving him to me, and giving him back to me when I thought I had lost him for ever.'

'Miss Macey, I leave this dreadful place to-morrow,' faltered Mrs Elliot.

'Yes, ma'am,' said the poor companion humbly; but her eyes had flashed an answering flash as Joane had spoken.

'Macey, you shall come and stay with us when we are married,' said Joane happily; 'and we are going to be married as soon as possible—before Mr Cable goes on his next voyage.' She went over and kissed Miss Macey's faded cheek.

'The sooner the better, I should say,' sneered Mrs Elliot. 'Only, understand that I wash my hands of you for ever. And this is the return for all I have done!'

'I am sorry to displease you, auntie,' replied Joane; 'but why should I wreck my life and the little remainder of youth that is left me for false notions of fitness? No, aunt; Burns was quite right when he said that "an honest man's the noblest work of God;" and, far from being ashamed, I can only feel proud of my choice.'

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The sun had gone down in a ball of fire; the dusk was closing in. Joane was alone in the little parlour, gazing out on the gray sea. Mrs Elliot had retired to her lachrymose couch. Presently the fragrant scent of tobacco stole in at the open window, and a footstep crunched the gravel outside.

Joane smiled to herself in the gloaming, and then slipped quietly out to the porch, where 'Captain' Cable was smoking his pipe of peace.

He turned quickly at her step, and encircling her with a strong right arm, drew her into his embrace.

'My own lass,' he murmured tenderly.

'My love,' she repeated, her lips against his cheek.

'You'll not repent it, Joane, think you?' he said half-anxiously. 'I mean all you are giving up to marry me?'

'Ah, no, no!' she cried, nestling against him; 'never, Jim. There is nothing to repent in what I am leaving—"vain threads," Jim; "vain threads" that I am only too glad to break.'

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE CANCER RESEARCH FUND.

AT the third annual meeting of the Cancer Research Fund, under the presidency of the Prince of Wales, the announcement was made in the report of some new discoveries which will arouse widespread interest. Cancer is prevalent in the whole of the civilised and uncivilised world, and is not, as many thought, a product of that culture upon which we are apt to pride ourselves. The disease is common to all animal life, and is found even in the fishes of the sea—it is not peculiar to the human family. It is not infectious, and is not transmissible from one species to another; but the cancer cell, if transplanted to a new host of the same species, will grow, the host not becoming infected, but providing a suitable soil. Cancer is not caused by a parasite, and the malady, as has often been erroneously supposed, is not on the increase. Lastly, it is most satisfactory to have a definite statement with regard to radium in relation to cancer. The new element has not been found to exercise any curative effect. It will thus be seen that the report of the Research Committee covers much ground; and we have no hesitation in saying that it is one of the most important contributions to the history of an obscure disease which has ever been compiled.

SALVAGE OPERATIONS.

Sir John Leng, writing to the *Times*, and commenting upon the circumstance that a foreign salvage company was employed by the Admiralty to raise the sunken submarine A1, deplores the fact that the British nation, which is the first maritime power in the world, is so inferior to other countries in the number of its salvage steamers and their equipments. He admits that excellent salvage work has been done by the Thames Conservancy and by certain British companies; but considering the enormous value of our shipping, the number of salvage vessels available is ridiculously small. The Neptune Salvage Company of Stockholm has ten vessels; the Svitser Company of Copenhagen has eight; the Hamburg Company has the same number; the French have a fleet of six salvage vessels. Altogether he enumerates forty vessels, equipped with all the necessary gear for raising sunken craft, which belong to foreign countries; while the British nation can only muster three salvage vessels, the largest of which is only four hundred and eight tons register. He considers that, in view of the immense expenditure upon our navy, the Admiralty should have its own salvage corps and appliances, so as to be independent of foreign aid.

THE CULLEN RIFLE.

The ball-bearing principle for reducing friction in the moving parts of a machine is familiar to every one who owns a bicycle or motor-car; but very few could have anticipated that it would ever be applied to the barrel of a gun. All kinds of improvements have been made in guns; but in the way in which rotation is imparted to the projectile we are in much the same position as we were when rifling

was first introduced. In the Cullen rifle a new departure is made. The spiral grooves which line the barrel are circular in form, with the crown of the tunnels cut off just where they touch its inner skin, so to speak. These little tunnels are fitted with steel balls which project to about the extent of one-twentieth of their diameter into the barrel, so that a smooth steel projectile in forcing its way through the tube travels upon a rolling bed which is almost frictionless. The inventor states that by this arrangement he obtains 40 per cent. greater average velocity, penetration, and range than he can obtain with the same weight of bullet and charge in guns made on the old system. The barrel does not heat, and there is little recoil. Before the outbreak of the present war in the Far East, the Japanese contracted to take the whole output of Mr Cullen's workshop for two years; but in future the invention will be in the hands of the English-speaking nations of the world. The invention is applicable to cannon as well as small arms.

ALGERIAN WINE.

Attention has recently been called to the great possibilities of the wine-growing industry in Algeria, to which the French are now devoting much energy. Little more than twenty years ago the area under vine cultivation was seventy-six thousand acres, and the product somewhat more than ten million gallons. Last year the amount of wine produced and exported had increased to one hundred and four million gallons. The soil is rich, and hitherto has been free from the dreaded phylloxera, which has worked such havoc in the vineyards of France. In Algeria the system is to build large central establishments, like breweries, to which the surrounding vine-growers send their grapes for treatment; and wine is so plentiful that it would not pay any one to manufacture an imitation of it. It is included in the price of all meals served at hotels and restaurants, and can be bought at threepence or fourpence per quart at the shops; and what is more, the beverage is of excellent quality. The industry is conducted on scientific principles, and the factories are fitted with modern appliances of every kind. The labourers are Kabyles, who are most industrious, and work for a small wage.

THE ARTS OF WAR.

While Western nations are watching with intense interest the progress of the terrible drama which is being unfolded in the Far East, two of them at least, the British and the Germans, are flattering themselves that the Japanese successes are in great measure due to lessons imparted by them. Major-General Meckel, of the German general staff, acted as chief military instructor of the Japanese army for three years, and there is no doubt that the Japanese navy has been founded on the British model. But the pupils seem to have outstripped their masters, or at any rate to have acquired such proficiency in the arts of war as to be quite independent of outside help for the future. Indeed, it is quite possible that we can learn much from our new allies. Our authorities will no doubt investigate the merits of the Arisaka rifle, a Japanese invention which dates from 1897. We should also be able to learn something from the terrible Shimose explosive with which the torpedoes were charged which dealt such havoc to the Russian ships at the opening of the war. Then there is the destructive Oda torpedo-mine which sank the battleship *Petropavlovsk;* the Yamanouchi gun platform; the Ijuin fuse; and last but not least, the Miyabara water-tube boiler. This boiler, however, is already well known in this country, although we are not aware that its merits have been officially tested by British experts.

SNAKE-BITE.

'Out of sight, out of mind,' says the old adage, and this is certainly true of snake-bite so far as that terrible scourge affects the stay-at-home inhabitants of this country, for our snakes are mostly harmless. But in India, where the victims of fatal snake-bite are numbered annually by many thousands, the matter is one of constant mindfulness. For this reason a paper which was recently read before the Royal Society (London), entitled 'Experiments on a Method of preventing Death from Snake-bite, capable of Common and Easy Application,' will command wide attention in countries where deadly snakes have to be reckoned with among the common risks to life. The paper bears three names as authors: (1) Sir Joseph Fayrer, who has made a study of the subject for forty years, and whose experiments made in 1869 on the use of sodium permanganate for local application and injection in cases of snake-bite attracted much attention; (2) Sir Lauder Brunton, the well-known surgeon; and (3) Mr Leonard Rogers, who has done much recent experimental work. In the year 1881 it was discovered that if a 1 per cent. solution of sodium permanganate was injected into the tissues near a snake-bite, and also when a mixture of snake venom and the permanganate was injected directly into the vein, a beneficial result was attained. But it is not every one who has a hypodermic syringe ready at hand when the demand arises, and Sir Lauder Brunton set himself to devise an instrument which should be cheap, always ready for use, and easily applied. It takes the form of a small tubular box containing a broad lancet and a supply of permanganate crystals which can be rubbed into the wound made by the little instrument. It is to be hoped that this device will find its way into countries where deadly snakes abound.

NATURAL AGRICULTURISTS.

According to Darwin, earth-worms are distributed throughout the world, and that they are helpful to farmers in mixing the soil and bringing fresh material to the surface to be acted upon by sun and atmosphere is known to all. But in spite of Darwin's statement, it seems that earth-worms are

not to be found in Manitoba and in many other districts of the New World. Mr E. T. Seton tells us in the *Century Magazine* that in the year 1883 he investigated with a friend a considerable section of Manitoba, and found no earth-worms. What, then, takes the place of these lowly friends of man in preparing the soil of that fertile land for plant life? For the black earth of Manitoba, which has a thickness of from one to two feet, is not a solid mass of decayed vegetable matter, but is well mixed with the subsoil so as to constitute a true black loam. The work is performed by a species of burrowing animals, the geomyidæ, or pocket gophers. These useful creatures, which are about the size of a mole, are found in every part of the great west where there happens to be soil enough to burrow, and rain enough to produce a crop of annual vegetation. Darwin came to the conclusion that the earth-worm in five years brought up enough soil to cover the ground one inch thick. The writer of the article referred to has reason to think that the pocket gopher is instrumental in bringing the same result about in as many months.

HEALTHY SUNSHINE.

It has for some years been known that sunlight acts as a destroyer of many of those pathogenic organisms which are popularly known as germs. Some time ago an ingenious experimentalist demonstrated this fact in a very convincing manner by preparing a 'culture' of these germs on a flat surface and exposing it to sunlight beneath a stencil plate, with the result that he obtained an image of the cut-out part of the stencil in dead germ life, the rest of the prepared plate being still alive. He called it a 'living photograph,' but the same term has since been applied to the popular cinematograph picture. The Massachusetts Board of Health have recently carried out a series of experiments in order to ascertain how far sunlight is able to cleanse water affected with the undesirable germs which result from sewage contamination. The two organisms dealt with more particularly were the colon bacillus and that associated with typhoid. They found that both species were quickly destroyed by free access to sunlight, thirty minutes to an hour being sufficient to sterilise a culture when spread out in a thin layer, as in the photographic experiment already detailed. In the case of the typhoid bacillus from 95 to 99 per cent. were quickly killed by exposure to direct sunlight, but there were always a few hardy individuals which required for their destruction an extended time.

IDENTIFICATION BY THE TEETH.

Professor A. H. Thompson, of the Kansas City Dental College, has recently been urging the importance of the teeth as a means of identification, and as an illustration he quotes the case of the terrible fire some years back at the charity bazaar in Paris, where the sole means of recognition of many of the victims were the records preserved by their dentists. Such records, he considers, would be of immense service to life insurance companies, and an instance is quoted where identification would have been impossible except by the teeth. Professor Thompson has drawn up a suggestive scheme which includes the measurement of the arch and vault of the jaws; the size, shape, and irregularities of the teeth; including any particulars of artificial interference. The scheme is elaborated in an article contributed to the *Popular Science Monthly Magazine*, New York.

LAKE FISHERIES.

Anglers will be interested to know that steps are being taken to stock one of the largest of the English lakes with trout, and there seems to be no reason why this noble piece of water (Windermere) should not in the future prove as productive as the lakes north of the Border. After Windermere the other lakes may possibly receive attention, and might perhaps obtain help from the hatchery which it is proposed to erect at the lake already named. At this establishment it is hoped to hatch half a million of ova annually, from which at least two hundred thousand yearlings would be placed in the lake waters. The establishment is estimated to cost only seven hundred and fifty pounds, of which sum about half has been subscribed. It is believed that when once started the hatchery will be self-supporting, for it is intended to sell each year enough yearlings to pay for maintenance. As there must be among our readers many anglers who would like to support this useful project, we may add that donations towards it may be sent to Messrs Gatey, solicitors, Windermere.

STUFFED ANIMALS.

The art of taxidermy seems to be just now undergoing a change, and a change for the better. From an artistic standpoint a 'stuffed' animal is not a thing of beauty as a rule, and we cannot imagine any painter venturing to use one for a model. 'Stuffed' is a most proper term to apply to many of these travesties of nature, for they appear to be stuffed to repletion, with every trace of beauty removed in the process. There are, of course, exceptions in the case of those persons who have earned a name for executing such work with anatomical and artistic knowledge. This work is now being carried out at one of the transatlantic museums with consummate skill, and the whole process is described and illustrated in a recent issue of the *Scientific American*. First of all the skull, pelvis, and legs of the animal are set up on a kind of framework to represent the skeleton. Next, this framework has the muscles built over it in modelling clay by a skilled sculptor. At various times during the process of building up, the skin, which has been duly prepared, is tried on to the limbs. Eventually a mould is made from the built-up form, and from this a cast is produced, the original model being discarded entirely. Thus in the finished animal no part of the actual creature is used except the skin.

It should be noted that one condition of success is that the animal should be carefully measured as soon as possible after it is killed, so as to give data for the construction of the preliminary frame. In carrying out the work the sculptor is largely helped by the use of photographs, secured at menageries and other places, of animals similar to those under treatment.

PROGRESS IN UGANDA.

The resignation of Sir Charles Eliot, and the discussion in Parliament and out of it upon land grants in British East Africa, have kept this country and the Uganda Protectorate before the eye of the public. In the June issue of *Chambers's Journal* there was printed an article on the 'Prospects of British East Africa.' The railway is five hundred and eighty-four miles long from Mombasa to Port Florence, on Lake Victoria Nyanza, and from thence there is a weekly steamer to Entebbe, Uganda. The whole journey occupies forty-eight hours. About half-way the traveller passes through an undulating plain with grass such as game love, affording a view of giraffes, herds of antelopes, gazelles, ostriches, and zebras. The climate is cool at five thousand feet. Port Florence, on the Victoria Nyanza, is almost entirely built of iron, and has a comparatively large population of a cosmopolitan kind, from the nude savage to the small European community. Every Monday a train leaves the lake for Mombasa, and every Tuesday a steamer takes passengers across the lake to Entebbe in thirty-six hours. The Kisumu natives speak a Nilotic language, but the mass of the Uganda and Kavirondo people are Bantus, like the Kafirs. The millions in the Protectorate, and still larger diocese worked by Bishop Tucker, in the region bounded by Egypt, the Congo Free State, German territory, and the East Africa Protectorate, are chiefly pagans, whose religion is a formless magic without literature. But for the patriotic interference of the late Sir Henry M. Stanley, says a writer in the *Scotsman*, when in 1875 he invited the Church Missionary Society to send men to King Mtesa, all would probably by this time have become Mohammedans. Islam pours in its influence from the Nile on the north and the line of railway on the east. But the Scottish Mackay was in time, and lived long enough to give Christian civilisation the start. In the last ten years the progress of the Reformed Church has been such that there are now in the Uganda Mission thirty-two native clergy, more than two thousand male and four hundred female teachers, forty-three thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight baptised adults, and twenty-two thousand boys and girls at school. Good books cannot be produced fast enough for sale. Women and doctors have done more than even teachers and preachers. The industrial work which Mackay began is training a number of Christian mechanics and raising the standard of wages and comfort. Even the Belgian Government has consented to allow teachers from Uganda and Toro to enter the Congo Free State. A great Christian kingdom is thus being created, and it will be only one of several stretching south from Gondokoro and Uganda to Livingstonia and Blantyre, from the Nile to the Zambesi.

FROGS AS FOOD.

A new source of wealth has sprung up in the New Orleans district, owing to the decision arrived at by the United States authorities to classify edible frogs as poultry, presumably because they are known as chicken frogs, and to make them pay duty as such, when imported from abroad. Formerly frogs destined for consumption in the United States were largely supplied by the Dominion of Canada, but since the imposition of a duty other sources of supply have had to be sought, and Louisiana, amongst other places, is found to be suitable for the breeding of this delicacy. The frogs caught in the swamps of Louisiana are larger than the Canadian, and fetch a higher price in the markets. They must be caught alive, care being taken not to bruise them. When destined for sale they are killed and sent all over the country in cold storage. One firm alone is said to deal in frogs to the extent of ten thousand pounds a year.

GOOD-BYE.

Wherefore 'Good-bye'?
The word is full of sadness.
Is it that we no more may hope to see
Thy winsome face,
Radiant with hope and gladness?

Or can it be
That, with the world before you,
You reck not of the pain its echo brings
To aching hearts,
And to the love they bore you?

Ah, surely no!
He knows, who sits above,
We breathed it too, to speed you in His name
To better things,
To friends and home and love.

Therefore 'Good-bye.'
'To part is such sweet sorrow'
When there is hope that some day we may chance
To meet again.
Would that it were to-morrow!

Peter Anderson.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE COLONEL'S MURILLO.

By ANDREW W. ARNOLD, Author of *The Attack on the Farm*, *For the Sake of a Kiss*, *The Sign of the Silver Bell*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

'YES, Lallesan, those are all right,' said Colonel Dolinier, with a sigh of relief, as he pushed some regimental account-books (for I was adjutant) across the table; 'and mind reveille at four. *Gracias à Dios!* before the sun sets to-morrow we ought to be far away from this confounded place. Ay,' he continued, bringing his great coarse fist down on the table with a bang, 'and, if all goes well, soon out of this infernal country altogether. After four long years it will be something to be in a civilised land again. Talk of luck. To think if I had only been under Massena or Soult, instead of Suchet, why, *parbleu!* I would have done enough "business" in that time to have been able to live at my ease all the days of my life instead of returning a beggar.'

The colonel was an uncommonly handsome man about forty. His weather-beaten, swarthy features may have been a trifle coarse, and his manners were certainly rather rough; still, his unbounded courage, his reckless, dare-devil carriage, and his generosity (albeit generally at other people's expense) made him a very popular commander. Nor was he a fool either, for beneath all his apparent *bonhomie* there was a rare fund of shrewdness and a love of number one. He would never have been where he was otherwise, for he had risen entirely from the ranks. His father, it was said, had been a pork-butcher at Irun; anyway, he was born on the Spanish frontier, and spoke Spanish as well as he did French. When a lad he had been a *tambour* in the first armies of the Revolution, and then changing into our regiment, he had followed young General Bonaparte in the memorable campaign of 1796 from one victory to another, from the Gulf of Genoa to the Adige. Keeping in the regiment, he had gradually mounted step by step till he won the gold epaulets and became its colonel.

Having no scruples himself, in fact all the instincts of a medieval swashbuckler, it may be imagined how he chafed at being under such a commander as Suchet, who of all the marshals in the Peninsula was about the only one who did not allow systematic pillaging. Of course he could not prevent it altogether, as in the taking of Valencia (though we dragoons were not present at that); but many and many an officer, no matter what his rank was, if the marshal heard of it, received a reprimand that he did not forget for many a day, and this had its due effect.

There was something so perfectly comical in the expression of my commander's features as he spoke of his supposed grievances that I had to busy myself collecting the papers in order to keep my countenance, especially when I thought of seven huge silver-gilt hanging lamps that he was kindly taking care of. He happened to come upon these in a certain monastery in the Sierra Negrete, and he had, with touching irony, told the reverend official that he did not think it safe for them to be there on account of there being so many *guerrillos* about.

From without, wafted on the summer breeze, came the scent of the flowers, and beneath us, in the lovely bay of Valencia, the blue sea sparkled as it lazily lapped the sun-kissed shore; the white houses shone out under the bright Spanish sun, and truly the city never looked more gay and inviting than it did that fine May day.

But all this was nothing to the matter-of-fact colonel, as he sat with a clouded brow, moodily puffing a *cigarrillo* and drinking the cheap wine of the country.

'I expect,' he said, speaking more to himself than to me, 'I shall have a bit of a scene with my little friend Mariquita to-night, but it will be no good her going into hysterics; because, if the little lady comes that game, I'——

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At that moment there was a rap at the door and an orderly appeared.

'*Mon colonel*,' he said, placing a card on the table, 'there is a Spanish gentleman who wishes to see you.'

'The deuce he does,' replied his commander petulantly as he emptied the last of the flask into his glass. '*Que se aguante hasta el Jueves*' ['Let him wait till Thursday'], 'as I am going to breakfast.'

As the door was ajar, and I could hear the visitor outside, I wondered how he would take this rather vulgar phrase, the origin of which I never could learn.

'But he wishes me to say,' continued the man pertinaciously, 'that it is on business that he thinks will interest you very much.'

For a moment the colonel seemed undecided; then, taking up the card, he read out, 'Don Francesco Rodrigo Garcia y Moldena Podarnez.' '*Sacré bleu!* he's got enough names,' he muttered. 'However, show him in.'

The next moment a tall, stout, moon-faced young fellow, with a stately bow, entered the room. Though he had the grave, demure appearance of a Castilian, yet from the twinkle in his small eyes and a certain *bonhomie* in his manner, he might have been an Andalusian.

He had evidently wished to speak to the colonel alone, and he looked uneasily at me. Now, as I was adjutant, of course I had plenty to do on account of our approaching departure; and I was only too anxious to go, and was about to do so, but my chief ordered me to stay.

'You can say, señor,' he remarked, 'all you have to say before Captain Lallesan.'

'You start, I believe, *señor coronel*,' commenced the young fellow, 'to-morrow for France?'

The colonel nodded assent.

'You will probably go by the coast *viâ* Puzol, Palancia, and so on by Castellan de la Plana, and then turn off by Torlosa, Lerida, &c.'

'We may or we may not,' replied the other laconically, eying him suspiciously. The audacious tricks of the *guerrillos* were proverbial, and the first thought that came into our heads was that this man was acting for them.

'But I have given you the best way.'

This was more than my chief could stand.

'And who the deuce are you, señor,' he answered angrily, 'to come here asking me your confounded impertinent questions?'

'Doubtless it may seem strange,' he replied in a humbler manner; 'but, señor, I am in love with the beauteous Rosita Christina Dolores Cardarra. Yes, I am in love, and I have been deeply wronged. You, *señor coronel*,' he added dramatically, placing his hand on his heart, while his upturned eyes beamed with an ecstatic fire—'you may have seen the rosebuds on the convent walls; but what are they to her lips? You may have seen the glistening stars shining o'er yonder bay; but'——

The colonel's rough, swarthy face was a study. Not having a shred of sentiment in his low-born nature himself, he stared at the young fellow in amazement. The rhapsodies of the amorous Spaniard were altogether beyond him, and he simply gave him credit for having had too much *vino blanco*, or for being slightly wrong in the head.

'What, in the name of Satan,' he broke in angrily, 'has all this to do with me?'

'Listen, good sir,' replied the other, 'till I have done. I am in love, I repeat, with the Donna Rosita, and she with me. Her mother died a year ago. Rosita has an only brother, Don Ricardo Cardarra, who went to Peru three years ago to seek his fortune. Shortly before her death his mother received a letter, which we know now was forged, from a *padre* to say that her son was dead.

'Thus all the money would come to the daughter. The old lady's step-brother, who had great influence over her, is the prior of the enormously rich monastery of San Antonio de los Montes in the Pyrenees. He persuaded her on her deathbed that, as the Donna Rosita was so beautiful, so joyous, and so gay, the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil would probably be too strong for her; and that to save her daughter's everlasting soul, after the good lady had paid him for masses to be said over her own soul, the estate should be divided between the monastery and the Convent de los Angelos, where Rosita could become a nun. In spite of the cries and entreaties of my beloved Rosita, her mother, who had passed all reasoning, consented; and her daughter is now in the convent, and in a short time Rosita's lovely tresses will be cut off and her fate sealed.'

'But is there no law in the land?' said the colonel.

'It is only nominal,' replied the other. 'I am not a poor man; but the convent and the monastery are both so enormously rich that I cannot bribe the judges to the same extent.'

'Well, I am very sorry for you,' replied Dolinier, who had listened to the young fellow's tale with more attention than I thought he would have done; 'but if you think I am going to get your inamorata out of that convent you make a mistake. I burnt my fingers two years ago when we were in Francheschi's brigade, *à propos* of a convent; I never passed such a pleasant time in my life as I did when I was in it, but I nearly got degraded, and I won't run the risk again. Still, I don't say but that if old Massena had been in command I wouldn't have a try for a consideration.'

'I am not asking you to get her out,' replied the Spaniard eagerly. 'Listen to what I am going to tell you. The monastery of San Antonio is one of the very richest and oldest in all Spain. There is a Murillo in it that is finer than any in Madrid. There is a Memling triptych in the lady chapel, and two Hubert Van Eycks that Alva, when he returned from the Netherlands, presented to the prior of that time. The monastery is on your direct route, and is only about a day's march from the French

frontier; and all I ask of you is,' he added with a peculiar look in his face, 'that you will pay the prior a visit, and make him give me and Don Ricardo a letter to the mother-superior of the convent where my *fiancée* is, ordering her to set Rosita free.'

This put quite a different light on the matter. We had now left sentiment in the background, and for some time Colonel Dolinier remained in deep thought, weighing the pros and the cons.

'There are not only pictures,' continued the Spaniard; 'but think of the amount of money the monks have got in their treasury, the gold and silver plate, and the vestments! The plate is very famous, a great deal of it being the handiwork of the far-famed Juan de Arphe.'*

Whatever scruples the colonel may have had of risking Suchet's displeasure, this last argument of the wily lover was too strong for him; besides, he knew he would be over the frontier long before it could reach the marshal's knowledge.

'Pass me that map, Lallesan,' he said sharply.

'There you are,' said Podarnez, leaning on the table; 'the monastery is not actually marked, but it is here among the mountains,' and he indicated the exact spot. 'There's the frontier, about ten leagues off.'

'Now, how am I to know, my friend,' remarked the colonel, with his keen eyes fixed upon him, 'that you are not telling me a pack of lies and setting a trap for me?'

The young fellow flushed crimson, and drawing himself up proudly, replied, 'You have the word of a Spanish gentleman; and he would be a brave man to gainsay it when it is given by a Podarnez.'

'*Corriente*' ['All right'], 'that is sufficient,' replied Dolinier, for there was no mistaking the real ring of truth in the young fellow's voice.

'Besides,' said Podarnez, 'I and Ricardo must go with you. We shall be in your power. You can shoot us both if there is any foul play.'

Accordingly it was arranged that on the next day Podarnez and his friend Don Ricardo should be at a certain *posada* two leagues from Valencia, and that we should pretend that they were wanted by the French police authorities, seize them, and take them with us to France. As our intended visit to the monastery was to be kept a strict secret for the present, our taking them prisoners was done not only to put their own countrymen off the scent, but also all the regiment.

Though, of course, I fully sympathised with the young lover's trouble—for I was betrothed myself to Desirée Largemont, a sister of a brother-officer, a lieutenant in my squadron; and had I been robbed of her as he had been, I should doubtless have acted in the same way as he intended to do—at the same time, I was heartily sorry that, without being able to help myself, I should be drawn into an affair that was no business of mine.

The Spaniards have a proverb, '*El mejor lance de los dados, es no jugarlos*' ('The best throw in playing with dice is not to play at all'). My great aim in life was to rise in my profession. I had plenty of money; loot, though I did not despise it, was nothing particular to me; and, therefore, I did not wish to take a hand in the colonel's game, for if Suchet came to hear of it I knew I should suffer. Yet, do what I could, I feared that I should have to take part in it, and this naturally vexed me.

* Of all the Spanish silversmiths the Arphes are the most celebrated. They are the Cellinis of Spain. They really created what is known as cinque-cento work. Juan de Arphes y Villafañe, the grandson, born in 1555, was the most famous of the family. He was made Master of the Mint at Seville by Philip II. He has left behind him many books of design. His chief masterpiece is generally considered to be the Custodia at Valladolid.

THE PASSING OF CAPE CASTLE.

LIVING as we are just now in an atmosphere of wars and rumours of wars, little attention is paid to events of lesser importance which at other times might loom large in the public eye. Thus hardly any notice has been taken of the fact that for the second time during the past few years the historic castle at Capetown has been offered for sale, and this time purchased.

Considering what South Africa has cost us, both in blood and money, this old edifice, so indissolubly bound up with the history of the colony since its earliest days, deserves at least that something should be known of its birth and growth. For years after the Cape was first discovered by Bartholomew Diaz, Table Bay was used as a calling-place for water and live-stock by the Portuguese, Dutch, and English ships engaged in the Eastern Ocean trade, and these made use of a very quaint means of postal communication. Large stones were engraved with the names of the different ships. Outward-bound vessels buried their letters and despatches carefully beneath these, and the homeward-bound ships unearthed the precious news. Probably nobody would have thought of settling in South Africa for many years had not a Dutch ship, the *Haarlem*, been wrecked off the coast in 1648; but when the survivors were picked up shortly afterwards by a passing vessel, they gave such a glowing account of the resources of the land that it was decided to form a settlement there, and Jan van Riebeeck, a surgeon in the service of the Dutch East India Company, was chosen to be the first governor. He landed on 6th April 1652, from three ships carrying his family, a few colonists, a hundred soldiers to form a garrison and help to

erect defences and residences, and a good cargo of building materials and merchandise.

Their first care was to build themselves a stronghold, and the site for the original fort was chosen by Van Riebeeck and his three skippers directly they landed. The walls were of earth, twenty feet thick at the base, tapering to sixteen feet at the top, and twelve feet high. This was ample protection against the natives, but would not have been of much use against a civilised foe, as the walls had an inconvenient way of falling in after heavy rain, although Van Riebeeck wrote of it in 1653: 'We have also fortified ourselves, and are daily continuing to do so, that with the help of God we need not be afraid of the English or any other enemies. . . . We can assure you that they will catch a Tartar, as below the fort we trust to have so many ambuscades along the beach that we shall be able to keep their feet from the land.' In the old records the English are frequently referred to, sometimes as detested foes, at others as most esteemed allies; their ships were constantly calling, and the governor was at last forbidden to show them hospitality, being told that the State did not support the new colony for the benefit of foreigners. Life was too dull, however, without a little social intercourse, and Van Riebeeck excused himself on one occasion by assuring the directors that the beef he had sent aboard an English ship was from unsound cattle!

By 1665 the English were enemies again; and when the colonists heard of the likelihood of war between England and the Netherlands, they came to the conclusion that it was fully time to build a stone fortress in Table Valley capable of resisting invasion by land and sea, and of mounting heavy guns. Plans were sent out from Holland, and the present site was selected, the foundations being marked out with due solemnity by 'our Land Surveyor and Fiscal, Sieur Hendrick Lacus.' The fort was constructed according to the rules of Vauban and Coehoorn, the great designers of fortifications at that time, whose masterpieces at Lille, Valenciennes, and Breda still exist. It was laid out in five points or bastions, two facing the beach and three at the back, with ditches, sally-ports, and other features usual to the time.

Thus very great and unusual activity prevailed at the Cape. Three hundred soldiers were detained from passing ships to quarry stones, and all the wagons in the settlement were engaged in the transportation of building material. Slaves and convicts were sent to Robben Island to gather shells for making lime, while large decked boats were kept busy carrying these and fuel from Hout Bay. Many of the red bricks used in the building were sent out from Holland, and massive teak to beautify the interior was brought from India. On 2nd January 1666 the first four large hewn stones were lowered to the bottom of the trench, and for nearly two hundred and fifty years they have supported the walls of the castle. When they had been laid by the governor, the clergyman, the *secunde*, and the fiscal respectively, the first-named presented six pounds to the master mechanics on behalf of the Dutch East India Company. It was a gala-day for the small colony: the farmers with their wives and families all turned out in their best clothes, tables were spread on the level ground inside the trenches, two oxen and six sheep were roasted, and, with a hundred huge loaves and eight casks of Cape ale, were placed at the disposal of the joyful crowd. In the Netherlands no day of public rejoicing was considered complete without a long and meandering recitation on the subject of the jubilation, and this custom the Dutch kept up in the land of their adoption. There is still preserved among the records of the colony the piece recited on this occasion by the amateur poet who composed it.

In the May of the following year news reached South Africa that the Dutch Admiral De Ruyter was in the Thames; and, believing that nothing further need be feared from the English, the governor gave orders that all work on the castle should be suspended, as it was a useless expense, and he sent the soldiers back to Batavia. Though three hundred men had been employed there for twenty months, only one point had been built, and that not completed. However, the work was resumed in 1672, more woodwork, bricks, and tiles, as well as the workmen, being sent for that purpose from Amsterdam. In two years' time the fort was sufficiently advanced for the garrison to move in, and the old building was pulled down; but the work of completion proceeded very slowly, and in 1677 the governor with his wife and little son and the chief officials and their wives took a share in carrying out earth from the excavations, the governor taking out twelve baskets and his wife six. This led to a quaint rule being made that everybody passing by the castle should contribute labour to the same amount, irrespective of rank or sex. In February 1679 news was received of the conclusion of peace between France and the Netherlands. This was followed by a reduction of the Cape garrison and the release of all labourers at the castle, so it was arranged that the moat—the only important defence still unfinished—should be completed by slave-labour; and two months later the Council of the Cape resolved to name the five points, in honour of the Stadtholder, Oranje, Nassau, Castenellenbogen, Buuren, and Lierdam.

About the time the castle was finished the then governor received instructions that a wapinschaw was to be held annually to keep up the utility of the garrison, so he seized the opportunity of uniting the first review to a sort of house-warming, and all men capable of bearing arms, as well as the soldiers, had to attend. At seven in the morning the drums called out the garrison, who marched outside the fort and were joined by the burghers and another mounted company. Then, divided into companies or 'standards,' they were marched three times round the governor's house, then round the houses behind the castle, after which they returned to their

quarters. The garrison were then treated to a *soopie*, and the freemen, instead of the six dollars allowed them on these auspicious occasions, received half a leaguer of Spanish wine, three hundred pounds of biscuits, and a cask of pork. An English ship was in the bay at the time, and the governor says in his journal that the display 'caused great surprise among our English friends, who had looked on and beheld our fine garrison and the formidable power which we could command should an enemy arrive. After this parade the English captain, his brother, the English ladies, and the officials of the Company were entertained at dinner and treated to a glass of wine.'

No events of any great importance marked the castle's history during the next hundred years or so, until it was occupied by the English—friends no longer; for the first time, in 1796, the British flag being hoisted by Lieutenant Ross of the Scotch Brigade, who further distinguished himself a few days afterwards by eloping with a beautiful and very wealthy Dutch maiden, the wrath and indignation of whose father is better imagined than described. How the Cape was ceded to the Dutch and again taken by our troops in 1806 is a matter of history. Events in Europe at that time were so stirring that the English occupation of South Africa did not meet with the attention it deserved. The battle of Trafalgar had just been fought, the Austrians had capitulated at Ulm, and the French army was entering Vienna. But since three o'clock in the afternoon of 10th January in the year of grace 1806, our flag has floated from the tower of Cape Castle.

It was not until 1819 that the whole building was surrounded by a moat which enclosed also the bank and the magazine for military stores; the last prisoner of any importance confined there was Cetewayo the Zulu king. Of late years it has been used principally as barracks, and the trail of the Tommy is over a large portion of it.

Numberless stories, legends, and superstitions cluster round the old castle. If its stones could only speak, what tales they could tell of all they have witnessed!—the first settlers who used the fort as their base and drove the natives into the interior, the arrival of the French Huguenots after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the punishments and tortures and heart-rending scenes of slavery. The old and carefully preserved records and governors' journals form most fascinating reading. Punishment for the slightest offences were cruelly severe: early in the seventeenth century a volunteer, who told the purser to go to the devil because he had served out penguins instead of pork for rations, was sentenced to a hundred blows from the butt-end of his own musket, and two other men were condemned to three years in chains on Robben Island for stealing a cabbage!

The first Englishwoman to live at the castle was Lady Anne Barnard, author of the famous song, 'Auld Robin Gray,' and afterwards the wife of the secretary to the first English governor; and in her interesting letters to Henry Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville, she gives a vivid account of life and customs in Capetown at that time. She mentions that the rack and gallows still stood opposite the castle, and also describes the first ball she gave when she did the honours for Lord Macartney, whose wife was in England. This ball was a great success; her lamps, for the sake of economy, were lighted with the fat from the tails of the sheep whose saddles her guests were eating at supper. She tells how the English officers flirted with the Dutch girls, and what huge appetites the latter had. The Barnards had a house in the castle; and being determined to have her residence at least as English-looking as possible, Lady Anne set the regimental carpenter to make her easy-chairs and sofas, and the regimental tailor to stuff them. In those days it took three months to reach the Cape, and there were only six thousand Europeans in the town. Admiral Pringle was in command of the squadron, and he pronounced the colony 'the cussedest place ever discovered;' saying also that even the hens did not lay fresh eggs, so vile was every animal in the place. But the admiral suffered from gout, and Lady Anne seems to have thought very differently. Certainly she was one of those charming characters who had the happy faculty of finding pleasure in the simplest things; but still, even at this time there must have been a good deal of enjoyment to be found at the Cape, especially for any one to whom it was all fresh and novel.

The castle itself is well worth a visit at any time. Over the carved gateway at the main entrance are still the arms of the six principal Dutch towns which composed the Company. The arms of Holland, the lion surmounted by a crown, are richly carved on the portico leading to what were the governor's quarters; these and the old dining-hall, a magnificent room, are now, alas! cut up into several small ones and used as clerks' quarters; whilst the beautiful teak doors, most elaborately carved, have been daubed with thick white paint by some vandal. To the left of these are the old black-holes where only condemned prisoners were placed, though many smaller black-holes abound, all of which are now used as store or lumber rooms. The upper floor, now the officers' quarters, cannot be seen without a permit. Here one may revel in queer old Dutch and early Georgian fireplaces. Perhaps there is no more beautiful view in the whole colony than that from the ramparts, especially the Castenellen redoubt, while close by the Buuren bastion is an exquisite little roof-garden, once the favourite haunt of the gentle and charming Lady Anne. The Captain's Tower, from which a sharp lookout used to be kept for the ships of 'perfidious Albion,' is now used for range-finding. The belfry stands on the roof, and is a ramshackle-looking affair; but its appearance is deceptive. Its fine old bell was brought from Amsterdam, and is dated 1697.

What will be the eventual fate of this fascinating old pile, which, according to the amateur poet whose verses were read at its birth, was to 'terrify not only Europeans, but Asians, Americans, and savage Africans'? It deserves at least to be kept intact, even though one may smile somewhat at the aforesaid poet's effusion, the closing lines of which, roughly translated, run:

> Augustus's dominion nor conquering Alexander,
> Nor Cæsar's great genius, has ever had the glory
> To lay a corner-stone at earth's extremest end.

To him and to all those early pioneers who underwent untold hardship and discomfort in a strange land, the building of the pile was the greatest event not only in their lives and their century, but in the history of the whole world.

'THE ISLES OF DESTINY.'

By H. Halyburton Ross.

CHAPTER IV.

THE following morning Christopher was surprised by Norma's abrupt entrance at the very moment when he had been enviously imagining her set forth upon her expedition.

'Madge is in bed with a headache,' she explained, 'and has sent me to find out if you want anything. I could read to you if you like.'

He glanced involuntarily out of the window, at the wide wet stretch of sand, beyond which the sea was shimmering invitingly; then he looked again at Norma. 'I thought I heard you say last night that you were going out,' he said somewhat ungraciously.

'Yes; but I have changed my mind,' she replied with unruffled composure. 'I don't like to leave Madge alone all day when she is ill.'

'And so you have included me among your charities.'

'I don't know what you mean by charities,' a faint additional colour alone betraying her annoyance. 'But if I can be of any use to you?' She was plainly set upon doing her duty.

'You can,' he answered with sudden resolution. 'Would you mind sitting down there and talking to me? I am afraid you don't quite realise what you have let yourself in for,' as she acceded to his request; 'I am a regular tyrant to my nurses.'

She smiled quizzically across at his grim, cantankerous face. The prospect was evidently not alarming enough to disturb her.

'What shall we talk about?' she began. 'The fords? Whenever the Uist people want a subject of conversation they discuss the condition of the fords.'

'A tantalising subject for you to-day, I should think,' he returned, with another glance at the dancing wavelets, 'seeing what you have missed.'

'I shall have quite enough of it after to-morrow,' she remarked with careless certainty.

Her words sent a stab of jealous anger through his heart, reminding him as they did that this was the very last opportunity he would have of claiming her interest. After to-morrow the rôle of outsider he had voluntarily assumed would be thrust upon him of necessity. A sudden desire to work a miracle flashed upon him, to encompass in one interview all the friendliness and intimacy the laggard days had denied him. But how to set about it? As he hesitated, a means suggested itself.

'Miss MacAlan,' he began abruptly, 'why do you never ask me anything about your brother? Has Madge not told you that I knew him in South Africa?'

The next instant he would have done anything to recall the question. Every particle of colour had ebbed from the girl's face, leaving it ashen and sheet-like. She had longed so for this moment, and now that it had come she was unprepared.

'Anything you can tell me,' she stammered at last, bravely striving to master her emotion, 'the smallest trifle'——

But it was Christopher's turn to be silent—shame and horror were contending within him. His unscrupulousness had been justly rewarded, and the very countenance of the dead man seemed to have risen before him—no likeness, but a tangible reality.

'Forgive me,' he cried hoarsely at last. 'I was wrong to broach such a subject—I—I—hardly knew your brother, and'—— he broke off.

Norma's eyes were dewy, her colour had returned in a rush, and the sight of her transfigured beauty completed his repentance.

'You don't know what it means to me to talk to some one who knew him out there,' she said softly, 'or you wouldn't speak like that. I have always hoped that one day you would—would say something, but I had nearly given it up; and—and now'—— she broke off.

Christopher was silent; shame and remorse still tied his tongue.

'Do you know,' the girl went on, that new sweet note of confidence in her voice that seemed to wring his heart, so basely had he deserved it, 'I have never told any one, but I believe they were a little jealous of Neil in the regiment, because, when my father wrote to the Colonel for particulars of—of the battle, he only sent back a very cold letter telling us where Neil had been found, but not a word about his valour or'——

'Courage is taken for granted among soldiers,' said Christopher, hating himself for the coldness of the retort. 'It is only the most conspicuous acts that gain particular notice.'

How brutal the words sounded! How he longed for her sake to be able to pay a tribute, no matter how small, to the dead man's memory! But strive as he might, he could not bring his lips to frame the falsehood.

As he hesitated the proud, troubled look that had grown upon her face while he was speaking faded away, and in a few minutes she was chatting gaily again of some minor matter which she had made the excuse for a change of subject. But long after she had left him Christopher lay and reviled himself for the unnecessary pain he had inflicted upon a woman—any woman.

CHAPTER V.

THERE are some natures that seem especially designed by Providence for utilitarian purposes, to induce an atmosphere of *bonhomie* and good-fellowship into every assemblage, and lend to the most warped and twisted conditions the saving grace of smiles.

Of these was Eric Forsyth, and he had not been at Tanera for more than a day before his influence began to make itself felt.

It is the tragedy of such lives that in diffusing the general they often fail in attaining particular happiness, at least that happiness which finds its fulfilment in the achievement of any specific desire or ambition. But there was no hint of such failure apparent in the present bearing and behaviour of the young Scotsman, and Madge found herself speculating vaguely as to the mysterious source of his influence.

So active a force could have nothing in common with mere good nature, she decided. No; its origin was to be found in the unbounded capacity for reverence—that rarest of all virtues—which distinguished him.

It was, figuratively speaking, with bared head that he watched the development of character in each new acquaintance, and the guileless flattery of his attitude unconsciously appeased and propitiated his fellows.

Even Christopher, who had set out with the determination to be hostile towards him, found himself drawn irresistibly into the circle of the new-comer's friendship, and admitted grudgingly one day that it was less trouble to like than to dislike him.

More wonderful still, he maintained this attitude even in the face of Eric's unblushing monopoly of Norma.

Since their last unfortunate interview he had not had another opportunity of private conversation with the girl. Her whole time had been devoted to her new companionship, and though hating his rival in the abstract, Christopher's jealousy was in some mysterious manner disarmed.

Eric, on his part, was enthusiastic in his admiration for his new friend. 'He ought to have been a duke,' he confided to Norma one day, with a fine burst of extravagance.

'Not a duke—a king,' the girl had corrected, and then paused in some confusion as she met the mild astonishment of her companion's gaze. 'Is he not a Tudor?' she cried, striving to defend herself.

'Christopher Tudor,' repeated Eric thoughtfully, as if struck by some new significance in the name. 'Well, I dare say it would explain a good deal—his boredom, for example, the result of glutted ancestors. But I fear his contemporaries are more responsible after all,' smiling as he spoke. 'There's a great difference between being tired and being hungry, though the symptoms are often pretty much alike;' with which enigmatical conclusion he brought the discussion to an end.

. . . . . .

It was Norma's birthday, and Eric had organised a picnic to the cave of Col in honour of the event.

The way led over a rough moorland road, deeply rutted by the carts of the moss-cutters, and with the native rock starting up every here and there into jagged prominences. But Mac, the sturdy Tanera pony, trundled happily along between the shafts, quite oblivious of the bumps and shakings endured by the party inside the wagonette.

'The cave is only half a mile farther on,' said Eric when, their uneasy pilgrimage accomplished, they had dismounted at the arid stretch of coast-line that marked their destination. 'It's a pity you can't get there, old fellow,' turning to Christopher, who had flung himself down full length upon the sand. 'But I'll take Madge and Norma turn about to see it after luncheon.' He was busy spreading the cloth upon a shelving table of rock out of reach of the tide as he spoke—such duties seeming to fall naturally to his share.

'Why not all go together?' amicably suggested Christopher.

'And leave you to mope among the cormorants. Not very likely,' said Eric, jumping to his feet and standing back to survey the latest effort of his genius, a little cairn of stones with which he had adorned the four corners of the cloth. 'It will take more than an Atlantic zephyr to blow away our frugal meal to-day,' he continued after a moment's complacent inspection.

'And as there isn't a breath of wind, you'd be much better employed in helping Norma to unpack that basket,' said Madge, settling herself down by Christopher's side with a little sigh of contentment. 'We'll leave the hard work to the young people, dear,' she said, laying her hand lightly on his arm. 'You're an invalid and I'm an old woman; so the distribution's quite fair.'

But Christopher answered not a word.

His gaze was fixed abstractedly on the wide

expanse of greenish-gray water before them. A faint haze enveloped the sea, through which the outer islands stood up spectre-like, each with its foam circle of breaking waves.

Overhead innumerable flights of sea-birds wheeled and flocked noisily, making the air plaintive with their sad, incessant cries, the very epitome of the sea's music. It was a day for dreams, a regal day, when all the seasons seem to blend together of their best and fairest in one exhaustive effort after perfection, the finest summer sunshine mellowed by the sad, rich grace of autumn, with just a tang of winter to quicken and vitalise the air.

Who knows what sacred rites are commemorated by nature on such days as these—rites at which we impervious mortals may not even guess?

The alfresco meal passed off gaily, and the memory of it too would doubtless have faded into the limbo of forgetfulness with all concerned but for a dramatic incident that marked its close, and which rendered it, for Christopher at least, one of the most significant episodes of his life.

In the midst of the talking and laughter Eric had suddenly risen, and in a few simple words proposed Norma's health and future prosperity.

No sooner were the words spoken than he realised his mistake. The girl had battled so bravely all day against the cloud of sad reminiscences with which the occasion was necessarily fraught that they had all been deceived.

But now the thought of one who up to this had shared every anniversary with her, and whose absence from henceforth was only to be measured by eternity, seemed to overwhelm her, and for some minutes she was quite unable to respond.

Instinctively each of them realised the cause of her distress, but were powerless to come to her aid. A shadow seemed to have fallen upon the group—the pale, dim shadow of irretrievable loss.

It was Norma herself who, with characteristic forcefulness, tore the sting from the wound.

'Madge—Eric,' she cried, her breath coming in short, quick gasps, her eyes shining, 'will you drink to Neil's memory too? I don't want him to think he's forgotten, and it's the first time,' she broke off.

But Eric's glass was already raised.

'To Neil MacAlan, the bravest of the brave,' he said, draining it as he spoke, his honest face pale yet with remorse for his blunder.

Madge had followed his example; only Christopher hesitated. His eyes, with their expression of unveiled repugnance and disapproval, were fixed upon Norma, but it was not the girl's face he saw. The pallid mask of the coward had arisen before him once again, and his very manhood revolted against the pledge. Then suddenly the vision faded, and his eyes met the tragic, mournful beauty of the girl's face.

A wave of that deep protective pity which is so nearly akin to love swept over him, and the next instant the glass lay empty at his side. . . . The whole episode had not occupied more than ten seconds, but to Christopher it had been like a flash-light upon some hidden place of his soul.

Just now he was too dazed to grasp its full significance. Such realisation would come later. All he was conscious of at present was a burning of the throat from the fiery pledge he had consumed and something of the exultation of the martyr over a pain voluntarily endured.

'It was for her sake,' he said in his heart, as if in apology to all the brave dead whom he had insulted —'for her sake.'

THE FINANCES OF THE VATICAN.

By Salvatore Cortesi.

IT is very difficult to have an exact idea of the real financial condition of the Holy See, not only for outsiders, but for the highest ecclesiastic personages directly connected with the government of the Church. We had a proof of this during the last conclave, when several cardinals complained that the Sacred College had not had in the past, and was not able to have while meeting for the election of the successor of Leo XIII., an even approximate account of the yearly income and expenditure of the Papacy; and added that similar complaints were made by some of the most prominent bishops and archbishops, who would like to represent to the faithful the true position of the head of Catholicism, in order to induce them to contribute in a perhaps more adequate measure to his support.

The Sacred College considers itself as the legitimate successor of the ancient Senate of Rome, deriving this position from a decree of Emperor Constantine, which conferred consulate and patrician rank on all members of this episcopal body.

The discontent of the cardinals reached its climax under Leo XIII., who, being very autocratic, deprived them of all usage of interference in important affairs, and especially in almost all questions connected with money matters, thus removing from the Catholic hierarchy that last trace of a democratic character which theorists have tried to give it, but which does not respond to the origin, essence, and object of the Catholic Church. In fact, according to Romish doctrine, the Pope is the Vicar of Christ on earth, he represents divine authority, he is the intermediary between Heaven and the faithful, he fixes dogma, he is infallible because interpreting divinity, he cannot err; consequently he cannot be subjected to control nor receive advice, as would

befit a democratic chief. It is easily understood that with such a conception of the constitution of the Church, given a man like Leo XIII., who centred all in his own hands, he should not allow any one to become really conversant with the secrets of the pontifical finances, understanding that, as in all modern organisations, the Church, as well as the State, depends chiefly in its action and influence on the money of which it can dispose. The cardinals, however, did not resign themselves to be despoiled of what they consider their prerogatives without resistance and protest, recalling what their rights originally were, when (in their turn) by degrees in the first centuries of Catholicism they deprived the people and the military of the rights they had in the election of the Pope and the administration of the Church. Nicholas II. was the first Pope elected—in Florence in 1059—without any popular intervention, and it was he who published the *magna charta* which established the authority of the Sacred College, and, to soothe the feelings of the Romans, decreed that the Pope should preferably be chosen from among the dignitaries of the Eternal City. Still, no one can affirm that this was carried out, as after the death of Nicholas II. in 1061, sixty-nine years passed before a Roman sat in the Chair of St Peter, in the person of Innocent II.; and altogether, from then to our day, out of the one hundred and two Popes, only sixteen have been Romans, while of the one hundred and fifty-six before Nicholas II. there were ninety; and it is interesting to note that while from St Peter to Nicholas II., in over ten centuries, there had been thirty foreign Popes, in the five centuries which followed there were eighteen, and since then none at all. Hadrian VI. of Utrecht, who reigned a little more than a year, from January 1522 to September 1523, was the last foreign Pope, and was so disliked by the Romans, because of his austerity and closeness with regard to money, that when he died some one wrote on his physician's door, 'You are the Saviour of your Country.'

Since 1870, when, with the formation of United Italy, the temporal power came to an end, the Vatican has had no special body or office responsible for the collection and disbursement of its revenues, nor has it issued any public statement giving even hints as to the amount of funds gathering in its coffers, and the way they are spent. In the budget of 1870, the last compiled by the Pontifical State, the expenditure of the Holy See was put down at one hundred and twenty-nine thousand pounds. The next year, on May 13th, the Italian Parliament voted the famous Law of Guarantees, giving a unique example in history, as it grants to the Pontiff the same rights of royalty as those enjoyed by the King of Italy, and assigns to the Pope a yearly income from the Italian State budget corresponding to the amount of the papal one. The law adds: 'This sum, equal to that inscribed in the Roman budget under the title Sacred Apostolic Palaces, Sacred College, Ecclesiastical Congregations, Secretary of State, and diplomatic body abroad, is understood to provide for the Holy Pontiff and the various ecclesiastical needs of the Holy See, ordinary and extraordinary, maintenance and custody of the Apostolic palaces and dependencies, for the salaries and pensions of the guards and members of the Papal Court, and other occasional expenses; also for the ordinary maintenance and custody of the museums and library, and stipends and pensions of those employed in them.' It was also established that this income should be paid even if the Holy See were vacant for some time, and that it should be exempt from any taxation, and could in no way and for no reason be diminished even if in future the Italian Government should take it upon itself to sustain the expenses of the Vatican museums and library. Besides, the possession was given to the Pope of the Vatican, St John Lateran, Rome, and the Papal Villa at Castelgandolfo, with all the palaces, gardens, and lands appertaining to them, which, however, do not represent an income, but rather an expenditure for keeping them up. The same law entitled the Pontiff to establish within the Vatican his own post-office and telegraph-offices, or to use those of the kingdom without charge, which latter course has been followed, making an average saving which is estimated at five hundred pounds yearly.

Since 1870, however, the expenses of the Vatican, although the papacy has been deprived of its territorial sovereignty, have, as in all States, considerably increased, especially through the more extensive diplomatic representations, it having been a chief point in the policy of Leo XIII. to re-establish relations with all those countries with which they had been allowed to drop under Pius IX. Indeed, Leo XIII.'s plan consisted in making the Church of Rome play a prominent part in international politics through its representatives abroad, whom he succeeded in having accredited to all the leading Powers except two, England in Europe and the United States in America. The expenditure, therefore, grew proportionately, and in certain years more than doubled what it was in 1870, reaching two hundred and eighty thousand pounds. Even at the ascension to the Chair of St. Peter of Pius X. the expenses were considerably higher; and he, curtailing expenditure as much as possible, and being the first to give the good example, has already succeeded in reducing them to two hundred and forty thousand pounds, without substantially changing any of the innovations introduced by the late Pope; as, although people like to depict the present Pontiff in opposition to everything done by Leo XIII., he dislikes exceedingly to have this said, and whenever anything of the kind has been hinted, he has strongly resented it, exclaiming, 'There is nothing we respect and venerate so much as the holy memory of our illustrious predecessor.'

The capital which gives the Pontiff a sure income is, proportionately, very limited. When Pius IX. died it amounted to one million two hundred thousand pounds; but Leo XIII., wishing to augment it, was induced to participate in several risky

financial enterprises, which ended in a severe disaster in 1893, when the Holy See lost four hundred thousand pounds. The former Pontiff, who was rather parsimonious with his money, felt the reverse most keenly, and set himself to repair it by all means in his power; and he succeeded, as ten years after, speaking to a cardinal only a few months before his death, he said that half of the money lost had been recovered. By this, however, he meant that he had succeeded in saving enough from the interest of the eight hundred thousand pounds which was left to him after the failure to bring that capital up to one million pounds. Independently from this, out of the offerings made directly to him in the twenty-five years of his pontificate, he succeeded in putting aside over six hundred thousand pounds, so that, contrary to what is generally believed, he left to his successor more than he had himself received from his predecessor. This is much more remarkable when it is considered that Leo XIII., although he had the reputation of being almost a miser, spent as Pope two million pounds in churches, restorations, and works of art, two hundred and eighty thousand of which went for the apse and repairs in St John Lateran.

Outside the interest coming from the capital which the Church possesses, its chief revenue is obtained by the Peter's Pence, which still represents about one hundred thousand pounds a year, although the time has long passed when for about eight centuries each English family contributed annually one shilling towards this fund, besides an average of twenty thousand pounds coming from the different ecclesiastical congregations for what was paid for briefs, matrimonial dispensations, annulments of marriages, conferment of titles, &c. Still, these three revenues summed up bring in altogether about one hundred and sixty thousand pounds yearly, which, as Pius X. said, after having introduced all possible economies, 'are only sufficient for eight months of the year.' For the other four months the Pope depends upon the direct offerings of the faithful, which, under Leo XIII., as we have seen, were generous enough to allow him to undergo considerable expense and save at the same time six hundred thousand pounds; but no one can say yet how things will go under a new Pope who does not perhaps exercise the same widespread interest and attraction which the late Pope commanded throughout the world.

Pius X., however, is in many small ways more practical than his predecessor, and among his various projects of reform has already launched the idea of forming a species of Ministry of the Treasury, to look after the income and expenditure of the Church according to the most modern systems. At first he thought of calling to the direction of this office the prelates of the Apostolic Chamber, who, together with the Cardinal Chamberlain and the Cardinal Vice-Chamberlain, formed, until 1870, a kind of Ministry of the Treasury of the Church; but afterwards he concluded that the members of the Apostolic Chamber, of late years appointed mainly in order to confer on them honorary positions, are not persons adapted to supervise financial affairs. Also the Pope, who is determined to remove all laymen from the congregations of a spiritual character, is equally desirous not to entrust monetary affairs to ecclesiastics. Following his plan there should be only one general deposit, abolishing all the separate ones which now exist in each congregation and almost in each office.

Out of the finances of the papacy a consideration may finally be drawn regarding the struggle which has now been going on for more than thirty years between Church and State in Italy over the loss of that temporal power, the cessation of which allowed the Pope to present himself to the faithful of Christendom as despoiled, persecuted, and a prisoner, while in reality he is richer, freer, and stronger: freer and stronger because in the full exercise of his spiritual ministry he has never enjoyed so much independence as at present, when he cannot be coerced with threats against his territory, the most eloquent proof of this being the famous *Kulturkampf* in Germany, which country, in other times, would certainly have ended the matter at once by an appeal to arms; richer, because since the Popes have voluntarily shut themselves in the Vatican the offerings of the faithful have reached proportions not dreamed of before. This advantageous economic situation is not the least among the reasons which will prevent the Vatican from coming to an understanding with the Italian Government. A conciliation, besides diminishing to a large extent the present political liberty of the Pope—who would be obliged to keep himself within certain limits with regard to the Italian Government—would certainly be a financial disaster. In fact, peace with Italy would imply the recognition of the Law of Guarantees mentioned above, and the acceptance of the income of one hundred and twenty-nine thousand pounds, which neither Pius IX. nor Leo XIII. nor yet Pius X. have ever touched. This sum would become the yearly allowance on which the Pope would have to depend principally, since, although it is set apart for him as private income, the moment he ceases to be a prisoner and a martyr in the eyes of the faithful, and accepts it, the Peter's Pence will certainly fall off enormously. The poor man who gives his sixpence with difficulty will argue that one who has about ten times as much as the Archbishop of Canterbury will not miss his mite, and will keep it in his own pocket.

THE ALMOND-TREE.

By R. E. FRANCILLON, Author of *A Dog and his Shadow*, &c.

I.

UNDER the tree in the middle of the lawn stood a very little boy. The tree was glorious with pink blossom. The child's face was flushed, his lips were set hard, his eyes were bright with angry tears, and his clothes, much too fine for a small boy in a big garden, showed the rents and stains of prolonged and desperate struggle. Well they might! For the sixth time his arms embraced the stem of the tree; for the sixth time his bare knees pressed its rind; for the sixth time he slid back to earth again without having come within measurable reach of the lowest bough. Some vision of himself triumphantly seated in the midst of the pink bloom had doubtless first tempted him to the adventure; but, after so many failures to achieve it, the original inspiration was clean forgotten. Not any object of victory, but just victory for its own sake, the simple determination not to be beat, was all that remained. He *had* to climb that tree.

He was not too young to have heard of Bruce and the Spider, as well as of Alfred and the Cakes; for his was a generation when even babies found their way into the wise heart of history through the pleasant paths of fable instead of waiting to be driven into some foolish maze of fable through iron gates of history—gates whence critics and pedants have cleared every ivy-leaf away. The seventh time, therefore, was bound to win. Round the smooth and slippery stem went the little bare legs again, and hard against the bark the little rasped knees; up went his hands to the utmost stretch of his arms. Now for a pull! Yes; up went his knees higher yet, and his feet after them, leaving only one of his shoes behind. Truly it was a tremendous pull; surely there could not be a leaf's-breadth between his finger-tips and the nearest bough. One spring, and—down he came for the seventh time.

'Master Lin! Master Lin!' cried a shrill voice from an open window, 'come in to tea!'

Tea! What a summons—and the tree still unclimbed! He could have sobbed; it would have been so proud a thing to be sought for high and low, and at last to have been discovered throned among those pink blossoms, to the wonder of his world. But to be found on common earth instead of half-way to the sky, with nothing to show for a heroic struggle but damaged clothes and knees—it was no feeble fear of a scolding that brought the tears to his eyes; it was disappointed ambition and humiliated pride. Was it too late for success even now? Alas! that shrill voice at the window was the resistless voice of Fate; and for such he knew it, though he would have called it only old Sarah's. Besides, the summons to milk-and-water and bread-and-jam under the title of tea was not, apart from circumstances, an unwelcome sound. So he was man enough to gulp down the sob and hold back the tears while working his foot into its dropped shoe. For a long moment he stood under the blossoms that seemed to mock him with their pinkness, and regarded their distance from the lawn with gravely measuring eyes; and then, before turning away, he slowly gave utterance to a vow of high resolve:

'When I'm old I'll climb into the almond-tree!'

II.

AMONG all who have had any part in our Empire-making, the name of Sir Lionel Galbraith, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., with as many more letters to follow as might set up a printing-office in capitals, has always stood for that of Good Fortune. 'Galbraith's own Luck,' on the lips of his many friends and few foes, came at a very early period of his career to supersede the older phrase.

His persistent good fortune was the more remarkable inasmuch as the odds had been so formidably against him at starting. That desperately unlucky country parson, his father, had left him nothing by way of inheritance beyond an insolvency, the care of an invalid mother, three ungrown-up sisters, an unfinished education, only the average amount of brains, and an unlimited lack of anybody to help him with patronage, interest, cash, or even counsel. Nevertheless, his initial achievement was to astonish an experienced crammer, as well as himself, by coming out at the tail of a competitive examination for Government employment in an exceptionally weak year. The result was his appointment to an obscure, remote, and unhealthy service abroad, where no opportunity for advancement was in the least likely to occur to a young fellow without means, expectations, or influential friends. But then that young fellow happened to be Lionel Galbraith. So there chanced to be trouble with some native chiefs just when his own chief chanced to be down with the native fever. Young Galbraith coped successfully with a situation which called for nothing beyond common pluck and common-sense, but for some reason or no reason happened to lay hold of public attention. The name of Lionel Galbraith, at three-and-twenty, got into the clubs, the House, and the papers in the right way; which meant (in those days) that it had come into the public mind to stay. When, therefore, his chief presently succumbed to the local malaria, from which nobody but Lionel the

Lucky had ever been known to escape scot-free, somebody else obtained unenviable promotion, while the fortunate youth was rewarded with one of the prizes of his career for which, precisely at that moment, and never at any other, nobody else happened to be available.

Thenceforth his record of success had been unbroken. Success is at least as often the parent of merit as merit of success; and his merit nobody ever dreamed of denying. In short, he failed in nothing save in exciting envy; so thoroughly was being passed by Lionel Galbraith in the race part and parcel of the natural order of things that when he distanced a rival he never lost a friend. But it could not have been through mere merit—which is as common a thing as posts for it to fill—that whenever and wherever there was any opportunity for special distinction, there was he always in its way; or that, wherever he was, there the opportunity was notoriously certain to come. The Destinies whose department is the ordering of promotions, retirements, illnesses, superannuations, deaths, and so forth, displayed towards him all the unscrupulous partiality of a mother for a scapegrace son. Even when he blundered they somehow turned the blunder to his credit.

And finally, for the luckiest luck of all, he became the husband of the best wife in the world (except, of course, that one better wife whose name every married man knows). It had been a love-match on both sides, which was luckier still; and it had remained, in middle age, a love-marriage; which is luck's crown. In short, in his career, in his health, in his wealth, in his friends, in his home, in his heart, Sir Lionel Galbraith had won all the success that is open to an honest man or valued by a sane one.

Every schoolboy—at least when Lionel Galbraith was one: things may be different now—had heard of the king whose luck was too complete for mortal man's until Fortune, whom he had come to regard as his handmaid, displayed herself in her true colours as a peremptory and relentless creditor, with a ruinous account for favours conferred. For she has a truly diabolical sense of humour, lifting her victims higher and higher the better to enjoy the depth of their fall. As mortals enjoy a farce, so does she split her sides over a tragedy; and, being her own playwright, there is no limit to the amount of enjoyment she can create for herself and for every other mean and envious soul. Was she but fattening 'Lucky' Lionel Galbraith for her shambles all the while?

III.

ONE pleasant summer afternoon Dr Wilson of Beechworth, Mrs Wilson, and the six young Wilsons—boys and girls from fifteen downwards—were chatting over tea in the drawing-room when a ring at the front door was explained by the entrance of the parlour-maid with two visiting-cards, one large and one small. On the larger was engraved 'Lady Galbraith;' on the smaller, 'Sir Lionel Galbraith, G.C.B.'

'Bless my soul, Madge!' exclaimed the doctor. 'Why, that's Galbraith—*the* Galbraith! What on earth can he be doing at Beechworth? And calling on us—us! What can it mean?' For though he too could write capitals after his name—M.R.C.S., to wit, and more than those—he was not vain enough to dream that they had attracted so very great a man to so very small a town. 'Madge!' But Madge had vanished to make the most of a moment with violet-powder and eau de Cologne. —'Jane, where did you show them? Not into the surgery?'

'Please, sir, they 're a-standin' in the 'all.'

'Great heaven!' Out he ran. And when Mrs Wilson returned to the drawing-room, almost as cool and fresh as if nothing were happening, she found her husband on the best of terms with a pleasant-looking middle-aged pair, with no more sign of the incarnate British Lion and his Lioness about them than any ordinary British couple paying an ordinary British call. She was almost as disappointed as relieved until she thought of the glory of their visiting-cards for ever clean and uppermost in the bowl on the hall-table for all Beechworth to read.

'I'm trying to feel like an impudent intruder, and can't,' Sir Lionel was saying. 'The fact is that to be within twenty miles of Beechworth and not bring my wife to see this house wasn't to be thought of—even if it required burglary. And so'——

'And so,' beamed Mrs Wilson, 'you will further honour us by taking a cup of tea. My children, Lady Galbraith: Henry, Charlotte, Violet'——

'You are welcome—most welcome,' said the doctor heartily. 'But this house—has it any particular interest? We haven't been here very long, and I've never heard.'

'Only the interest that this little fellow here'——

'Vincent,' interpolated Mrs Wilson.

'Will take in it when he is as old as I am and has lived as far away. I was born here—nothing more.'

'*You* were born *here!*' exclaimed the doctor.

'So it happened. This was the old vicarage—I was terribly puzzled by the discovery of a new one—and my father was vicar of Beechworth. I lived the first half-dozen years of my life here. Then I remember a sudden journey, and I never saw Beechworth again till this afternoon. Yet, young as I was, I remember things—little things of course; but then it is just the little things that brand themselves in; there's nothing smaller than the prick of a tattooing needle, but there it stays, a part of the man. The haze that blurs what people call big things! But I could show you the very spot in this room where my poor mother's work-box stood, and give you an exact list of everything inside it.'

'And what *was* inside?' asked a small voice not far from his knee.

'Oh, wonders, secrets: Aladdin's lamp, Bluebeard's key,' he said, with the rather shy laugh of one who has been very nearly talking sentiment to strangers. 'Mrs Wilson, I dare say you won't mind letting your young people show me round some of my old haunts and corners? You see, I 've got to get back to about this little fellow's'——

'Vincent's'——

'Vincent's age, and I shall want a proper guide. —Let me see: are there still dragons in the shrubbery behind the water-butt, eh?'

'No,' said Vincent. 'But there 's lots of snails.'

'Civilisation all over, eh, Bess?' asked the Empire-maker of his wife: 'exit the wild and harmless dragon; enter the mild and destructive snail.—Well, we 'll visit the water-butt; and I 'll lead the way.'

That he was quite able to grow back towards Vincent's age was presently evident. The children forgot to be shy; and if Mrs Wilson kept a skeleton in any of her cupboards she must have been trembling, so completely was every nook explored in search of the little adventures of the great man when he was small. Thus, in due course, they reached the garden. To what an immense expanse of hill and dale, to what Saharas of gravel and savannahs of turf, to what boundlessness of flower-land and forest, had the old vicarage garden spread out in his memory; and into what a poor, shrunken caricature of his childhood's wonderland did he now step through the bow-window! Well, everybody knows how the shrinkage of illusion feels. 'I suppose you big boys,' said he, 'know how to climb? Now, I wonder which will be astride of a branch the first of us three—Henry, or Richard, or I?'

And before anybody could answer, he, the great Sir Lionel Galbraith, G.C.B., had pulled one arm out of his frock-coat and was pulling out the other. He was smiling; but his face was flushed and his smile a little strange.

'My dear, what *are* you going to do?' asked Lady Galbraith, who until now had thought that she knew him well.

'Oh—only—only, my dear—— But—hulloa!—surely—surely there used to be a tree—an almond-tree—in the middle of the lawn?'

'Oh yes,' came in answering chorus. 'There used to be; but it was in the way of the tennis, and so'——

'Ah! By Jove, Bess! do you know how late it is? We shall have to hurry if we mean to catch the train. Good-bye—very many thanks—don't trouble—I know the way quite well.'

A very different person was the rather stiff and stern Sir Lionel who took such abrupt and hurried leave from the genial playmate of five minutes ago.

. . . . . .

'Bess dear,' said he during the short-cut to the railway station through the fields, 'people call me a successful man.'

'Of course they do, and they call you better than that!' said his wife with wifely pride.

'Well, I 'm nothing of the kind. You can't call a man successful who has failed to do the only thing that in all his life he ever tried to do with all his strength and all his will. And I am that man.'

'Lin! Why, there 's nothing worth doing that you haven't done.'

'Say there 's nothing worth getting that I haven't got. That would be true. I have *you*. But we never even made-believe that you were hard for me to win, did we? And as for all the other things—well, they just came of themselves. The only thing I ever set myself to do with all my strength and all my will was to climb into an almond-tree.'

'Into an—almond-tree?'

'Don't look so frightened! I was only a baby—about the age of the smallest of those Wilson boys. I couldn't climb it; but I vowed I would some day! The very next morning we left Beechworth for good. But I never forgot that vow! I've dreamed of that almond-tree and its pink blossoms in India, Persia, China—all over the world; it has given a sort of unity to my life; I've always had a feeling as if every step I rose in life was a step nearer to that almond-tree. To-day, Bess, was to have been my triumph: "When I 'm old I 'll climb into the almond-tree!" And now I shall *never* climb into the almond-tree. No,' he added with a smile, 'not even if I should live to be young!'

Even so was the long and heavy debt to Fortune paid in full.

ROBERT NAPIER: A PIONEER STEAMSHIP BUILDER.

THE river Clyde has justly been designated the birthplace of European steam navigation, and it stands first in the United Kingdom as a shipbuilding centre. The happy idea of the separate condenser for the steam-engine came to James Watt as he was crossing Glasgow Green one Sunday afternoon. Henry Bell, profiting by William Symington's successful experiments with the *Charlotte Dundas* in the Forth and Clyde Canal in 1801 and 1803, launched his *Comet*, a steamer of twenty-five tons burden, to ply between Glasgow, Greenock, and Helensburgh. This was in 1812, and next year there were three fast steamers plying on the Clyde. One of them was the steamer *Argyle*, afterwards named the *Thames*, which was

taken round from the Clyde to London in May 1815 by Captain Dodd, as related in the article 'Progress of Steam Navigation' in May *Chambers's Journal*. This was practically the first voyage of a steamboat on the open sea. Glasgow had thus steamer communication with the coast for two or three summers before the great Metropolis and before the *Thames* arrived in London in this otherwise memorable Waterloo year. It was natural that alert engineers and boatbuilders on the Clyde should adapt themselves to the new conditions, and shape them not a little. Not only is the Clyde now first in shipbuilding output for the United Kingdom, but it is calculated that some thirty million pounds sterling are sunk in the industry, and an army of twenty-five thousand men find employment in the shipbuilding yards and marine-engineers' shops. Between 1810 and 1903 the Clyde Trustees have spent over seven million pounds sterling in deepening and transforming the Clyde, so that in less than a hundred years it has become a mart of world-wide commerce. All this has reacted on the iron, steel, and coal industries in the West of Scotland and on the population of over seven hundred thousand.

There are several memorials to Henry Bell on the Clyde, one of the most interesting and characteristic being a life-size figure placed over his grave in Row Churchyard, on the Gareloch. In the same churchyard there is a memorial by Henry Bell to Captain Robert Bain of the *Comet*, who first took a steamer through the Caledonian Canal. The life-size seated figure of Henry Bell, which is said to be a characteristic likeness, was erected by Robert Napier of Shandon, the pioneer steamship-builder on the Clyde. His career might have pleasantly engaged the pen of the late Dr Smiles. The story of how the Dumbarton blacksmith helped to establish the great Clyde shipbuilding industry has just been told in the *Life of Robert Napier of West Shandon*, by James Napier (W. Blackwood & Sons). How he won fame as an engineer from the smallest beginnings, broke down the prejudice against Scottish engineers, advised and built for the Admiralty their first iron ships, and, besides, built the early Cunarders and aided in the inception of the company, are all here told with an entire absence of exaggeration. Including the first Cunarders, his firm executed four hundred separate contracts, and supplied machinery and warships for the Danish, Dutch, French, Japanese, Russian, and Turkish Governments. He also executed over sixty contracts for the British Admiralty, which now spends about four million pounds sterling annually on the Clyde.

Another noticeable result from Napier's career has been that the majority of the present leading engineering firms on the Clyde were founded by men trained under him. Among these are the Fairfield Shipbuilding Company, Messrs Denny of Dumbarton, Messrs John Brown & Co., Messrs W. Beardmore & Co., The London and Glasgow Shipbuilding Company, Messrs D. & W. Henderson & Co., Messrs Aitken & Mansel, Messrs Dunsmuir & Jackson, Messrs G. L. Watson & Co., and Messrs Napier, Shanks, & Bell. That the Clyde still holds its own is evident from the order recently given for the boilers needed for battleships and cruisers by the United States Government.

'Deeds, not Words,' was the very practical motto of Robert Napier, who is described as being 'as fine a fellow as ever lived.' Both Robert Napier's father and grandfather were blacksmiths. When Robert, the second of six sons, was born, 18th June 1791, his father, a master-blacksmith at Dumbarton, had a small foundry and two steam-engines, so that, as he said, he was born with a hammer in his hand. After a plain but sound education, he entered as apprentice, at fourteen, in his father's workshop, and finished his term in 1812, the same year that Henry Bell made his experiment with the *Comet*, the first Clyde steamer. Napier had the reputation of being a first-rate workman, especially in ornamental smith-work. His spare moments were profitably employed in making small tools and drawing instruments; while drawing, of great importance later, was not neglected. After a year of discouraging experience in Edinburgh, he was back in Glasgow in 1814, working with William Laing and Sons in the Old Wynd. An uncle, John Napier, engaged in his own line, may have helped to draw him towards that centre. He had no desire to remain a mere workman all his life, however, so with fifty pounds sterling borrowed from his father he bought the tools and goodwill of a small smith's shop in Greyfriars' Wynd, and began business there in May 1815. Sir William Fairbairn of Manchester made a like humble start. The sign, 'Robert Napier, Engineer and Blacksmith,' drew business, and those who employed him were satisfied with the thoroughness of his workmanship. As a means of promoting trade interests he joined the Incorporation of Hammermen, his 'essay' hammer being forged out of a piece of square bar-iron and steeled on both ends at only three successive heats in the fire, a proof that he was a skilful workman. Three years after starting in business he was happily married to his cousin, Isabella Napier. No doubt Robert Napier's mind would be drawn towards the coming problem of marine-engineering by the fact that his brother-in-law, David Napier, made part of the machinery of the *Comet*, and was endeavouring to work out the problems of deep-sea navigation. He had a foundry at Camlachie, and had the courage and originality to fine the bows of vessels, as being better for a sea-passage. He built the steamer *Rob Roy* (1818), and with her regular steam connection was begun between Greenock and Belfast. As the biographer remarks, 'he thus established oversea communication; and the blue books of the House of Commons record the fact that the vessels built by David Napier were the first to demonstrate the practicability of navigating the open sea by steamer.'

David Napier also built the engines of the *United Kingdom*, the first of the big steamers which left the Clyde, 28th July 1826, with one hundred and fifty passengers on board, and sailed round the north of Scotland to Leith in sixty-five hours. His *Eclipse* (1826), of which he was owner, is described as the most complete vessel of her size ever built on the Clyde. Brilliant and fertile in ideas, he introduced many improvements into steamers—surface-condensers, steeple engines, feathering paddles, and also made a floating battery, a breech-loading gun, and a steam-carriage. Robert's work was of a more solid character; and after the explosion on board the *Earl Grey* at Greenock, David Napier removed to London, where he died in 1869, in the eightieth year of his age. The foundry at Camlachie had been leased to his cousin Robert in 1821; later he also took the works at Lancefield. There he had a good works-manager, David Elder, who was with him for forty years. Robert Napier's reputation increased; he invariably turned out good work, with accurate finish, and one of his early engines, for the *Leven* (1823), wore out the hulls of three vessels. By 1827 his reputation was made, and in 1830 he was the most prominent marine-engineer in Glasgow, and 'almost no steamboat line was now started without consulting Napier.' Both Camlachie foundry and Lancefield were eventually purchased by him, and he took off ground in Washington Street as his business developed. Napier spared no pains to secure success, although it took some years yet to convince the Admiralty and English capitalists that really first-class work could be done on the Clyde. A steam-yacht, the *Clarence*, which Napier had built, won a yacht-race, and drew the attention of Mr Assheton Smith to the Clyde shipbuilder and engineer. As a result Mr Smith gave him an order for a steam-yacht at twenty thousand pounds sterling, and was so pleased with the *Menai*, delivered in 1830, that he continued to order fresh yachts until nearly eighty years of age. Mr Smith never liked the screw, and stuck to the paddle-steamer. Fruitful contracts were those also made with the Dundee, Perth, and London Shipping Company, and with the East India Company, for whom he built the *Bernice* at a cost of thirty thousand pounds sterling, and the connection continued till his death. A brother, James Napier, joined the firm in 1841, and supervised the commercial affairs. He was inventor of the tubular boiler and of a patent steam-carriage.

When consulted in 1833 by Mr Patrick Wallace of London regarding steam-vessels to ply between London and New York, Robert Napier wrote a letter in which he made a remarkable forecast regarding what was coming in steam navigation. He said: 'If they enter upon it with a determination to meet opposition and difficulties spiritedly, and to overcome them, then I have not the smallest doubt upon my own mind but that in a very short time it will be the best and most lucrative business in the country.' Robert Napier was destined to have a hand in the inception of steam Atlantic navigation on a large scale. When Mr Samuel Cunard secured the contract for the conveyance of the North American mails to England he came to London, and was introduced by Mr Melville, secretary of the East India Company, to Napier, with the advice to leave the matter in his hands. The interview was satisfactory to both parties, and was followed by an order for several of the first Cunarders. The practical sagacity of Napier, and his experience, led him to suggest enlargement of the vessels from the first specification; and so the *Acadia*, *Britannia*, *Caledonia*, and *Columbia* had their birthplace on the Clyde. Napier was no less useful in securing such men as George Burns of Glasgow (who became agent there for the company) and David M'Iver of Liverpool to invest capital in the Cunard Company. Thus the two hundred and seventy thousand pounds sterling required were soon subscribed. 'It was the confidence reposed in Robert Napier, in the man and his work,' says his biographer, 'that secured most of the capital money, and it was provided always that the company set out right at first by having first-class vessels fully suited for the trade in every department.' The company wished fast-sailing vessels as well as good ones, and they secured them, so that, 'by those possessed of the requisite knowledge, Napier's energy, organising skill, and engineering ability have been cordially recognised as the foundation from which the Cunard Company took its beginning.' In 1841 Napier began in his new works at Govan iron shipbuilding, in which his brothers had been pioneers, selecting as his manager his friend William Denny of Dumbarton, who had the reputation of being one of the best ship-designers of the time. In 1843 he built and engined three iron steamers for the British Navy. The *Erebus* for the Black Sea (1856) was the first armour-plated vessel built in this country. In 1856, on the launch of the *Persia*, the first Atlantic greyhound, it was said that 'Mr Napier had built forty large vessels for the [Cunard] Company, and there never had been a fault or mistake in the carrying out of one of them.'

By the middle of last century Napier was at the height of his greatness and fame. At sixty his two sons James and John, and his son-in-law Mr Rigby, joined the firm; at seventy he struck out a new line and made battleships a feature of his business, and built the *Black Prince*, launched in 1861. Sir Donald Currie's first Cape steamers were built by Napier, who was elected President of the Institute of the Mechanical Engineers in 1864. After a life of such fruitful and successful industry, Napier died 23rd June 1876, in his eighty-sixth year, and is buried at his native Dumbarton. His biographer may well say that Robert Napier had a wonderful career, and was the architect of his own fortune. He grasped the situation when steam navigation was in its infancy, and 'by superlatively good work he overcame the prejudices against Scottish contractors, and through his efforts Glasgow became the centre

of the shipbuilding of the world.' If Robert Napier had been asked what were the leading factors in his success, probably he might have said industry, civility, and superlatively good work. He was a man of active, industrious habits; and his biographer thinks his success lay less in initiation than in selecting the inventions of others, and by patience and industry adapting them to requirements and bringing the result to perfection. As he said to Cunard in his famous early contract, 'Every solid and known improvement that I am acquainted with shall be adopted by me.' To this principle he adhered in every contract.

The great shipbuilder has left another memorial of his success on the Clyde. Every visitor to the Gareloch must notice, as Lord John Russell did at once, and be interested in, that handsome pile of buildings on its north shore at Shandon, which was completed in 1852 as a country residence for Robert Napier. Now, somewhat altered and added to, Shandon has a great reputation as a Hydropathic. The region is characterised by great beauty of hill and wood and water. The winter climate is mild, and a former parish minister of Row mentions that he has seen the wild primrose in flower in January, and the *Rhododendron ponticum* matures its seeds from which the young plants spring up without shelter or care. Across the Gareloch on the point opposite is Roseneath, beloved by artists, with a residence of the Duke of Argyll, while the inn sign and other details there owe something to the artistic taste of the Princess Louise. Mrs Oliphant has a memorial to a daughter in Roseneath Church, while the Rev. Principal Story has memorialised his father's ministry here by an interesting record, which gives a picture of the place in the first half of last century. The founder of the useful Andersonian Institute in Glasgow was a son of the manse here; and Dugald Stewart's father was minister here before he was called to be professor in Edinburgh University. Carlyle has left a picture of his impressions of this region in his *Reminiscences*. The Row controversy is now as silent as the grave of the Rev. John MacLeod Campbell, who, cast out of the Church of Scotland in 1831, now sleeps within the area of the ruins of the old church at Roseneath, near which a fine yew avenue and two monster silver firs, 'Adam and Eve,' interest the visitor. Scott brings Jeanie Deans thither at the close of the *Heart of Midlothian*, although his description of Roseneath is less convincing than of other scenes in some of his novels. Two monographs have been written by W. C. Maughan, one on Roseneath and the other on Garelochside. Robert Napier had his residence at Shandon built of fine white sandstone from Bishopbriggs. The woodwork was partly executed by workmen from the Govan shipbuilding yard, and the plans were by a professional man, but so altered by the shipbuilder that he may be said to have been his own architect. Like Scott's 'romance of stone and lime' at Abbotsford, in plan it is an 'extreme case of intentional irregularity.' Here Napier exercised a boundless hospitality, and took part in entertaining the British Association on its visit to Glasgow in 1855, when he placed the steamer *Vulcan* at the disposal of members. Almost every person of note, when in the West, visited Shandon, and here Princess Louise made an early call after her marriage to the Marquis of Lorne, now Duke of Argyll. The picturesque West Highland Railway has a station on the hillside behind Shandon, which has such pleasant memories for many as a health-resort.

The old business of R. Napier & Sons has lost its identity under other names (Mr Henry M. Napier, of the shipbuilding firm of Messrs Napier & Miller, Yoker, is a son); but it would have gratified the great engineer and shipbuilder had he lived to see the continued progress of the industry to which he gave such an impetus on the Clyde, and to know that his old friends the Dennys had assisted in bringing to birth so many turbine steamers at his native Dumbarton. Captain James Williamson has further prepared a book on the *Rise and Progress of the Clyde Passenger Steamer during the Nineteenth Century*, so that the subject continues to receive attention.

THE DREAMLAND SHIP.

When the lamps are lit in the silver skies,
And mother says, 'Time for bed,'
When you softly close your drowsy eyes,
And the last 'Good-night' is said,
There's a tale I know of a wondrous trip
You take o'er the ocean deep,
When you sail away in the Dreamland Ship
Through the fairy Realms of Sleep!

The Dreamland Ship is the sweetest craft
The bairnies ever have seen,
Her cabins are loaded afore and aft
With sugar-plums fit for a queen;
The captain is made, so I've heard them state,
Of coco-nut creams and spice,
There's a butter-scotch bo's'in, a gingerbread mate,
And a crew of real chocolate mice.

The masts and rudder are peppermint rock
Just seasoned to every one's taste,
And down in the hold there's a secret stock
Of toffee and almond-paste;
You may gather the dates and candied peel
That grow on the decks all round,
But you must not speak to the mouse at the wheel
Or the vessel might run aground!

So close your eyes, and the breeze will blow,
And you'll hear the captain's call;
He loves the bairnies so well, you know,
There's no room for 'grown-ups' at all;
And when you have sailed round the world to-night,
And the wonderful voyage is o'er,
Please drop your anchor at morning light
In the Harbour of Home once more!

MARY FARRAH.

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SIXTH SERIES.

ABEOKUTA.

By a Resident.

BEHIND Lagos, head of the colony of that name, about fifty miles to the north, lies the town of Abeokuta, with its hundred thousand inhabitants, the capital of the Egba people. The Egbas are a branch of the Yorubas, and are perhaps the most advanced of that people. They have been in constant contact with the European race longer than any other of the Yorubas; and they have shown their admiration for European customs in the sincerest way, that of imitation. Abeokuta is the seat of government for the Egbas, and now boasts a national flag, and a council of government whose formal head is the Alake, recently a visitor to this country. The town is made up of many separate townships or districts, each under its own chief, at one time bitterly jealous of each other; but strife and faction have given way to more or less substantial unity, and the government of the whole town is now vested in the council composed of the various chiefs. His Britannic Majesty's representative is a member of this council, and keeps a paternal eye upon all its doings.

The town has a history. Its name means 'Under the Rock,' and all visitors are impressed by the wonderful rocky scenery of the district. The town lies grouped about great masses of boulders, which rise abruptly from the plain here and there to a height of two or three hundred feet. Many years ago, a large grotto or cave beneath the largest of these rocks was the home of a band of robbers much dreaded by the people of the district. About a hundred years ago a wave of civil war swept over the country; and after its cessation these robbers withdrew from the cave, which then became the home of a few refugees from the various towns that were destroyed.

Gradually this settlement was increased by the arrival of other refugees and in other ways, till at length a considerable population was gathered together, the town being then fortified by a wall and a deep ditch. The people of the neighbouring towns did their best to destroy Abeokuta, making raids upon it and selling the inhabitants as slaves, until a skilful leader arose, who united the Abeokuta people and drove off the invaders. It was through the energy of this man that a road for commerce was opened up to Lagos, the sole port for the Yoruba country. He conquered the kingdom that lay between him and the coast, and so made it possible for his people to use the river Ogun, on whose banks the town stands, as a safe waterway to the coast. The canoe traffic on the river Ogun was once large and important, but since the railway has been opened the river has been comparatively little used.

About this time a number of Egbas who had been sold as slaves, and rescued by British cruisers, returned from Sierra Leone, where they had learned something of civilisation and something, too, of Christianity. These, as was only natural, gave a bright account of the English who had been their rescuers, and so disposed the mind of Shodeke, the leader mentioned above, and his followers, to the English people, that invitations were sent to missionaries to come and settle there. This invitation was accepted, and an English mission was opened in 1846.

Three years later the town was again engaged in war, the aggressors in this case being the Dahomans, who are perhaps best known as the people whose army was singular in having a large proportion of women-soldiers. Their country lies to the east of the Ogun, and is now in French territory, and most efficiently controlled.

The force that marched across from Dahomey was sixteen thousand strong, some six thousand of the warriors being women. So fiercely did they fight and so much terror did they spread that even now the name of the Dahomans is almost enough to create a panic. However, on this occasion a determined resistance was made, and the King of Dahomey, instead of getting the easy victory and rich plunder he expected, was met by a force equal to his own, which compelled him to

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retreat after a terrific fight, in which he lost over a thousand warriors. It is said that the fight lasted four hours, and that the smoke from the guns was so thick that even at the distance of a hundred yards the opposing armies were scarcely visible to each other. At times the fight raged hand-to-hand, and one account says that the combatants even broke their empty guns over each other's heads.

The Dahomans, though forced to retreat on that occasion, continued a menace to the town for years, and in 1862 made another determined attempt to capture it by means of a carefully planned and vigorously maintained siege. It was a terrible time. Every man who could hold a weapon was at the walls, any able-bodied man found in the streets meeting with execrations from the women, and sometimes with blows as well. The assault was continually expected but unaccountably delayed, though parties were always abroad reconnoitring the defences and capturing any stragglers or scouts who had ventured to leave the town. The method of scouting employed by the Dahomans was clever and effective. Parties crept through the bush in single file, and when trying to effect a capture would spread out so as to enclose the unfortunate straggler in a diamond-shaped enclosure. At a given signal they would close in, and it was rare that the victim escaped. There are a few old people in the town to-day who remember those days. The Dahoman king had announced that any white men he found in the town would be made his hammock-bearers, an announcement not calculated to calm the nerves. The siege had one or two amusing incidents. A white man in the town who possessed what was, for the time, a fine glass, made himself of service to the defenders by spying out the lines of Dahoman scouts in the distance, and also by reporting the doings in the distant camp. However, an old chief of the town, a great horseman, conceived a particular hatred for this white man, and was loud in his assertions that 'the white man was a liar.' On one occasion he determined to prove it by riding out in the direction in which it was reported scouts were prowling about. He had a triumphal exit from the town, but returned a little later minus his horse, with his respect for the white man heightened considerably, and a wiser though a sorer man.

Fortunately for the Egbas, the siege was unexpectedly and suddenly raised, smallpox having broken out in the Dahoman camp, the king's son being the first victim. This was enough for a people so superstitious, and they hastened to leave what novelists call the ill-omened spot. All danger of another similar siege has been obviated by the French occupation of Dahomey; and though at first the Dahomans were dealt with in stern and seemingly remorseless fashion by their conquerors, the lesson has been learnt, and they have settled down into quiet and peaceful occupiers of the country.

The memory of the Dahomans is even yet a terror, for they fought with great fury. At one of the town gates to-day there lies an old brass cannon which the writer found on inquiry to have been taken from the Dahomans. An eye-witness of the siege tells of one incident that illustrates the fury of these Amazon fighters. One had been taken prisoner and was brought into a room where a number of men were together. While they were debating her fate, her eye caught sight of a musket standing in a corner, and, breaking away from those who held her, she snatched up the weapon and shot a man dead on the spot, and so was immediately shot down. We may be thankful that we have not now to encounter an enemy so relentless and fierce.

Since those days, however, the colony of Lagos has spread, and British influence has grown, and consequently peace has generally prevailed. While other towns have vanished into the maw of the British Empire, Abeokuta has been allowed to retain its independence to a certain degree, although a British commissioner lives in the town and has a seat in the council. Trade in foreign goods has increased, and two Manchester firms and one German firm have stores just inside the town. The walls are broken down, though in many places the ditch remains, and gives some idea of the former strength of the place, which must have been great in the days before artillery came into general use. The railway serves Abeokuta now, although it does not come right into the town. Aro, an important station of the Lagos Government Railway, lies about three miles from Ake, across the river, where the king's palace is situated, and a branch line runs from Aro, across a particularly fine steel bridge over the river Ogun, to the small station just outside one of the town gates, rather nearer to the palace.

There is some talk, though it has never been more than talk, of a light tramway to connect the township of Ake with the railway.

The town is a great mart for the various produce of the country. Palm-oil, palm-kernels, and cotton are brought through continually. The Cotton Growing Association is established here, and is doing a useful work for the trade of the country. There is no doubt that excellent cotton can be grown here, and that it will become a staple of the country if the cultivation of it is encouraged and a good market found for it.

The climate is treacherous, as is the case all along the coast. The heat is great, and makes the place trying to Europeans. Still, it is fairly dry, and one who is accustomed to it gets to dread the moisture of Lagos town more than the heat that is so constant here.

Missions are well represented. The Church Missionary Society has many churches and schools, and the Wesleyans and Baptists are here too. Perhaps the finest buildings are those of the Roman Catholic Mission.

The town is becoming more and more Anglicised. English is spoken largely, and is taught in all the

schools, which, by the way, are all under the management of the various churches, receiving small grants from the Egba Government.

What will be the future of the town? It is uncertain. If its government can control it effectively, no doubt it will remain the head of a dependent state; but if, as has already happened more than once, discontent has been aroused, and the help of the British troops at Lagos has to be called in to uphold the Egba Government, probably it will pass into British hands.

As to whether that would be a good thing for the town, opinion is much divided. Meanwhile, those who live longest will see most.

'THE ISLES OF DESTINY.'

CHAPTER VI.

AFTER luncheon Eric, faithful to his promise, led Madge away to visit the cave, leaving the other two alone together. For a long while neither spoke, though their silence was attributable to different causes.

Christopher's tongue was paralysed by fear of what he might say did he once allow himself to launch forth into explanation. How could he venture to offer excuses for his conduct without betraying the one and only true motive that was able to redeem it? His hesitancy to pledge a fallen comrade must under any circumstances have appeared brutal and ungenerous, in this case especially so, and yet had he not more than warrant enough for having refused the toast altogether if Norma but knew it.

An almost savage desire to share his secret with her took possession of him.

Why should she be allowed to nourish this delusion—to sully even in imagination the roll-call of the true and the brave by including amongst their number one so base, so unworthy.

But the next moment shame for the impulse overcame him, and he was filled again with that vague half-comprehended satisfaction he had formerly experienced in enduring for her sake.

As for Norma, her silence was due more to a stupid lack of words consequent upon her previous emotion than to any other cause. Like the rest of the party, she had regarded Christopher's hesitancy as a natural result of the experiences he had been through, and there was far more of sympathy than reproach for him in her thoughts.

At last, when the game of dumb cross-purposes had continued between them for some time, Christopher suddenly broke the silence by inquiring in a tone which he strove to make ordinary the nature of his companion's thoughts.

'Do you really want to know?' she asked, half turning towards him.

'I assure you it is my highest ambition,' he replied earnestly.

'Well, then, I was thinking of the heart and the mind and the soul of the sea,' she averred with slow deliberateness, 'and longing for some of its wisdom.'

Christopher sneered to cover his relief—the veiled truth in her generalisation had escaped him.

'Its wisdom is the wisdom of rapacity,' he said. 'To seize and to hold, that is its creed, and it has the strength to match—the strength that some of us want so badly.'

As if in illustration of his words, a line of creamy foam broke at this moment over the rocks at their feet—the first playful overture of the tide.

Norma uttered a little half-nervous laugh.

'See, it has commenced its claim,' she said. 'The very land is subject to it; and we who dwell in its midst are subject to it too. Can you wonder that for us it is a living thing?' she continued in a tone of dreamy abstraction. 'All the cares and turmoil of its moods are traced upon the faces of our people. They cannot escape it if they would. Loving or hating, their destiny is to be bondsmen of the great deep.'

'I know one person it has never mastered,' said Christopher, his voice full of quiet meaning.

She did not affect to misunderstand him.

'You are right,' she said with a little sigh; 'but then I have a sort of quicksilver in my blood that rebels against any restraint. There is so much to love and laugh at in the world, and sorrow only intensifies feeling. It is not that I don't feel,' turning to him, her voice grown passionate and remorseful all at once; 'it is that I feel more than I did a year ago.'

For a few moments Christopher was too taken aback by her confession to make any reply. That she should have thought it necessary to apologise to him for that joyousness of spirit which from the first had filled him with a kind of bleak envy was almost incredible, and an odd mingling of constraint and humiliation tied his tongue.

'Thank the gods for your sentient soul, child,' he ejaculated at last. 'Nothing else they can give you is of any value without it.'

'Miss MacAlan,' he added a moment later in an altered tone, 'I want you to promise me something.'

'Yes,' said Norma; 'what is it?'

'I want you to take me over to Barra some day to see your home, to be able to remember you in it when I have gone. I don't suppose I shall ever come to the islands again.'

'Oh, why not?' she cried, taken off her guard; then added quickly, 'But I needn't ask; of course I understand you have been dull and bored here.'

'Dulness doesn't express it,' he interrupted her with a short laugh. 'It has been the happiest and

unhappiest month of my life. But,' reverting to his former tone, 'that is not answering my question.' A faint colour had suffused her face; she had barely time to express her consent before Eric's voice broke in upon their *tête-à-tête*.

'We came back another way. Are you ready, Norma? The cave is full of ghosts and hobgoblins howling to be loosed, so prepare for the worst.'

'It is only the sea,' said Madge, laying her hand reassuringly on the girl's arm as she passed and kissing her.

There was a grave significance in the action which did not escape Christopher's observant eyes.

'I suppose it will be all settled by the time they come back,' he said when he and Madge were alone again.

'I hope so,' was her quiet answer. 'Eric deserves her, and I could wish no greater happiness for Norma than to be his wife.'

She watched him narrowly as she spoke. Were her newly formed suspicions correct, she wondered; and if so, what must his feelings be? These three young people were all so dear to her; but Christopher was nearest to her heart, and she longed for his happiness above all things. Yet, truly as she desired it, her sense of justice warned her that it was best for the other two that Christopher should be the one left out.

Poor Christopher! Fortune had made game of him so persistently, and she had always hoped that in the matter of his love at least he would be blessed; and now, if she were not very much mistaken, his love affair was going to turn out the most tragic and disastrous episode of his life.

There was a pause.

'The sooner I make myself scarce the better,' he began at last, in the disagreeably flippant tone Madge knew so well. 'Engaged couples always get on my nerves.'

'There will be no fear of that,' she replied tranquilly. 'Eric had a letter from his father this morning, and has to go home to-morrow on business. But he always intended to speak to Norma to-day, being her birthday.'

'Surprising amount of method in his madness, drawled Christopher. 'I suppose he has it all rehearsed from the beginning—how many paces along the shore he will commence his declaration, and goodness knows what besides,' flinging a pebble with an impatient jerk into the sea as he finished speaking.

The levity of his tone did not for an instant deceive his listener, though for various diplomatic reasons she chose to maintain an impervious attitude.

'Eric is a canny Scot,' she said; 'but he won't make any the worse husband for that.'

There was a pause.

Christopher's eyes were following a triangular flight of geese winging their way steadily across the grey middle distance. His thin lips were compressed. Intuitively Madge divined that he was having recourse to the miserable philosophy he had evolved for his own support and comfort out of the salvage of contrary circumstances. She turned away her head, overcome with a sudden pity for his limitations. As she did so she caught sight of two figures advancing slowly towards them over the rocks. It was Eric and Norma. Their heads were bent as if in earnest colloquy. Once Eric held out his hand to help the girl across a difficult place. The action seemed typical of their mutual attitudes through life.

'There is destiny for you,' said a harsh voice by her side. Christopher too had turned and was watching the approach of the pair.

'What slaves we are, the best of us,' he added a moment later.

'Not those who believe that they carry their own destinies within them,' cried Madge, prompted to the words by some mysterious prophetic instinct.

Christopher glanced curiously at her, then turned away his head with a little half-nervous laugh.

IN THE 'NEVER NEVER' LAND OF AUSTRALIA.

By Alexander Macdonald, F.R.S.G.S.

THERE is still a land sacred to the explorer, a land vast and trackless as a mighty ocean, over which grim Nature rules in all her solitary grandeur. Far into the heart of Australia, extending to all points of the compass, and particularly towards the north and west, the mystic 'Land of the Never Never' stretches its shimmering sand-wastes, and sullenly dares the wanderer to penetrate its dreary solitudes. In the cause of knowledge many have given their lives to this miserable desert; and here and there, amid the wildering mallee scrub, an axe-blazed stump bearing moss-grown symbols is all the record left to show where the pioneer has wandered.

Truly here is an environment well fitted to unnerve and overwhelm all who come within its influence, and it is little wonder that disaster so often attends the traveller in this lonely tract. All nature seems to conspire against him. The stunted eucalypti afford no welcome shade; they dot the salt-plains in monotonous, even growths, and the eye becomes wearied by their everlasting motionless presence. The salt-bush clumps and spinifex patches conceal hideous reptiles. Writhing snakes and loathsome centipedes start across the track; scaly lizards, venomous scorpions, ungainly bungarrows, and a miscellaneous number of nameless pests are ever near to torture and distract. Even the birds of the air are imbued with a solemnity

profound that adds still more to the wanderer's depression. The mopoke's weird double note sounds out on the still air as a calling from a shadowy world; and the horrible carrion-crow, with ominous scream, is constantly circling overhead. The gorged kite perches moodily on the shadeless mulga branches, or staggers drunken-like through the sand on its endless quest; and the pelican appears like a phantom on the path as if to guard from intrusion its undiscovered home. And above all a fierce heat is perpetually beating and pulsating in long chimerical waves across the ironshot flats.

Such is the nature of the Never Never Country, uninspiring, ghostly, maddening; yet—and here is its powerful attraction—it abounds in precious stones of many varieties, and is supposed to contain El Dorados such as would pale into insignificance the finds at Klondike and Kalgoorlie; yea, mountains of pure gold are believed to exist amid its inhospitable wastes. Who could resist such incentive?

It has been my lot to experience to the full the miseries of this desolate expanse, and I have also been able to mark here and there over its broad surface a miners' oasis—with gold taking the place of water; a bitter irony of fate that renders her taunting gifts worse than worthless, inasmuch that they have lured many brave hearts to their doom. But it is not my purpose to give a critical survey of the country; few might be interested, and fewer still would be able to credit the enormous extent of Australia's *terra incognita*. Rather will I give you a story of travel, a page from a wanderer's log, a mere incident of many, from the heart of that sweltering wilderness.

We were four months out on an expedition from Kalgoorlie to the Leopold Mountains, and over eight hundred miles now divided us from any form of civilisation. For many weeks we had struggled painfully over ironshot flats and rolling sand-plains, replenishing our water-bags from various muddy soaks as a kind Providence directed; but at this stage we had been reduced to woeful straits. Not a drop of moisture of any description had been encountered for ten days, and the country was showing little signs of improvement as we proceeded. The parched series of sand-ridges which now opened to our view did not tend to cheer us; already we had ceased to hope, and our progress was continued more through force of habit than by energetic endeavour. We had started with five horses and three camels; but the horses had all died, and one of the camels had also succumbed about a hundred miles back. Two powerful animals, Slavery and Misery, only were left to us; but they bore up bravely, though their load of 'tinned dog,' flour, and extracts caused them to sink to their knees in the fine drift-sand, and their almost superhuman exertions were pitiful to witness.

'I doot puir auld Slavery's aboot feenished,' Mac said hesitatingly to me at our noonday camp when I was working out our position on the chart.

'We've come through some close calls before, Mac,' I answered wearily, 'and perhaps we can hang out for another day'——

'Wha says I'm grumblin'?' he interrupted shortly; then he turned away, and vainly tried to whistle a selection from the *Geisha*.

'Fur Heaven's sake, Mac!' howled Stewart, who was making frantic efforts to keep Misery from falling, 'come an' pit yer shou'der against this puir animal. If he fa's we'll never get him up again.'

Both camels were beginning to show signs of extreme exhaustion, and it was plain that they could not go much farther.

'This is a country of contradictions,' muttered Phil the geologist, 'and if we go under we at least know that we have done our best.'

Truly our prospects of ever getting out of the desert seemed small indeed. The camels had not had a drink for nearly two weeks, and the great canvas bag so tantalisingly lapping Slavery's rubbery back was now flat and almost completely dry.

'We hevna the properties o' camels,' said Mac sorrowfully, as he estimated the amount of liquid remaining. 'There's aboot twa pints yet; but of course there's naebody thirsty.'

We had not moistened our lips since the night before; but we could not bring ourselves to swallow the precious drops still left.

'While it remains we'll not give in,' I said as cheerfully as I could, 'and perhaps to-morrow may find us camped by a native well or claypan. A better stretch of country may lie straight ahead.'

All through the afternoon we kept up our erratic march, staggering, stumbling, and floundering in the giant sand-waves that intervened to bar our northward course. We were close on the twenty-first parallel, and but a few minutes west of the one hundred and twenty-seventh degree of longitude; just about as far away from anywhere as we could well get. We had seen no natives for over a month, and I scarcely expected to meet any until the more northerly latitudes were reached. I was, therefore, very much surprised when Phil, on surveying the horizon through his field-glass in the early evening, announced that several 'smokes' were observable in the distance.

'Niggers!' cried Mac and Stewart simultaneously, in huge delight. 'We'll soon get water noo.'

'It must be a tribe moving east into Central Australia,' I said, 'and in that case it does not follow that water may be found in the vicinity.'

'Mebbe no,' grunted Mac; 'but niggers get thirsty like white folks, an' they are ower weel acquaint wi' the vagaries o' their ain country tae gang on the wallaby without knowin' whaur tae camp.'

Slowly we drew near to the supposed settlement, straining every nerve so as to reach it before nightfall; but while yet a good way off the curling smoke-clouds suddenly died away, and we could only vaguely calculate the point we had been steering for. I guessed that the aborigines had decamped immediately on seeing us, first putting

out their fires that we might be misled as far as possible. But we were not to be put off the scent so easily. My doughty henchmen coaxed their cumbrous charges along with many endearing epithets; and the poor, patient animals seemed to understand that some extreme effort was required of them. Mile after mile was traversed, and no signs of habitation were anywhere visible. A sparse forest of stunted eucalypti began to show on the hill-crests, promising more generous tracts ahead; but no indications of water could be traced. At length Phil stopped in the centre of a space in the straggling brushwood that looked like a natural clearing.

'It was here the beggars were camped,' said he; 'though they have managed to bury all their fires, they could not hide their own peculiar markings.'

He examined several impressions made by the ungainly feet of the aborigines, while Mac kicked up from the numerous sand-hillocks around many still smouldering logs.

'Ay, Stewart,' muttered the latter individual, solemnly surveying his discoveries, 'the black deevils are no defeecient in strategy. We'll need to ca' canny.'

Stewart was busily engaged anathematising the same 'black deevils' with all the eloquence at his command. 'Ca' canny?' he bellowed wrathfully. 'No vera likely. I'll fair pulverise the first nigger I catch. They hae nae respeck whitsaever fur the laws o' hospeetality.'

'We'll get on for a few miles yet, boys,' I said; 'the brush is thicker right in front, and the natives may be hidden among the trees.'

'Gee up, Slavery!' grunted Mac.

'Aince mair, Meesery!' pathetically adjured Stewart, and our weary cavalcade marched on.

The sun was now but a few points above the western horizon, and his fiery radiance bathed the silent bushland in golden splendour. The motionless mulga and mallee shrubs seemed ablaze with ruddy light, and the wastes of sand shone as a sea of burnished bronze. Not a sound was heard but the harsh cries of the gaily-plumaged parrots that flitted eerily from tree to tree, and the occasional dismal monotone of the mopoke.

'Cheer up, boys,' shouted Phil, as we entered a belt of thicker timber than usual. 'Life is short, you know, and we'll be a long time dead.'

'For ony sake, Phil,' implored Mac, 'dinna moralise'——

At that moment a series of unearthly yells broke upon our ears, and at the same time a shower of spears whizzed overhead and perilously close.

'Get the camels under cover, boys,' I cried, hurriedly unstrapping my rifle.

'There's nae cover!' roared back Mac, who had diplomatically laid himself flat on the ground at the first alarm; 'they must tak' their chance.'

Whiz! Splash! Even as he spoke a long quivering missile rustled through the willowy branches and penetrated the water-bag overlapping Slavery's flank. The tough canvas saved the animal, but our hoarded supply of the precious fluid trickled remorselessly to the ground.

Mac uttered a groan of despair, which his comrade, prostrate by his side, echoed mournfully; then the two sprang up in fierce resentment.

'I'll hae revenge for this!' cried Mac, dashing forward through the scrub.

'An' I'll hae that deevil's life for burstin' the baggie,' howled his compatriot, following closely at his heels.

It all happened so quickly that I had no time to give any directions; and if I had ventured to restrain the indignant pair they would probably have disregarded my orders in any case. Several more flights of spears skimmed well above our heads; but one or two dangerously barbed darts, more surely aimed, stuck deep and quivered in the sand at our feet.

'There is some population here apparently,' said Phil coolly, examining his revolver. 'Now, we know that there must be water in the district.'

Without further remark he turned and rushed after our companions, whose vehement shouts now mingled with the shrill cries of the dusky warriors.

'Try and catch one, Mac,' he loudly cried, as he ran. Then, fearful that disaster might overtake our entire party, I gripped my rifle and hastened after him. The shadows of night were fast closing in, and between the trees of the pigmy forest a heavy gloom had settled, providing excellent cover for our assailants; but the blacks of Australia, though crafty enough at times, are absolutely without resource; and, having discharged their weapons, they were now beating a retreat, yelling most hideously the while. Scarcely fifty yards before me I could vaguely descry Mac, Stewart, and Phil charging after the fugitives, and I quickened my pace in order to come up with them.

'We'll catch a specimen,' hoarsely spoke Phil, 'if we have to chase them all night.'

On we raced, while the crackling branches a little way ahead betokened the nearness of our quarry, and their shrieks guided us unerringly. Evidently the fleeing natives were just about as tired as we were, for we were slowly but surely overtaking them. Suddenly one of their number screeched out some sort of signal which had the effect of making the runners scatter in all directions. We could see their shaggy heads above the bushes as they diverged on various tacks; then the new order of things confused us, and one by one the gorilla-like creatures vanished from our view. Loud and deep were the curses of my disappointed comrades. Even Phil, who so seldom allowed his temper to be ruffled, joined in the chorus and consigned the escaping blacks to the warmest department in Hades with considerable fluency of expression. Yet still we kept up our mad run, loath to return without some satisfaction to raise our drooping spirits. The night was rapidly darkening, obscuring the scrub and the intervening sand-wastes under a common pall, so that our progress was made only

with much difficulty; yet wearily we continued our aimless search.

'We'll have to turn, boys,' I said at length, when the stars began to glimmer in the heavens. 'We'll go back and make our camp by the camels. To-morrow we shall search the district thoroughly'——

A ponderous exclamation from Mac interrupted me, and that gentleman halted with an unrestrained roar of mingled merriment and relief. We were passing under an unusually large tree of the lime family; and, looking up, against the stars, I could see an awkward figure scrambling frantically among the higher branches.

'Treed, by Jove!' cried Phil, gazing upwards also.

'I thocht I smelt niggers,' said Mac, when he had recovered his equanimity; 'but if his long feet hadna touched ma heid I should never hae thocht o' looking in a tree for the deevil.'

'But how are we going to get him down?' I questioned; 'it won't be an easy matter, judging by the way he hangs on to these branches.'

'Me and Mac'll attend to that,' broke in Stewart, and without further ado he commenced to swarm up the small, round trunk of the tree.

'Take care, Stewart,' I warned, 'he may smash your head before you reach him.'

'Will he, though?' growled the climber ferociously, already half-way up.

'Strategy's the word, Stewart,' counselled Mac, as with deliberation he prepared to ascend to his comrade's assistance. The little tree swayed under its load, then bent until its lower limbs touched the ground.

'We had better see that our prisoner does not make his escape by jumping for it,' said Phil; and we, therefore, stood out on opposite sides watching with alert eyes the huddled figure. Nearer and nearer Stewart writhed his way to the top, and slowly the terrified aboriginal retreated to the farthest limit of his branch until it cracked ominously.

'I've got ye noo, ma man,' muttered Stewart. 'You just wait till I come to ye.'

But the poor nomad had no such intention. As Stewart approached, he began to scream horribly, more after the manner of a wild beast than a human being, then he broke off bits of the lesser branches and twigs and showered them down on his implacable enemy.

'Shake him off the branch, an' I'll catch him,' advised Mac, worming his substantial form along the limb directly underneath our prey. In vain Stewart endeavoured to grasp his prospective prisoner; but the oily savage eluded the worthy besieger every time, and sorely tried his temper by keeping up a vicious fusilade of wood fragments. He had, however, completely overlooked the presence of Mac, directly below; and when, in the midst of a furious assault on the unfortunate Stewart, his foot slipped slightly, it was instantly seized by that watchful gentleman, and held in a ruthless grip.

'Ye've got to come, ma man,' he grunted, evading the free foot of his victim with much dexterity.—'Noo! Staund frae under'——

Crash! They came down all three together, the top branch having broken with the strain; but the height was not very great and the sand below was loosely packed.

'It's a blessed thing,' quoth Mac, as he rose up, 'that the black deevil was nice an' saft. It was jist like fallin' on a cushion.'

'Take care of your prisoner, boys, now that you've got him,' I said, as we turned to steer our way back to the camels; 'we'll have to make the most of his knowledge.' Then I addressed the sullen aboriginal, and by constant repetition of the word *babba* (water) sought to make him understand our need. But it was all to no purpose; our captive made no sign, and only groaned horribly when I pressed my question with a show of anger.

'All the same,' sternly spoke Phil, 'he'll tell us what he knows before morning.'

I had been afraid that we might experience some difficulty in retracing our steps; but such was not the case. In the pale light of the rising moon we could plainly discern our faithful beasts, far out on the plain, crouched where we had left them, with their bulky burdens looming large above the dwarfed scrubland. In a short time we had reached them, and undid their girths; then we prepared our camp-fire near the scene of the skirmish; and soon the roaring flames leapt up cheerily.

Having no water, we could not make tea, so we contented ourselves with munching some old pieces of damper to the accompaniment of a very meagre portion of 'tinned dog.' It was at this point that our prisoner showed signs of interest in our proceedings, and Mac thereupon proffered him a substantial piece of damper, which he seized and ate with avidity. But still my repeated interrogations of *babba? babba?* seemed to have no effect; he glanced past me to where Stewart was gingerly slicing up some of the tinned conglomeration with various names which is served out to explorers, and opened his cavernous orifice expectantly.

'The poor devil's hungry,' said Phil. 'Let him have a piece of that unknown substance, Stewart; if it does not kill him it may arouse some sense of gratitude.'

'He'd reduce our stores very quick, I'm thinkin',' grumbled Stewart, noting with dismay how rapidly his hospitable offerings disappeared.

'Jist haud on a wee,' murmured Mac thoughtfully. 'I think I hae a raal bonny plan.' He hastened over to the many sacks lying on the ground where the camels had been unloaded, and came back with a handful of salt. 'When yer as auld as I am, Stewart,' said he graciously, 'ye'll ken the meanin' o' strategy. Dae ye savy?'

Stewart took the salt with humble deference, and without a word proceeded to mix it lavishly with

a small tin of the aforementioned edible compound, which he then handed to the hungry savage.

'Eat it a', ye howlin' baboon,' said he kindly, 'an' if yer no' as thirsty as a camel efter it yer no constructed on the same princeeples as white buddies.'

Phil and I listened to the schemers in bewilderment; then, as we saw the ravenous heathen bolt the salt-laden meat with great gusto, we forgot for a moment the pangs of thirst and indulged in a paroxysm of laughter.

'For a certainty our dusky friend will want water badly soon,' said Phil.

We sat round the fire and calmly waited developments. If our prisoner knew of the presence of water in the neighbourhood he must surely endeavour to find it; half a pound of the strongest salt in his interior might tend to enlighten him as to the meaning of *babba, babba*, which I had repeated to him so persistently. We were not mistaken; half an hour later he began to show unmistakable signs of uneasiness, and his lips moved like the gills of a fish out of water. Then he strained at the rope which bound him to a mulga sapling behind, and rolled his eyes as if in great distress.

'We'll give him a full hour yet, boys,' I said. 'We can hang out as long as he can, I think.'

Mac chuckled drily. 'I'm a grand instructor o' furrin langwidges,' he grunted. 'Ye'll see that our freen' Beelzebub here can understand what water means very shortly.'

It was now nearly midnight, and the slow minutes dragged like ages as we sat by the fire, anxiously watching the antics of the salt-gorged aboriginal. For a long time no one spoke; but our basilisk-like glare evidently disconcerted the native, for he commenced to moan in an exceeding melancholy manner, and endeavoured to evade our gaze by every artifice in his power.

'He thinks we mean to eat him,' hazarded Phil; and I believe he had truly guessed the captive's thoughts. However, the tortures of thirst were surely having due effect on the poor savage, and his cries soon became most distracting to our ears, so long accustomed to the solemn silence of the eternal bush. Suddenly he broke into a wailing chorus, which echoed dismally through the still air and caused even the long-suffering camels to raise their heads in protest.

'*B-bab-ba! ba-bab-ba! ba-bab-ba!*' he cried, tugging strenuously at the binding cords.

'Patience is its ain reward,' soliloquised Mac calmly, slackening the rope from the tree and gripping the free end of it tightly.

With a bound the native headed out into the densest part of the scrub, almost pulling Mac over the sand in his frantic haste; and we followed at our best speed with a feeling of thankfulness surging in our minds. Our now tractable guide did not lead us far; he stopped in a small hollow, which I reckoned must have been close to the lime-tree where we had made our capture, and with feverish hands he scraped away some covering twigs, revealing to our eager eyes a glittering pool of water. With a deep gurgle of relief he buried his tangled visage in the sparkling liquid, and drank so deeply that Mac felt compelled to jerk him backwards out of sheer regard for his welfare.

'Ye shouldna drink so much after a heavy supper,' said he reprovingly. 'It's very bad for yer digestion, I'm thinkin'.' Then with light hearts we went back to fetch the camels.

Such is the story of the finding of Providence Spring in latitude twenty-one degrees seventeen minutes south and longitude one hundred and twenty-six degrees fifty-three minutes east; and that night's experience comes vividly back to me now, reminding me painfully of our dreary journeyings through the land of salt-bush, spinifex, and sand.

THE COLONEL'S MURILLO.

CHAPTER II.

HOW often when the reveille has sounded have I longed for another hour's repose; but when it rang sharp and clear on that bright May-day morning no lark rose with more alacrity than I.

Out from the north gate we sallied, with the sun shining brightly on our helmets and on our dark-green uniforms.

From the colonel down to the youngest trooper all were in the highest spirits, pleased at leaving Spain behind them. I was in the first squadron, and on that day, of course, in the vanguard. As arranged, we found the two Spaniards in a *posada*, with some muleteers and peasants.

'Ah! ah! my friends,' I exclaimed in apparent surprise, 'I think you are the two we want.'

They sprang to their feet and protested violently, and so did some of those around them; but I had drawn my pistol, and before they could offer any resistance, amid the oaths and gesticulations of their countrymen, who drew out their deadly *navajos* but feared to use them, my troopers had seized them.

'What do you want with us?' they cried. 'What have we done?'

'You will find out soon,' I replied, as I compelled them to mount before two men who carried loaded carbines on their hips.

We waited till the rest of the regiment came up,

when I handed them over to the colonel, who appeared greatly pleased and surprised at their capture.

Before we had started that morning, to avert suspicion of his real object, Colonel Dolinier gave out that he had received instructions to be on the lookout for the two young Spaniards, as they were supposed to have been in communication with the enemy, so this episode excited no particular surprise.

The dispositions of our two prisoners were very dissimilar. Podarnez was a merry, light-hearted fellow, and soon became a favourite; but Don Ricardo was altogether different. He was an exceptionally handsome young fellow, but grave and taciturn, and, moreover, very shrewd. He spoke French almost as well as his own language. He acted his part, too, as a prisoner far better than his companion, who was always laughing and making jokes. Ricardo had, it appeared, only just missed making a large fortune in Peru, and he was certain yet he would do so if he could only get money. It was, I could see, this want of capital chiefly that had induced him to join hands with Podarnez more than anything else. He had no objection to the latter marrying his sister, nor to her regaining her liberty; but if he could only have got the money that he had been robbed of by the monks he would not have troubled himself much about the welfare of either.

The weather from the time we started from Valencia was gloriously fine; in fact, almost too fine, for I had not quite recovered from a wound, and found the heat was rather trying. League after league we travelled along the white, dusty roads of Tarragona, on through Lerida. The brown-coated idlers round the village fountains, the beggars by the church doors, might look on us with no friendly eye; the muleteers might scowl; and dark-eyed beauties, as they sat lace-making outside the yellow houses with the painted sundials * above them, might not even deign to return the kisses that we blew them as we went past—still we had little to complain of.

The district, we knew only too well, was infested with *guerrillos;* it was even said that Rico, the famous fanatical monk, was not far off, but we were then in comparatively open country, and our numbers prevented them from molesting us; for these brave gentry were very careful of their skins, and would only attack with every advantage on their side. The presence, also, of our two prisoners may have had some effect, for probably the *guerrillos* reckoned they would be the first to suffer if they did us any harm.

Gradually we got up into higher and more rugged country, and soon we saw in the distance the Pyrenees, and the sight of these glorious purple mountains, with their snow-capped peaks, filled us with joy, for was not our beloved France on the other side?

As we got into these high altitudes our progress was rather slower; for the roads were not only bad, but the colonel had a travelling-carriage, and this was everlastingly breaking down, as it was very heavily laden. Uniform cases, and even saddles, were conspicuously placed inside and out; but there were, so it was said, besides the silver lamps he was kindly taking care of, a few other *souvenirs d'Espagne.* However, all had so far gone well; we had passed the summit of the range, and in two days we hoped to pass the frontier.

It was a glorious day, the sun shone brightly overhead, and there was not a cloud to be seen. It would have been unbearably hot in the plains; but up in the mountains there was a pleasant freshness in the air. A part of my squadron furnished the rear-guard that day, and I was with that portion. The natives seemed more wild and ferocious than any we had yet come across. Though we had hitherto suffered in no way, still, our commander never relaxed his vigilance; and, though what seemed to be a misfortune was soon to happen, he could not be blamed; and this *contretemps,* as I will show, he soon turned to his own benefit.

We had entered a long, broad, ascending valley. I could see the advance-guard far ahead. Suddenly it stopped at what proved to be a barn, and a trooper came back to the main body, which hurried on and halted too. Wondering what could be the matter, I gave the order to trot, and, approaching nearer, I could make out their angry gesticulations; and no wonder, for a horrible sight presented itself. On the door of a barn we saw, to our horror and disgust, the mutilated bodies of two French soldiers, *voltigeurs* of the line, crucified upside down, side by side. They must have been dead a fortnight, but the agony on the battered faces of the poor wretches, and their blood-stained clothes, showed what they must have suffered. Now, though this characteristically Spanish form of torture was common, it was the first time I had seen it; and, used as I was to war, the sight made me almost faint and sick, but this was quickly followed by anger. This barbarous murder naturally made the blood boil in the troopers, and it was as much as we officers could do to prevent them wreaking their vengeance on Podarnez and Cardarra, especially the latter, who was perfectly unmoved. He, from his cold, cruel, vindictive nature, seemed to look upon this atrocity as an ordinary incident of war; but his companion was just as much shocked as we were.

The colonel said little when he was angry; but I knew by the look on his face that it would probably go hard with the inhabitants of the first village we came to, especially as there was a scrawl near the corpses headed, '*Mueran los gavachos*' ('Death to the scoundrels'), and stating that the same fate would await 'any cursed French devils' that might be caught.

* The Catalans are noted for their industry and thrift, and it is a common thing in the province of Catalonia to see dials painted or carved on the houses to teach the value of time.

'*Caramba!* those fiends shall pay for this,' he shouted savagely. 'Form up there.—Lallesan, you keep a sharp lookout.'

Within an hour the first village we came to was a mere smouldering heap of ruins. While the place was being sacked and burnt, Podarnez and Cardarra were placed under guard in a small *posada*. As soon as they came out Don Ricardo begged the colonel to hurry on, as he knew the country. '*Tenga usted cuidado* ('Take care'), he cried, 'for I saw them send a shepherd lad off to the mountains, and there is a very dangerous pass on ahead.'

'*Corriente*,' replied the colonel curtly, 'these brutes may catch and murder two wretched stragglers; but the cowards,' he continued with an oath, 'are hardly likely to hurt us.'

'But they can see these flames from the mountains; it will rouse the whole district.'

'Well, let them,' he answered.

At the head of the valley the road passed into a wild but very beautiful mountain gorge, with a foaming torrent at the bottom of it. The pass was so romantic and lonely that it was called the pass *de los duendes* (of the fairies). From the left, almost at the beginning of the pass, another small stream ran into the torrent, and the former was crossed by a stone bridge high above it. Now, we in the rear-guard were just ascending to this bridge, and the main body, owing to the winding road, was out of sight, when the mountains re-echoed with the sharp crackle of musketry.

'*Allons, mes enfants!*' I shouted, and we had just reached the bridge when a brigadier came tearing back towards us.

'We have been caught in a trap—completely surprised,' he cried; 'the brutes are hurling rocks down on us. The colonel's carriage is in the stream; there's a —— monk with a brass blunderbuss on the other side with a dozen *guerrillos*, and two of our men are killed and several wounded. The colonel says you are to clamber up and clear our flank. It is like a wall farther up, and he can do nothing.'

In a moment I took in the situation. With a dozen of the most active, I sent my future brother-in-law, Largemont, who was as bold as a lion and as agile as a cat, up the slope. Leaving a few to mind the horses, I galloped along a small bridle-path at the side of the stream to the left. I had ordered Largemont to turn the quarry, if possible, in my direction. I had reckoned on being able to send some men under a *marechal de logis* to take them in their rear; but the path was so very narrow, and we were unfortunately on the wrong side of the stream beneath us, that I soon saw that it would be better, after all, to place the men at long intervals beside their horses with their carbines cocked, and await events.

In a few minutes our ears were gladdened by the sound of firing above us.

'*Parbleu!* the youngster's got them,' exclaimed old Tellier, my *marechal de logis*.

The thick undergrowth prevented us from seeing what was going on; but even this had its advantage, for it also prevented the *guerrillos* from seeing us, and they evidently had not reckoned on our presence; for the sergeant had hardly spoken when there was a movement among the bushes, and four terrified ruffians came stumbling altogether down the incline not forty mètres from us. Before they realised their position we brought down two, and I wounded one with my pistol. The other ran like a rabbit away to the left; but those who were following these men desisted and kept out of sight. Soon we heard our fellows shouting that the way was clear, and so we returned to the bridge, where Largemont soon joined us and received our congratulations.

'We made a fair bag,' said a young fellow, 'for they were so intent on their infernal work that they did not perceive us till we were close upon them. We killed two for certain, and must have wounded others.'

This was highly satisfactory, especially as we had suffered no loss whatever.

'Now, where are these fellows?' I said to the brigadier ere we started.

'Higher up, *mon capitaine*. The road takes a sharp turn to the left, and they are posted just opposite, on the other side of the stream.'

'*Parbleu!* we shall have to make a dash for it then; they must be fools if they don't bring some of us down.'

'The path is strewn with boulders,' he replied; 'we must ride carefully.'

'Now, *mes enfants*,' I cried, 'you follow me. —Largemont, you bring up the rear.'

My blood tingled with pleasure and excitement as I thought of the danger. To save our horses, we ascended slowly till we reached the turn of the road, and then, followed closely by the brigadier, I set spurs to my horse and dashed on.

'There they are! There's the monk!' exclaimed the latter; and sure enough I saw him in his brown habit with his followers. The words were hardly out of my companion's mouth when they opened fire upon us. Boulders or no boulders, I dashed on. As I did so I caught a glimpse of the colonel's carriage with its dead mules in the stream below; and even at that moment, while our cowardly foes were taking long shots at a safe distance at us, I could hardly repress a smile as I thought of the silver lamps and all the other loot that my chief set such store on, and which he would never see again. Whether they were really farther off than they seemed, or they were wretched marksmen, or their guns were poor, anyway, apart from slightly wounding a horse, they did us no harm, and we were soon out of range. For more than a league we followed the winding road; but the main body had had such a start that we could see nothing of them. Then we gradually began to descend, and soon beneath us, as the road turned sharply to the left, we saw, in comparatively open country, a large village.

When we reached it, in a *plaza* before the church, on an old chestnut-tree two corpses were already hanging: one, a mendicant friar, a poor wretch who was only begging his way about the country; and the other, the *alcalde* of the village. But two more of the inhabitants were waiting their turn while our men were getting some rope. Around the waiting victims their wives and children were sobbing and screaming; but the colonel sat motionless on his horse, with Don Ricardo and Podarnez beside him. Soon these two more were kicking in the air.

After I had made my report, the colonel ordered all the officers to come to the chief *posada*, along with the two prisoners.

'Nothing, Lallesan,' said my commander, drawing me aside, 'could have turned out better for my plans. They have crucified two of our men, and it was a monk who was the leader of those who attacked us. If any fuss is made about our sacking the monastery I shall have good justification. Come what may, I'll have that Murillo.'

I agreed with him in a measure, though I fervently hoped that it would not fall to my lot to carry out his enterprise. Taking a seat, he disclosed his scheme, dilating eloquently and not without a touch of sarcasm on the accumulated riches of those who had taken vows of poverty; stating it was his kind intention to bring these monks back to their original state of innocence. The great bulk of my comrades received his remarks with unbounded delight; but the senior major, who was not only a man of very good family, but also very grave and austere, spoke strongly against what he called a downright theft, and declared that if it was carried out that he would not soil his fingers with the loot. The eyes of Midon, the second major, brightened, as he saw that this would make it all the better for him. He and the colonel had very much in common, both having risen from the ranks. What, however, caused his hearers the most surprise, was when their chief told them that Don Ricardo and Podarnez were not *bonâ-fide* prisoners at all, and that they would act as guides to the monastery, and that every assistance was to be given to them to make the prior sign a renunciation of his right to Donna Rosita and her brother's property, &c. Of course Podarnez came in for a good deal of chaff, and he was told that he must ask us all to the wedding.

But Colonel Dolinier quickly stopped this badinage, and turning to me said, 'Lallesan, I know I can always trust you to carry out an affair well; so in a quarter of an hour you will start with our two Spanish friends with twenty men.'

I begged hard for him to choose some one else. I told him that my men, as he knew, had had harder work that day than any. I even pleaded fatigue, and also my recent wound; but it was no use. Major Midon volunteered; but his chief, for reasons of his own, drily told him that he could not spare him.

As I could not persuade the colonel to let me off, I thought the sooner I got the affair finished the better. I knew that the executions that had taken place would spread like wildfire; and the monks, being sure to hear of it very soon, might be on the *qui vive*. At their own request, Don Ricardo and Podarnez were dressed as troopers, as they feared they might suffer afterwards if it were known that they had anything to do with our enterprise.

The monastery of San Antonio was about a league from the village, and approached by a steep winding path, through a beautiful pass with a rushing torrent at the side of it. Having procured a couple of mules to bring away the loot, within a quarter of an hour we were on our way to the monastery.

With the exception of myself, all were in the highest spirits. The lesson of the morning was not forgotten. I even made some men go ahead on foot up the mountain-side among the brushwood, and every precaution I could think of was taken. At length we arrived at the top of the pass. The monastery, so Don Ricardo told us, was on a large plateau. It would be possible to clamber up the mountain at the side of the path, and attack it in front, or go on by the road which came out at the side of the plateau. I decided on the latter. Apart from myself and Largemont, all the men dismounted. A stout sapling was cut down to be used as a ram. I smile now as I think of the grand arrangements we made, and the hopes we indulged in, and the easy work we thought it would be to surprise a few guzzling, lazy monks. The idea of their offering any resistance never occurred to us. Leaving a few men to look after the horses, we went up the path, and then beheld the vast building before us.

'Follow me,' I shouted, riding forward into the open. The men, including the two Spaniards carrying the pole, advanced at the double. I rode in advance on one side of them and Largemont on the other. We had got some way, and were not sixty mètres from the monastery, when from every window a withering fire of shot, slugs, and bullets was poured into us. Strange to say, I was not hit in the first volley. Turning my horse, I tried to rally the men, but it was not a bit of good; dropping the pole, they turned and fled, and as they did so my horse was badly hit. Taking the bit in its mouth, the maddened beast rushed straight towards the ravine with the foaming stream at the bottom of it. It was a terrible, horrible moment, for I saw certain death in front of me. Only one thing could save me. I drew my pistol from its holster and fired it into the ear of my steed. I knew the crash that must follow; and, loosening my feet in the stirrups, alighted on the ground as it fell with a deadening thud on the very brink of the precipice.

CHURCH BLUNDERS AND STORIES CLERICAL.

EACH profession has its stock jokes, its stories innumerable, and to each belongs a flavour all its own. That the point of a jest lies not in the tongue of him who makes it but in the ear that hears is the testimony of the great dramatist. The doctor on his rounds and the judge upon the bench have both an audience ready and willing to accept as the highest wit the *bon mots* of the speakers; and there is no club or gathering of men that does not acclaim one of its members as supreme in this respect, and are ready to yield due recognition of the gift. There is, however, a vast amount of unconscious humour always floating about, and to those who perceive it the world is ever very amusing. It must be admitted that the blunders and jests clerical stand for some reason pre-eminent both in number and in mirth-producing qualities. The reason of course is not far to seek; the very surroundings in which they occur, the very upsetting of one's preconceived notions of reverence all tend to cause a reaction in the ordinary mental equilibrium, and the simplest mistake or accident under such circumstances assumes the proportions of a huge comedy.

In gathering together some such incidents there is no claim made to any special novelty in the selection, but many serve to recall what raised a smile before and will perhaps do so again.

The divine who in drawing the attention of his congregation to a special communion service on the following Sunday informed them that 'the Lord is with us in the forenoon and the bishop in the evening' is chronicled with praying for the children of his parish in these words: 'And now, O Lord, bless the lambs of this fold, and make them *meet* for the kingdom of heaven.' While a Scotch minister innocently perhaps hit the mark by telling his people, 'Weel, friends, the Kirk is urgently in need of siller; and as we have failed to get money honestly, we will have to see what a bazaar can do for us.'

There is a certain amount of excuse to be made for the young curate who, remarking that some people came to church for no better reason than to show off their best clothes, finished up as he glanced over his audience, 'I am thankful to see, dear friends, that none of you have come here for that reason.'

An Irish clergyman is credited with having concluded a powerful oration in this fashion: 'My brethren, let not this world rob you of a peace which it can neither give nor take away;' which is coupled with the remark of a fellow-country colleague who in reasoning with a lady who had lost her faith in Christianity told her, 'Well, you will go to hell, you know; and I shall be very sorry indeed to see you there!'

But what can be said of the negro student who, conducting the prayers at one of the great missionary colleges, said, 'Give us all pure hearts, give us all clean hearts, give us all sweet hearts,' to which the entire congregation made response 'Amen.'

How many preachers receive the thanks of their listeners for information given in a spiritual sense but taken in the literal fashion as did the minister who told his people that the Omnipotent placed some in the sun and others in the shade for their good. 'You know you plant roses in the sunshine, and heliotrope and geraniums; but if you want your fuchsias to grow you must keep them in a shady nook.' A woman later that day clasped his hand warmly, and her face glowed with pleasure as she thanked him gratefully for that sermon. He felt exalted—for a moment. 'Yes,' she went on, 'I never knew before what was the matter with my fuchsias;' a conclusion that cannot have astonished him more than the text repeated by a cook to her mistress on her return from church as 'split peas and suet,' and which turned out to be 'seek peace and pursue it.'

The giving out of church notices has often proved a pitfall for the unwary. 'During Lent,' said a rector lately, 'several preachers will preach on Wednesday evenings; but I need not give their names, as they will be all found hanging up in the porch.'

Shortly after the King's illness in 1902, on the occasion of a thanksgiving service, a worthy cleric startled his hearers by saying, 'And now, dear friends, let us join in singing Hymn No. 48, "Peace, perfect peace"—in the Appendix.'

Sydney Smith was, of course, the best of wits in the last century, and the innumerable clever things fathered on him would fill a volume. It was he who declared that no bishop could ever marry, as he had no opportunity of flirting, since the most he could say was, 'I will see you in the vestry after service.'

But the bishops have their own fun, as can be seen when Bishop Wilberforce got out of the train at Wheatley Station, and was asked by an anxious porter, 'Any articles in the van, my lord?' 'Yes; Thirty-nine Articles,' was the reply. The porter went on his search, and kept the train waiting and made the guard angry as he looked. He returned to the bishop. 'There are only seven, my lord.' 'Only seven?' he got for answer. 'Ah, you're a Dissenter then, I should think.'

The same dignitary paid a visit to a boys' school and told them that he was a very busy man, who had to go about all over his diocese and had now no time to study. In fact, nearly all his study was confined to one book. 'It begins with a B. Do you know what it is?' 'The Bible, sir

—the Bible.' 'No,' replied the Bishop of Oxford with a merry twinkle in his eye, 'it's called *Bradshaw*.'

A clergyman in Dublin once invited several of his colleagues to dinner, but was disappointed at not getting an answer from a very popular clergyman whom he particularly desired to be present, so he called on his friend, fearing he might be ill. 'You received my invitation, I hope.' 'Yes,' replied the other, 'I received your very insulting communication.' 'Insulting?' 'Very. Read it for yourself.' The amazed rector read it, and found that, by a truly clerical error, he had invited the clergyman to come and dine in order 'to meet a few other clerical *fiends*.'

We all know of the vicar who was away when a gentleman called to see him, but whose servant asked would the 'local demon' do as well; and we can sympathise with the people who heard the following mixture given as his text by a bashful curate at his first sermon: 'And immediately the cock wept, and Peter went out and crew bitterly;' which is perhaps not worse than the announcement of a hymn as 'From Iceland's greeny mountains' instead of the familiar words.

In a village in Yorkshire a notice was affixed to the church door stating that the annual Easter meeting would be held the following Tuesday in the vestry, 'at two o'clock, *D.V.*' 'What does *D.V.* mean?' queried one neighbour to another, and at length the villagers decided to ask the oldest man in the place if he could throw any light on the meaning of it. This man had been sexton in his day, but declared he had never heard of *D.V.*, when suddenly a bright idea struck him. '*D.V.*? Why, that means dinner in the vestry of course.' The following Tuesday, when the vicar entered the vestry he found all the vestrymen assembled, each laden with a mug, knife, fork, and spoon, according to the fashion in which Yorkshire rustics go furnished to a tea-meeting.

Children have often many funny remarks after their first visit to church. There is the little girl who thought it not fair that one man did all the work and another went round and got the money; and the boy who remarked to his mother when she said the sermon was only pretty good, 'What could you expect for a halfpenny?' which was the amount he had seen her put in the plate; and there are not a few of us who have felt with the little maiden of eight summers who said church was very nice, but the matinée (Litany) was too long.'

Brevity personified are the letters that passed between the Duke of York, son of George III., and the Bishop of Cork in reference to the ordination of a gentleman named Ponsonby. The Duke wrote, 'Dear Cork, ordain Ponsonby.—Yours, York.' The Bishop wrote back, 'Dear York, Ponsonby ordained.—Yours, Cork.'

The liberality of some folk at an appeal in church was satirically touched on by the discontented cabby who, driving two ladies to a sacred edifice, was disappointed at the amount offered him. ''Ere, it's goin' t' be a cherrity sermon! Keep this 'ere, and put it in the plyte.'

The profusion of dignitaries in the Church of Ireland led some person to wonder whether, if Li Hung Chang had visited one of the Diocesan Synods during his stay in England some years ago, he, with his love of asking personal questions, could have refrained from inquiring 'Who made you all canons?'

It must have been a Scotsman who, having all his life opposed the introduction of music into the church he attended, was asked some time after the organ had been installed how he liked it, made answer, 'Dod, I'm feared I'm gaun to like it!' which is very different from the feelings inspired by a listener to the Gregorian chants badly rendered, who, hearing that tradition said they owed their origin to King David, declared that he now quite understood why Saul threw his javelin at the psalmist.

The borrowing or buying of sermons has led preachers into curious errors when they had not previously looked fully over their discourse. A sermon suitable for a mothers' meeting was hardly suitable for a collection of college students; and the chaplain of a jail, when he lent a friend his sermon-book omitted to blot out the last sentence he was in the habit of using: 'And now, my beloved brethren, I hope that I shall never see your faces in this place again,' a remark that considerably startled the innocent congregation to whom it was then addressed, and deserves the scorn expressed by Cowper on

> The things that mount the pulpit with a skip,
> And then skip down again; pronounce a text,
> Cry 'Hem,' and reading what they never wrote
> Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
> And with a well-bred whisper close the scene.

Returning homewards one Sunday, a clergyman, good but not brilliant, was accosted by an old woman who informed him, 'Well do I like the day when you preach, sir.' He said, 'My good woman, I am glad to hear it. There are too few like you. And why do you like it when I preach?' 'Oh, sir,' she replied, 'when you preach I always get a good seat.'

Archbishop Magee was once taken to hear a preacher whom a friend greatly liked; and being asked afterwards what he thought of the sermon, said it was very long. 'Yes,' said his friend; 'but there was a saint in the pulpit.' 'And a martyr in the pew,' rejoined the archbishop.

The following privilege was reserved for an honoured Archbishop of Dublin, who, slightly paralysed in his later days, slipped one day in the street, when a little girl offered to see his Grace home. He doubted her ability to render him any assistance, and expressed the same to her, but received for answer, 'Oh yes, I'm sure I can. My father's the same every day.'

It was a rector who gave out a hymn beginning 'Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve,' before his sermon, and a curate who read in the lesson for the day, 'He spake the word, and cathoppers came and grassipillars innumerable;' but it was at a young woman's Bible-class that when asked what hymn should be sung at the close they all with one accord chose 'Where is my wandering boy to-night?'

The visitor to a country church, who entered during the sermon, and inquired of his neighbour had the preacher been going on long, and getting answer that he had been there thirty-two years, fairly concluded he would soon stop, was more patient perhaps than the old dame who left her kirk one Sunday before the conclusion, and was inquired of by a coachman waiting outside, 'Is the minister dune wi' his sermon?' 'He was dune langsyne,' replied the old lady, 'but he winna stop;' which cannot have been the same occasion as that on which a gentleman expressed his opinion of a lengthy discourse which had delayed his dinner, ''Twas very good, but it spoiled a goose worth two of it.'

It happened in Cornwall, according to report, that a pastor complained that his congregation had the habit of looking round at late-comers; and while he thought it natural enough, he saw that it disturbed their religious duties, and so determined to announce by name those persons who came in late. Accordingly he several times paused during the prayers and said, 'Mr S., with his wife and daughter;' then again, 'Mr C. and William D.' This went on for a while, and the congregation kept their eyes fixed on their books; but when it was given out 'Mrs M., in a new bonnet,' every feminine head in the church was turned.

THE FOREST OF DEAN.

By William Andrews.

THE forests which formerly covered so large a portion of the surface of England are gradually decreasing in number and extent with the increase of population; and they must, it is feared, be regarded as doomed to extinction in the course of another century. Those of Hainault in Essex and Wychwood in Oxfordshire, were disafforested nearly half-a-century ago, and the famous Epping Forest would have shared the same fate if its preservation had not been decided on in the interests of the dense working population of the east end of London. The forests of Kent and Sussex have been broken up into a number of woods, separated by agricultural land; and none of those which remain in other parts of England retain their primitive appearance.

The Forest of Dean is situated in the western portion of Gloucestershire, between the Severn and the Wye, and extends over more than twenty-three thousand acres. It was formerly of much greater extent and more generally wooded; for in a survey made in the reign of Charles I. it was estimated that originally it had extended over forty-three thousand acres. Much of the decrease appears to have been due to unwise grants by the Crown and the negligence of the officials in dealing with encroachments. Charles I. disafforested and granted to Sir John Wyntour eighteen thousand acres of the forest, on which more than a hundred thousand trees were growing. Sir John employed five hundred woodmen to clear the portion of woodland included in the grant; and so effectually was this done that when a survey was made in 1667 only two hundred of the oaks and beeches were found standing. Parliament passed an act in 1680 to remedy the effects of this wholesale clearance, and under its provisions eleven thousand acres of the forest were enclosed and planted. From the plantations then made most of the timber was obtained for the royal dockyards until its use was superseded by the employment of iron in shipbuilding. During the long war of the French Revolution the Forest of Dean supplied more than a thousand loads of timber annually for the construction of warships.

According to Camden, the destruction of the Forest of Dean was one of the objects which the commander of the Spanish Armada had instructions to effect in the event of the success of that expedition. Evelyn makes a statement to the same effect, showing how much the maintenance of the English Navy was supposed to depend upon the timber grown in this great forest; and he says that in the reign of Elizabeth an agent of the Court of Madrid was sent to this country to procure the destruction of the forest by treachery or otherwise. The same writer states, in his *Sylva*, that a tremendous hurricane occurred in his time, which caused great devastation among the trees, 'subverting many thousands of goodly oaks, prostrating the trees, laying them in ghastly postures, like whole regiments fallen in battle by the sword of the conqueror, and crushing all that grew beneath them. The public accounts reckon no less than three thousand brave oaks, in one part only of the forest, blown down.'

The Forest of Dean has long been famous for its collieries and ironworks, the latter having been in existence before the Roman conquest. There were seventy-two furnaces for reducing ore into

'pigs,' as they are technically designated, as early as the reign of Edward I.; and it is said that the heaps of refuse which had accumulated during the Roman occupation of the country were utilised by the miners of those days as affording material more readily convertible into iron than the ore they obtained. It appears, therefore, that the ore worked in the Roman-British period was very imperfectly smelted.

The population consists chiefly of miners and men employed in the ironworks. The minerals of the district were formerly worked under customs similar to those of the lead-mines of Derbyshire. The mining rights could be exercised only by those who were called 'free miners,' or by persons claiming the right through purchase or otherwise from a free miner. The qualification of a free miner was that he had been born in the hundred of St Briavel, and had wrought for a year and a day in a coal or iron mine. He was then entitled to claim the privilege of mining in a portion of the forest selected by himself, subject, however, to the approval of an official called the 'gaveller,' who was appointed by the Crown, and who fixed the limit of the privilege and the rent to be paid, which was usually very small. In the course of time capitalists entered the field, bought up the rights of most of the miners, and carried on mining and iron-smelting operations on a more extensive scale and in a more efficient manner, with corresponding success.

There are now two railway stations in the forest, on a branch of the Midland line from Birmingham to Bristol, one at a lodge in the centre of the forest, known as the Speech House, the other being the terminus of the branch at Coleford, a small town in the centre of the iron-works district. In this neighbourhood is an old farmhouse known as Scowles Farm, a name it has received from the numerous vestiges of iron-working of the period of the Roman occupation, the sites of which are locally known as 'scowles.' These old mines were formed by sinking a circular pit to the average depth of about twenty feet, with a diameter of from twenty to thirty feet, and then, when a promising bed of ironstone had been found, working the ore as far as it could be followed. Some of these ancient workings are said to extend two or three hundred feet underground. The ore drawn from them is of fibrous appearance, so rich in metal that much of it looks almost like pure iron; and it has been found in such abundance about these old workings that it may often be seen built into the rough walls surrounding the gardens of the miners' cottages. However inefficiently the mining operations of those old times may have been conducted, a considerable quantity of ore must have been raised, for the whole of the surface between Coleford and the Wye is thickly covered with the slag and cinders from the Roman furnaces.

Roman coins and broken articles of pottery have frequently been found in the vicinity of these old iron-mines. The greatest find on record was made between fifty and sixty years ago in a small oak coppice called Perry Grove, about a mile from Coleford. Three earthen vessels were found containing upwards of three thousand brass coins, with inscriptions showing that they were coined during the Roman occupation.

The earliest forest laws were made by Canute in 1016, when forests were maintained solely as hunting-grounds for the recreation of the king and the nobles. The Danish king took to himself power, therefore, to take possession of any tract of woodland in the kingdom, and made the most strict regulations for the preservation of the wild animals that roamed at large in the forest. Verderers were appointed to have charge of the royal forests; and as these officers were likely to become unpopular with the dwellers on the borders of the forest, severe penalties were decreed against any man who offered violence to them. The death-penalty was exacted for the offence of killing a deer in a royal forest, though this sentence was sometimes commuted to loss of the eyes; and if any man, for sport or mischief, should chase a deer until it panted, the lowest penalty was a fine of ten shillings, which in those days was a much larger sum, in respect of its purchasing power, than at the present time.

William I. confirmed this severe code of forest laws, and used its power of afforestation without the least regard to the rights of the subject. His immediate successors followed his example with so much freedom that the encroachments made by them on the estates of the nobles, added to their own possessions, amounted under the early Plantagenets to one-eighth of the land of the kingdom, most of it consisting of woodland. Such a state of things could not exist without creating discontent among all classes, and in 1257 great concessions were obtained from Henry III. in the charter of the forests, the opening clauses of which stated: 'All forests which King Henry, our grandfather, afforested and made shall be viewed by good and lawful men; and if he [the king] have made forest of any other wood more than of his own property, whereby the owner of the wood hath sustained injury, it must be forthwith disafforested. . . . All woods which have been made forests by King Richard our uncle, or by King John our father, unto our first coronation, shall be forthwith disafforested, unless it be our own property.'

Then comes the most important clause in the charter, from the point of view of the humanitarian: 'No man from henceforth shall lose either life or limb for killing of our deer; but if any man shall be taken therewith, and convicted for taking our venison, he shall make a grievous fine, if he have anything on which to levy a fine;

and if he have not, he shall be imprisoned a year and a day, and after the year and a day have expired he shall be liberated if he can find sureties, and if not, he shall abjure the realm.' A clause scarcely to have been expected in those days provides that 'All that be outlaws of trespass within our forests since the time of King Henry, our grandfather, unto the first year of our coronation, shall come to our peace without let, and shall find to us sureties that from henceforth they shall not trespass in our forests.' One curious clause runs as follows: 'Whatsoever archbishop, bishop, earl, or baron in coming to us at our commandment shall happen to pass by one of our forests, it shall be lawful for him to take and kill one or two of our deer, by the view of the forester, if he be present, or else he shall cause one to blow a horn for him, that he seem not to steal our deer; and likewise it shall be lawful to do the same in returning.'

The village of St Briavel, situated on the western edge of the forest, was once a town of considerable importance, and possessed a market under a charter granted by Edward II. Its inhabitants formerly enjoyed some singular immunities which have now become obsolete; but they still have a right of common in Hudknoll's Wood, a tract of about seven miles long and one broad, on the banks of the Wye. The parishioners have also the right of cutting wood in other parts of the forest, but not of felling timber.

St Briavel's Castle was built in the reign of Henry I. by Milo Fitzwalter, Earl of Hereford; but about a century later it was a royal fortress, the constable, who was also the warden of the forest, being appointed by the Crown. The castle is now in ruins, the north-west front alone having escaped the ravages of time; it consists of two round towers, between which is a narrow elliptical gateway. The walls are eight feet thick. There are vestiges of a spacious hall; but the greater part of the structure fell in 1754, and the remainder twenty years later.

There are a great number of apple orchards in the neighbourhood of the forest, and the making of cider is one of the chief industries of the agricultural portion of the district. The cider made here is said to be particularly fine. The process has been described as follows: The apple-trees are gently shaken two or three times in the autumn, so that only the ripest of the fruit may fall. The apples are then collected into heaps, if possible under cover, with a free admission of air, and allowed to remain so for ten days or a fortnight, some kinds of apples even longer. Care is taken that no decayed fruit or impurities shall be taken to the cider-mill, where the apples, under the old method of cider-making, of which Mr Thomas Hardy has given some glimpses in *The Woodlanders*, were crushed by a large circular stone turned by a horse. When the apples were completely crushed, the 'must'—as the resulting pomaceous mass is called—was placed in large square pieces of hair-cloth, so folded that nothing but the juice could escape when they were placed under the screw-press by which it is expressed. The juice is received into a large tub, from which it is conveyed into casks. About sixty years ago a mill driven by water-power was substituted for the horse-mill, and this makes from three to four hundred gallons of cider per day. In this mill the apples are placed in a large box, with an aperture in the bottom through which the apples are dropped between two iron rollers, by which they are broken in pieces, and these fall between two stone rollers set close together so as to crush the seeds too, a result considered to be essential to the flavour of the cider. The 'must' is first received into a large tub placed beneath the rollers, and afterwards it is placed in the press. Seven or eight sacks of apples will yield about a hundred gallons of cider.

AMANTIUM IRÆ.

Oh, woman's eyes are April skies,
That light with joy and gloom with sorrow,
And what to-day was bright and gay
May change again before to-morrow:
Come, while the clouds no longer lower,
And let me cull the present hour
Of gladness, ere it find the power
Some alien ill to borrow.

Come, seek with me the headland free,
And I my secret haunts will show you,
And high above the mere you love
On cushioned mosses soft bestow you:
Where under glassy waters green
The glimmery boulders dim are seen,
And white-winged gulls their plumage preen
On the black rocks below you.

Here, at your feet, will I, my sweet,
Keep ward, your every wish divining,
Till yellow noon—too soon, too soon!—
Deepens, to purple eve declining:
And you the cloud-strown sea will view,
And I shall look at only you,
And both may know, what one ne'er knew—
Peace, that has no repining.

C. H. St L. Russell.

, TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

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THE ESSEX MARSHES.

By the Rev. Canon VAUGHAN, M.A.

ALL along the low-lying coast of Essex, from the mouth of the Thames at Tilbury Fort to the towns of Harwich and Dovercourt, there stretch thousands of acres of salt-marshes, the haunt in former days of myriads of wild-fowl, and still of considerable interest to the naturalist. A glance at the ordnance map of the county will show the great extent of these 'marshes' and 'salterns,' especially near the estuaries of the larger rivers, the Crouch, the Blackwater, and the Colne. A 'marsh,' it should be noted, differs from a 'saltern,' in being a tract of land reclaimed from the sea, and protected against the inroads of the tide by an artificial bank or sea-wall. These marshes, which make valuable grazing-land, are intersected by numerous dikes or ditches, known locally as 'fleets,' bordered in many places with dense jungles of reeds and rushes. 'Saltings,' on the other hand, are those stretches of marsh and mud land which have not been enclosed by a sea-wall, but are more or less flooded during the period of high tide.

To most persons this vast region of marsh-land would doubtless seem desolate enough, especially in the dreary days of winter when the wind is sighing among the reed-beds, and the peewit is uttering its mournful cry. But to the lover of nature these same marshes, in winter and summer alike, are of the deepest interest and fascination. The tread of civilisation has hardly touched them, and as one wanders along the sea-banks, clothed with silver Artemisia and the wild spinach, it is easy to imagine the days when the early botanists went gathering 'simples' along the Essex shore, when large colonies of black-headed gulls bred in the salt-marshes, when kites and buzzards soared overhead, and when the raven was a common bird. In former years immense numbers of wild-fowl were annually taken in the 'decoys,' of which there were many along the coast. During the winter of 1799 no less than ten thousand head of widgeon, teal, and wild-duck were captured in a single decoy at Tillingham. About the same time, at the famous Goldhanger decoy, 'as many pochards were taken at one drop as filled a wagon, so as to require four stout horses to carry them away.' Even now there are several decoys regularly worked in the Essex marshes, and a goodly number of birds are annually taken. Widgeon, teal, and wild-duck still abound along the coast in winter-time, and the rarer sorts of wild-fowl are not uncommon. The handsome pintail may occasionally be met with, and the pochard and the shoveller are far from rare. A few of the latter always remain to breed in the marshes, and the nest of the sheldrake may be found most seasons in the sand-hills near Dovercourt. Large numbers of coots still exist—in former years the gunners used to reckon them by the 'acre'—and a custard made of coots' eggs has only recently ceased to be a regular dish at village festivals. A few small colonies of the black-headed gull, also known as the peewit gull and the cob, may be visited by those who know their haunts, but the eggs are no longer collected, nor the young birds fatted for the London market.

And if those vast stretches of lonely marsh-land, where the peregrine and the raven may still occasionally be seen, have a strong fascination for the ornithologist, they are no less dear to the botanist. The flora has but little changed since the days of the early herbalists, and most of the plants noticed by Gerard and Merritt and John Ray and Adam Buddle may be found in their ancient habitats. Now, as then, the wild celery is plentiful in the marshes; the rarer form of sea-lavender continues to flourish at Walton, and the beautiful marsh-mallow, with its stem and leaves thickly clothed with starry down, puts forth its pale, rose-coloured flowers every autumn, as when in the sixteenth century old Gerard found it 'very abundantly' in the salterns 'by Tilbury blockhouse.' There is the same hoary growth of orache and wormwood, the wild beetroot grows as rankly as ever on the sea-banks, and the twin-spiked cord-grass (*Spartina stricta*) remains the characteristic plant of the muddy salterns as in the year 1667 when Merritt

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first recorded it as growing at 'Crixey Ferry in Essex.' A specimen of this plant, gathered 'in August 1703 in the marshes about the river Wall-fleet, near Fambridge Ferry in Dengey-hundred in Essex,' may be seen in the Buddle herbarium, now preserved in the British Museum at South Kensington, which is one of the earliest collections of British plants in existence.

The stretch of country between the beautiful estuary of the Blackwater and the mouth of the river Colne is one of special interest to the naturalist. In this district at least fourteen decoys formerly existed, and one, occasionally used in hard winters, remains. In Ray's famous *Synopsis of British Plants* there are many references to these marshes, only some twelve miles distant from his home at Notley, where the great naturalist found, among other notable plants, the broad-leaved pepperwort, the golden samphire, and the delicate sea-heath. In his day the sea scurvy-grass, 'of great use in the curing of scurvy,' grew so plentifully in the marshes about Maldon that the common people, he tells us, 'gather it and send it about to the markets above ten miles distance, where it is sold by measure.' But, strange to say, one scarce and striking plant, which to-day grows on the Essex shore, was overlooked both by Gerard and Ray. This is the shrubby sea-blite, or *Suæda fruticosa*, which the writer saw in abundance last autumn at Maldon, St Osyth, and in Mersea Isle. In the last locality the plants were as large as gorse-bushes, and could be seen for a considerable distance. Ray, indeed, mentions the plant as growing in the Isle of Portland, where it still flourishes on the pebble beach; but he is silent as to its existence in Essex. It was found, however, a few years after his death by his disciple, Samuel Dale; and it is interesting to know that a specimen gathered by him is preserved in the South Kensington Museum, and labelled in Dale's handwriting, 'Western end of marsh bank, Harwich, plentifully.'

The Isle of Mersea, situated at the junction of the Colne and the Blackwater, is still linked to the mainland by the old Roman causeway called the Strood, which crosses Pyefleet Creek, and is covered by the sea at high water. An additional interest is given to this locality as being the scene of Baring-Gould's powerful story *Mehalah*. Standing on the sea-bank over against Mersea 'city,' as a cluster of old wooden houses and an ancient inn are somewhat pretentiously called, one can see in the distance the cluster of thorn-trees on the 'Ray,' which sheltered Glory's cottage, built of tarred wreckage timber and roofed with pantiles. Beyond the 'fleet' stretch the salt-marshes of Salcot and Virley, where stood until recently the ruffian Rebow's lonely farmhouse, built in 1636, and known from its appearance as Red Hall. This district, in the early days of the last century, was a centre of the smuggling trade, and deeds of violence were far from rare. According to one story, a whole boat's crew were found on Sunken Island, off Mersea, with their throats cut, from whence they were transported to the churchyard and buried, and their boat turned keel upwards over them. It was difficult to realise such lawless deeds amid surroundings so calm and peaceful as presented themselves to the writer last September. Cattle and a few sheep were grazing in the 'Ray' marshes, and a kestrel hawk was hovering over the thorn-trees. On the sea-bank the golden samphire was in flower, and hard by the rare dittander; a couple of wild-duck were lazily floating down the Rhyn; the rippling waters of the estuary were dotted here and there with the picturesque red sails of tiny fishing-craft; and no sound was to be heard save the rustling of the wind among the tall reeds and bulrushes that edged the 'fleet,' and the cry of the sea-birds as they settled on the mud-flats left bare by the receding tide. It was in Mersea Isle that many interesting plants were found by our early herbalists, and most of them still grow there. There are several specimens of the sea-wormwood, showing its various forms, now preserved in the British Museum, which were gathered by Samuel Dale in Mersea Isle two hundred years ago. Adam Buddle, vicar of North Fambridge, found the rare sea-trefoil in 'the salt-marshes by the Strood.' John Ray noticed the glaucous form of the bulrush in the 'sea-ditches at Mersea.' Earlier still Gerard gathered the beautiful sea-convolvulus, with its large, pale, rose-coloured flowers striped with red, on the sandy shore, and the very rare sea-cotton-weed or *Diotis maritima*. This latter, he says, 'groweth at a place called Merezey, six miles from Colchester, neere unto the seaside.' Unfortunately this exceedingly rare plant, which is thickly clothed with white cotton and bears small terminal heads of yellow flowers, is now lost on Mersea, and is no longer to be found in the county of Essex.

Another locality in the marshes intimately associated with the early history of the Essex flora is 'Landermere Lading,' at the head of Hamford Water. The spot, especially at high water, is a very picturesque one, with its ancient wharf and storehouses of black boarding roofed with deep-red tiles, and its group of fishermen's cottages, in one of which the famous physician Sir William Gull passed his early years. Even at low tide the vast stretch of mud-flats has a quiet beauty of its own, especially when the sea-lavender is in flower. On the sea-banks about Landermere a rare and striking plant, remarkable for its large umbels of yellow flowers, and found only in one or two localities in England, is still as plentiful as when old Gerard first discovered it in the sixteenth century. It is known as sulphurwort, the reason whereof is thus given by our famous herbalist: 'I have digged up roots thereof,' he says, 'as big as a man's thigh, blacke without and white within, of a strong and grievous smell, and full of yellow sap or liquor, which quickly waxeth hard or dry, smelling not much unlike brimstone, called sulpher, which hath induced some to call it sulphurwort.' He found it 'very plentifully on the south side of a wood, belonging to Walton, at the Naze in Essex, by the

highway side.' About a hundred years later Ray noticed it 'in the salt ditches near Walton;' and there it flourishes to-day, the most distinguished plant of the Essex marshes. But sulphurwort was not the only plant that attracted the notice of John Gerard at 'Landamar Lading.' In a meadow adjoining 'a mill beyond a village called Thorp, at a place called Bandamar Lading'—evidently the same locality as the above—he found 'in great plentie' the wild asparagus or sperage, corrupted in the language of the marshmen into 'sparrow-grass.' The writer searched in vain last autumn for this exceedingly rare plant in the vicinity of 'Bandamar Lading;' but it is interesting to know that it still exists in the Essex marshes. Another handsome and important plant seen by the great herbalist at Landermere was the sea-holly or Eryngo. Ray thus refers to it in his list of rare Essex plants, published in 1695: 'This being a plant common enough on sandy shores I should not have mentioned, but that Colchester is noted for the first inventing and practising the candying or conditing of its roots, the manner whereof may be seen in Gerarde's Herbal.' The extract from Gerard is too lengthy for quotation, but it is worthy of notice that a considerable trade in candied Eryngo-roots, as a remedy in pulmonary diseases, was at that time carried on at Colchester. The chamberlain's accounts for the borough in the early years of the seventeenth century contain frequent entries with regard to the payment for 'Eryngoes,' which seem to have been valued at about four shillings a pound. The trade was continued until comparatively recent years, when it appears to have ceased in consequence of the difficulty of obtaining a sufficient supply of roots.

In those days several native plants found in the salt-marshes were regularly gathered by the people and used as vegetables. In his scarce book on *The Antiquities of Harwich*, Samuel Dale tells us that the sea-beet or sea-spinach, so abundant along the coast, was commonly used 'as a boiled sallet and in broths and soups.' This good and sensible custom has not yet died out, and many a dish of wild spinach is gathered every spring in the salt-marshes along the coast. One of the commonest plants to be found on the mud of the salterns is Salicornia or glasswort, and this in the olden times was regularly gathered for purposes of pickling. It served as a substitute for the true samphire, which was not to be met with in the Essex marshes. But, strange to say, within the last few years a single patch of this species, *Crithmum maritimum*, a plant immortalised by Shakespeare, and still to be seen in luxuriant profusion in its historic locality on the chalk-cliffs of Dover, has been discovered in the salt-marshes not far from the Landermere Lading. Never before had the plant been recorded for the county, or, indeed, for the east coast of England. But there, on one solitary spot in the vast stretch of salterns, it was flourishing in lonely splendour. How it came there must be left to others to decide.

'THE ISLES OF DESTINY.'

CHAPTER VII.

THE following morning Eric Forsyth left Tanera. No announcement had been made previous to his departure, nor was there anything about his farewell to Norma to denote the existence of a warmer tie between them. Once again Madge had to own herself baffled.

When she recalled the young man's resolute face, his words of hope and confidence to her in the cave regarding the outcome of his suit, she could not bring herself to believe that after all he had allowed the occasion to pass uncommemorated.

And if he had spoken, was it possible that Norma had refused him?

No, there had been nothing of the hang-dog air of the rejected lover about him when he started that morning—nothing to denote that the dearest ambition of his heart had suffered extermination. On the other hand, whatever had taken place there was assuredly no cause for congratulation. She must only wait and watch developments, trusting to time to unravel the mystery.

As for Christopher, he hardly knew whether he was more relieved or perturbed by the uncertainty of the situation. The revelation that had come to him the preceding day had left him face to face with a hopelessness akin to despair.

At last, when it was too late, he had recognised his love—fool, blind, insensate, that he had been, to allow a chimera of his imagination to so long defame its glorious likeness.

He had loved her from the beginning—from the first glimpse caught on the darkling moor, through all the ups and downs, the vain struggles, the fitful chances and changes of these memorable weeks, until now, and now might pass into eternity and never another chance of fulfilling love would be given him.

It was scant compensation to know that the penalty was deserved. The hunger of heart and arms he was enduring was not to be so lightly appeased, and the daily sight of the girl in the new strange mood which had come upon her since Eric's departure added torment to the pain he was enduring.

She seemed to have enclosed herself within a barrier of wilful reserve, and even to Madge could not be persuaded to unbend. But it was in her treatment of Christopher that the change was most apparent. The pitch of intimacy they had reached

in their solitary conversation on the sea-shore had marked, as it were, the high-water line of their friendship, and since then the tide had been gradually receding until at last there was nothing left but the dry barren rocks of estrangement and alienation.

Christopher, bitterly incensed by her conduct, did all in his power to break down the unnatural armament in which she had encased herself; but his endeavours were vain, and even his attempts to provoke her to open hostility proved futile.

At last his injured pride rebelled, and with an ache in his heart, such as in the old days of blatant cynicism he had never imagined, he resolved to cut short his visit.

His leg was now sufficiently well for him to travel, and the 'lights of London,' flickering delusively in the background of his consciousness, promised at least a temporary cure for the pain he was enduring.

Once free of the hallowed atmosphere that seemed in some mysterious way to pervade the solitude of these uttermost isles, he would be able to fall back again upon the well-worn pose by means of which he had managed heretofore to sustain a certain zest in existence. It would be a step down, he acknowledged, but no excitement in store for him would be delirious enough to obliterate the memory of the clean, pure days he had lived in this sea-girt hermitage, or of the love that had given him a glimpse of heaven upon earth.

Madge did not attempt to dissuade him from his purpose. She had formulated a theory of her own regarding the change in the girl, and was impatient to put it into execution, a project impossible of realisation so long as Christopher remained to act as a stumbling-block between them.

Accordingly, that very afternoon, Christopher drove himself into Tanera to make inquiries about the sailings to the mainland. It was growing dusk when he started upon his homeward way, and as he drove along the now familiar road his thoughts were full of the first evening he had traversed it, little thinking how fateful a way it was to prove. He recalled the fantastic splendours of sea and sky, and contrasted them with the dim grayness that prevailed to-night.

The same contrast seemed to be reflected in his life, and the wraith-like mist fleeting silently across his path was but a shadow of the happiness that had escaped him—the 'might have been' that haunts each one of us at some period or another, and is perhaps the hardest of all the ghosts to brave. To-morrow he would pass that way again for the last time, and it would be all over—the bitter, sweet chapter closed for aye, the golden promise unfulfilled, the light extinguished.

What a skipjack knave is fate to thus wave the beacon in our eyes only to whet our appetites and make our failures seem more dismal! But to-night—there was still to-night—the very place, the very love, the very memories were his to enjoy. He might revel in them at his will—let his imagination run riot—dream his foolish dreams—clasp his phantom happiness to his arms—be fool, madman, what he willed. Without seeing distinctly, he knew that he was approaching the spot where he had caught his first glimpse of Norma MacAlan. The girl's figure was as vividly before him as it had been that night, though glorified now by the love with which it was ever surrounded in his thoughts.

A portion of ruined dike by the roadside marked the exact place, and as he reached it he reined the mare back on to her haunches. But his determination to indulge for a brief space in the foolish fancies that crowded into his thoughts was put to flight by the sight of Norma herself seated upon the crumbling stones.

'You—Norma!' he cried, and was down on the road beside her in an instant.

'I was walking home. I have hurt my ankle,' came her voice, cold as the mist itself. 'Why did you stop just here?' she added curiously. 'You did not see me at first, did you?'

'Why did I stop?' he echoed in a dazed fashion, glancing round him as if for an answer. 'Why did you choose this very spot to sit down? It was fate, I suppose, in both cases. But,' with an abrupt change of tone, 'do you think you can manage to climb into the trap? Tanera is only three miles farther on, and I am afraid I am very little good at doctoring.'

For all answer she struggled to her feet.

He caught her by the elbow. 'You have no right to take these long, lonely walks,' he said, struck by a sudden dread of what she would have done if he had not happened to pass that way.

'Thanks; I can help myself,' she retorted coldly, shaking herself free of his clasp.

His hands dropped to his sides. A white, tense look came over his face.

'If you were not hurt like this I would demand to know how I have offended you,' he said between his teeth.

There was a moment's silence, then she raised a face as pale as his own.

'You have done nothing,' she said, 'but show from the first how much you disliked me. That for a woman is surely excuse enough.'

Christopher flung back his head and laughed, the relief was so great.

'No, I have never liked you,' he said, and then paused. 'But God knows I have loved you,' he added, a new note of passion in his voice.

His words seemed to echo round the naked heath. To his own ears there was something sublime in the utterance. It was the supremest moment of his life. Surely—surely the woman before him must be feeling something of his exultation.

'If I could only bewitch you into loving me for a single minute now, I think I would be satisfied,' he said, taking one of her hands as he spoke and holding it against his beating heart.

The magnetism of his touch thrilled her through and through, but she gave no sign.

'You say you feel things so acutely,' he went on, harking back almost unconsciously to her confession of that last day of their intimacy. 'Can you not feel my love, Norma darling? Your hand is cold,' covering it where it lay with both his. 'Is your heart cold too? I cannot believe it. If there is any power in love, you must—you must—ah!'

She had torn her hand from his clasp and was covering her face with it.

'You are cruel, cruel—cruel to talk of minutes,' she cried.

'Give me eternity then,' he mocked.

She jerked her hands down again.

'It isn't mine to give,' she said; 'it has been yours from the beginning.'

'Norma, what do you mean?' he cried, seizing her by the shoulders, his dark, passionate face bent down to hers.

A quiver went through her.

'I mean that I have always loved you,' she said.

CHAPTER VIII.

BARRA SOUND lay sparkling in the sunlight. Rum and Eigg and the blue hills of Skye showed up faintly through the eastern haze. Only sun-kissed Muic—'set like an emerald in the casing sea,' might have been a verdant strip of Paradise gone astray in mid-ocean. A north-easterly breeze sent the *Minnie* of Tanera skimming bravely forward across the Sound.

Christopher had claimed his promise, and Norma with the tiller under her elbow was steering him straight and true as she knew how to Barra and her home.

Scarcely a week had gone by since the wonderful evening of revelation on the moor, but to Christopher the time had been long with the unnatural length of many and varied emotions. He belonged by training rather than heredity to that class of individuals who, no sooner is a fortunate climax reached in their affairs than they are filled with anticipations of a treacherous anti-climax—a want of faith justified in nine cases out of ten by exasperating circumstances—and hardly had the first flush of his conquest passed before the inbred weakness asserted itself.

The transition from utter hopelessness to the acme of realisation had been too abrupt to carry conviction, but it was mainly his own sense of unworthiness that hindered his faith. When he thought of the strong, steadfast love of years, to say nothing of the material advantages from which the girl had turned for his sake, he was filled with misgivings. A dreadful sense of responsibility combined with his doubts to torment him. What if after all he failed to make her happy, he who up to this had failed so miserably in achieving happiness for himself, and even now, when as it seemed the miracle of miracles had come to pass, was incapable either of realising or possessing it.

The effect of this inward conflict was to render him the most imperious and tyrannical of lovers, and Norma seeing nothing that was not of himself in his masterful dominion was only too ready to yield to his behests. When he sued for an early date for the wedding she agreed without an instant's demur, and when that morning he had abruptly demanded at breakfast that she should accompany him to Barra for the purpose of interviewing her father upon the subject, she had eagerly seconded the proposal. But in his secret heart the impending visit was to Christopher rather a disagreeable necessity than a long-looked-for consummation. It is true that the old chieftain had written in courteous terms to accept him as his son-in-law, but he had been able to read between the lines and to recognise how keen was the old man's disappointment in the destruction of his hopes.

Had Norma fulfilled his expectations and become the wife of Eric Forsyth, he would have had the satisfaction of seeing a MacAlan reigning at Luaig again, and of knowing that the blood if not the name of his race was being perpetuated on his ancestral soil. But it was not to be, and the intention so plainly evidenced in his letter of making the best of a bad bargain was not calculated to appease Christopher's tender susceptibilities. Some such reflections kept him moody and silent during the passage, and Norma on her part was too full of rosy anticipations as to the prospective meeting between her father and lover to notice his pre-occupation.

The only other occupant of the boat, old Donald Farspach, proved himself a model of discretion as far as the lovers were concerned. His sole care in life seemed to be the management of the sail, and never did sail require such constant manipulation. He would have scorned to cast so much as a glance at the pair, and even his directions to the steersman were delivered with carefully averted head and eyes gazing horizon-wards. Time was when he too had known the heyday of love, and not all the buffetings of wind and weather had had power to rub the sweet taste of it from his memory. 'Time was,' could a sadder conjunction of words be found, I wonder, in all the vocabularies of the world.

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The old chieftain, a gallant figure in his kilt of sombre tartan, was waiting for them on the little landing. His eyes fell with unconscious anxiety upon Christopher as the young man stepped ashore, but to judge by their expression what he beheld did not displease him.

'You have two vacancies to fill,' were his first words, 'My son and my son-in-law. You are a soldier too, so it is no insult to my lad that you should act as his substitute.'

He broke off, waiting, as it were, for some recognition of this the proudest privilege he could have bestowed upon any man. But Christopher, who in his turn had been scanning his host's face for any sign of the likeness he had dreaded half-unconsciously to see, and finding none had been proportionately relieved, now stood stubborn and silent before the unexpected dilemma.

'You overwhelm me, sir,' he said at last. 'Let me first deserve your confidence,' but not a trace of humility was there in the tone to confirm the apparent subservience of the words.

'My daughter's choice has made that unnecessary,' retorted the old man gallantly. 'But I like you none the less for your independence. Neil would have said the very same in your place, I am sure. Poor lad, he was always one to stand or fall by his own merits. Ay, ay, poor lad.'

The keen eyes were looking past Christopher now—past the black chain of rocks that encompassed the little harbour—past even the wide, faint line of the distant horizon, straight into eternity, as it seemed to Norma, who had been a silent but anxious spectator of the scene. Then all at once the remembrance flashed back into them, and with a half shamefaced, half apologetic glance at the pair, he turned and led the way from the pier.

The fisher-folk of Barra came to the doors of their primitive round-roofed hovels—which seemed to Christopher rather like potato-pits than human dwellings—to watch the trio as they passed.

Strange, long looks were cast at the young man—no common curiosity, but the searching gaze of those who sought to find more than the mere drawings of the past, the inflections of a present mood on the face of every stranger, as if the weird foreshadowings of destiny might be seen to flicker there already like the goblin shadows in a firelit room. And Christopher, as he realised their purpose, smiled to himself with new confidence. The warmth and cordiality of his reception had done much to allay his uneasy fears.

As for Norma, she was too full of unrestrained delight to pay much heed to the morbid scrutiny, and at every few paces would dart away to exchange greetings with one or other of her friends, now stooping to hug a brown baby, or wring its mother's hand, or smile up into the father's face. But many a head was shaken as she passed, and many an ominous word of prophecy dropped.

To be happy in the islands meant to be ring-marked for affliction.

At last they reached the gray stone house on the brae-side in which the MacAlans had lived for two generations as tenants on their own land.

'Norma will take you to see Luaig after luncheon,' said the old chieftain, turning on the threshold to address his guest. 'It is higher up the brae than Creagan Islair. Nearer the clouds, nearer heaven, as I used to think in my young days. My castle in the air I called it then. Ay, and it might have been my very own if I had willed. But'—— he paused, a half-whimsical, half-tender smile flickering for a moment over his keen, eagle-featured face. 'Norma's mother had eyes like the blue deep, and the Forsyth heiress's were green as a serpent's.' There was no doubt about the smile now—then his hand fell heavily on Christopher's shoulder. 'History has a trick of repeating itself, my lad,' he said. 'And now that I have seen you I cannot blame the lass, though to be sure Eric is as good as gold, and'——

But Norma's arms round his neck put an abrupt end to his eulogy.

. . . . . .

Yet, notwithstanding his fresh lease of confidence, Christopher could not resist a pang of the old, jealous fear when a little later he stood by Norma's side gazing up at the ancient stronghold of her race. To his eyes, with the rugged splendour of its lichened towers and crow-stepped battlements sharply defined against the amber sky, its impregnable walls, upon which no ivy ever grew or green thing crept, its bold, defiant opposition to the four winds of heaven, it seemed the very embodiment of all that was highest and most to be coveted in life—unconquerable strength, pride, and dominion without; love, tenderness, beauty, home within. And for Norma this ideal might have been a concrete reality instead of a vague, impossible dream.

'Might have been'—with a startling vividness there flashed into his memory the thought of another day not so long gone by when the 'might have been' after which he himself had yearned had been unexpectedly fulfilled. Why not this?

Fate plays strange tricks sometimes, leads us by simple ways towards shining horizons; but even at the verge, the road turns and we are brought up at a precipice.

Who had better proof than he of its capricious devices?

'And that might have been my home,' said Norma in a dreamy voice at his elbow. Christopher turned sharply. To his sensitive ears there was something malignant in this coincidence of ideas between them. But whereas the girl was thinking of the past, and the rights which for poverty's sake had been forfeited, his thoughts were all of the future, and of those which for love's sake she had foregone.

'Yes—if it had not been for me,' he allowed bitterly.

For an instant she hesitated, then as his meaning flashed upon her she turned and slipping her hand into his, led him with her impetuously down the steep precipitous path by which they had come.

'If all my life were to be as rough and thorny as this road, I would rather be your wife than the queen of any castle, and you know it—you know it,' she cried passionately.

Christopher answered nothing. Her words had shamed him to silence; but long afterwards they came back to him with the force of prophecy, and acted like a beacon on his darkened path.

IN THE HOME OF THE 'HABITANTS.'

By the Rev. ROBERT WILSON, Ph.D., St John, New Brunswick.

THOUGH French Canada was discovered by Europeans more than four centuries ago, outside of a few important centres it is still a land but little known. This is traceable to the severity of its winters, its frequent change of rulers, but more than all to the exclusive and non-progressive character of its people. Perfectly contented with themselves and their surroundings, they have paid but little attention to what has been done in the great outside world, and innovations upon ancient usage have been frowned upon. Notwithstanding the fact that for a hundred and fifty years they have enjoyed the benefits of British rule, under which such marvellous progress has been made elsewhere, they are in dress, speech, habits, style of buildings, methods of work, ideas, and beliefs, just what their ancestors were more than two centuries ago. Quebec has been described as 'a bit of medieval Europe transplanted to the New World but still embalmed in its ancient sentimentalism, upon which the rush and roar of modern unrest produces as little effect as do the Atlantic breakers upon the cliffs of Cape Breton.'

The slumbers of this Rip Van Winkle people are being disturbed, and there are indications of an awakening. Much of this is due to the visitors from the United States and the other British provinces, who have found in the quiet country villages along the St Lawrence the rest they so greatly needed. Indeed, I know of no place where holidays could be more agreeably spent than in the quaint old city of Quebec and its surroundings. Having seen it for myself, I can heartily endorse the following beautiful pen-picture: 'The majestic appearance of Cape Diamond and its fortifications, its cupolas and minarets blazing and sparkling in the sun; the noble basin, like a sheet of purest silver, in which the navies of the world might ride in safety; the graceful meanderings of the river St Charles; the numerous village spires; the fertile valley, dotted with the picturesque houses of the *habitants;* the distant falls of Montmorency; the park-like scenery of Point Levis; the beauteous Isle of Orleans; and the grim purple mountains to the north—these form a picture which is unsurpassed in any part of the world.'

This region is rich in the memories of other days. Every cape and cliff and stream is associated with some daring feat in adventure or in war. Here Cartier made his first landing, Champlain founded the first French colony, and here was made the first effort to convert the wild aborigine to the faith of the Christian. Here the 'red man' and the 'pale face' contended: the one for his home and hunting-grounds, and the other for territory and wealth; here the Gaul and the Briton fought long and fiercely for supremacy in the New World; and here was many an heroic deed done which glows upon the page of history. These hills and valleys have echoed to the thunders of the broadsides from the ships in the harbour and to the terrible responses from the citadel; and here the battle ended in which both Wolfe and Montcalm fell, and the flag of France gave place to that of Britain. These things remind us that the human lends a deeper interest to the finest scenes in nature, and invests them with an importance and clothes them with a charm to which otherwise they could lay no claim.

Many of the visitors above referred to were business men who, while seeking rest and recreation, had their eyes open, and learned what the country could furnish and what the people needed, and were not slow to turn the knowledge thus acquired to practical account. Money has been invested in various enterprises; and the railway, the steamboat, and the telegraph have brought the *habitant* face to face with a new order of things. Outsiders are studying the character of this non-progressive people, as well as the resources of their country, and they in turn are watching the new-comers with suspicious curiosity. The outcome can be easily foreseen. Jacques will have to adapt himself to his new surroundings, and fall into line with his neighbours of other nationalities.

The *habitant* is a devout Roman Catholic, has an unshaken faith in the religion of his fathers, and is undisturbed by the doubts and cavils of modern times. His zeal and devotion are shown in his liberal support of the Church and her institutions; for, according to Professor Goldwin Smith, the value of ecclesiastical property in the province of Quebec amounts to ten million dollars. Among any other people the numerous fasts and holidays would be considered burdensome; but, in the belief that they are necessary, the burden is uncomplainingly borne. As a class the rural clergy of Quebec are kindly, considerate, sympathetic, and faithful in the discharge of their duties, and to these good qualities is largely due the tremendous power which they possess, and which has enabled them, as Professor Smith puts it, 'to make the people in their way moral, and in their way religious.'

A few miles from the city of Quebec is the celebrated shrine of St Anne de Beaupré. Thither for more than two and a half centuries invalids in large numbers have gone in search of health. Tradition states that while the seventeenth century was yet young, some Breton sailors were caught in a terrible storm on the St Lawrence. In their distress they invoked the aid of the sainted sister, and made a vow that if rescued from a watery grave they would build a church to her honour on the

spot where they should first land. They were saved, and in fulfilment of their vow built a small wooden chapel, which has been replaced by an immense cathedral-looking structure. There is a spring within the church, whose waters are said to possess wonderful curative properties, and thousands from all over the continent come to be healed. In a single year as many as a hundred and twenty-five thousand have made pilgrimages thereto to see for themselves whether the benefits said to be derived from these healing streams were real or pretended. That cures are effected is undeniable, as is testified by the abundance of canes, crutches, and other things needed by the afflicted which are left behind as being no longer required.

The home-life of the *habitant* is of the most primitive character. As a rule he marries young, is frugal in his habits, moderate in his demands, and has neither the desire nor the opportunity to 'waste his substance in riotous living.' He is a man-of-all-work, and can do a little of everything: farming, fishing, lumbering, or whatever else comes to hand; and during the spring, summer, and autumn looks after his interests with commendable attention. He builds his own house, manufactures or repairs his furniture and farming and fishing utensils, cures the tobacco he has grown in his garden, salts his own pork, and makes boots and moccasins for himself and family. In his wife he finds an efficient helper. She spins, weaves, and makes cloth and flannel for home use, and blankets and sheets and towelling for Marie and Jeannette when they go to housekeeping for themselves. She plaits dry rushes and straw into hats, knits stockings and socks, and makes up the skirts, jackets, and other clothing that is needed, out of the wool that has been spun and woven by herself. When she is needed outdoors she is always willing to lend a helping hand. The home itself is attractive on account of its quaint old-fashioned appointments. It has an open fireplace, over which hangs a picture of the Saviour or some saint; usually there are a couple of arm-chairs of rustic design, a spinning wheel, distaff, and a loom.

During the winter the *habitant* takes things more easily, and a good deal of time is given up to pleasure. Vivacious, light-hearted, and cheery, cares do not press heavily on him, and with 'the blues' he is not very familiar. He can sing, dance, play the fiddle, perform in amateur theatricals, tell a story, and with the ease and grace peculiar to his people can make himself an agreeable companion. His stories are largely about ghosts and spectres, and of the dreadful things they did or foreshadowed, told with an awesomeness of tone and manner that convinces the listener that the teller of the story has no doubts as to its truth.

The *habitant* has a supreme faith in the superiority of his race, and is fully persuaded its equal is not to be found. Of this the following are good illustrations. One of these men found his way to Quebec, and was taken by a friendly priest to see the sights in the quaint old city. Among the places visited was a convent church, on the walls of which was a picture of David and Goliath. After gazing for some time with evident admiration upon the giant, he said, 'What a fine man!' 'Yes,' said the curé, 'a fine man.' 'Grand! splendid!' and after a pause he added, 'I suppose he was a French-Canadian.' And the good-natured priest, not wishing to disappoint the simple-minded patriot, replied, 'Oh yes, he was one of our people.' Another is equally to the point. Some six or eight months after the death of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, a tourist met with one of this class on the lower St Lawrence who had not heard of her decease. 'What!' he said, 'the Queen die?' 'Yes; she died last winter.' 'And who is Queen now?' was the next question; to which the answer was, 'We have a King now.' 'And who is the King?' 'Why, her son, the Prince of Wales.' Then, using a term common in Canada to show how positions are sometimes secured through the influence of powerful patrons, he said with a smile, 'My! my! he must have a big *pull* with Mr Laurier.'

The tourist in Quebec will find many families bearing the names of White, Wilson, Leonard, Campbell, Fraser, Ross, Burke, Flynn, and others belonging to other races who, in language, look, and sympathies are to all intents and purposes French. The explanation given me was this: several generations back adventurous young men, dissatisfied with their surroundings, and having no strong ties to bind them to the old land, came to this country, married French wives, and became the founders of the families referred to. As they were engaged in hunting, trapping, and other avocations which took them away from home a large part of the time, the children learned their mother's language, while the father measurably lost his by disuse; and at his death it ceased to be spoken in the home. But with the father's name there was associated the more enterprising spirit of the Briton; and to-day some of the cleverest men in public life in Quebec are the children of these mixed marriages. To meet a Campbell or a Ross unable to speak either Gaelic or English would be a surprise to other members of the same family in the home of their common ancestors; but it would be more surprising still to find him thoroughly and intensely French, with no desire to acknowledge any relationship with his kinsfolk beyond the seas.

The steady adherence of the French-Canadians to the British throne has been a surprise to many. The descendants of Britain's hereditary foe, and compelled to take the oath of allegiance to the conqueror or leave the country, they bowed to the inevitable and met the generosity of their new rulers with a frank confidence alike creditable to all concerned. Not more than fifteen years after their conquest they were invited to join the American revolutionists; but although France aided the Americans against the Motherland the French Canadians resisted every appeal, and

rallied round the standard of their new Sovereign, and thus helped to save to Britain the larger part of North America. They were equally loyal in the war of 1812; and in the contingents sent to South Africa the Frenchman has again been in evidence. While the loyalty of the French-Canadian may differ from that of his English-speaking fellow-citizen, because he is not of the same race and language, and while other reasons may be given for it, the fact remains that despite all the influences that have been brought to bear upon him, he has for more than a century and a half, in peace and war, been true to the Union-jack; and to-day he is proud to see, in the person of the Right Honourable Sir Wilfrid Laurier, one of his own race and creed the prime-minister of this Dominion.

From the Canadian premier, with his 'pleasant manners and his sunny ways,' the transition is easy to the Canadian songstress who has been described as having 'a song-bird in her throat,' with her superb voice and wonderful gifts of song. Of Madame Albani the *habitant* is very proud, because she is of his own kith and kin, having been born in the little village of Chambly, on the Richelieu river, in his much-loved province of Quebec. When a mere child she gave evidence of being possessed of rare musical ability, and at the early age of fourteen was solo soprano in the cathedral at Albany, State of New York; and her association therewith led her to choose Albani as her professional name. None of the singers of the day has been more honoured by noble and royal houses than has this modest Canadian, who, amid it all, 'has preserved the utmost simplicity of manner, with a quiet dignity and reserve.' She was a special favourite with Her Majesty Queen Victoria, before whom she frequently sang, and with whom she was often an honoured guest at Balmoral. She has been the recipient of many valuable gifts from the rulers of Germany, Russia, France, and other distinguished persons; but none of these are so highly prized as those given her by the late Queen, including brooches, bracelets, necklaces, the Victoria badge, and other ornaments, richly set with gold and jewels. Of the many occasions on which she has been called to sing before royalty special mention may be made of one. In accordance with the wish Her Majesty had expressed, Madame Albani sang beside the bier the night before the entombment. The scene was singularly solemn. Only members of the Royal Family, the German Emperor, and the King of the Belgians were present. The catafalque was piled up with wreaths. In the dim light of the evening hour, and amid the hush and quiet that prevailed, Albani sang, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' followed by a hymn of consolation for the bereaved. Speaking of it afterwards, she said, 'I had no more tears, and to sing as my last homage was a blessed comfort.'

Canada has two official languages—the English and the French—both of which are used in the parliaments at Ottawa and Quebec, and in the Courts of Quebec. While this recognition of their own language, together with certain special ecclesiastical privileges accorded the French Roman Catholics, has doubtless done much to attach them to the British throne, looked at from the broader Canadian standpoint it is a matter to be deeply deplored. Apart altogether from the question of expense, which is quite an important consideration, the recognition and use of two languages tends to perpetuate racial distinctions, and to prevent that unity of thought and action so much needed. Persons of other nationalities learn our language, adopt our usages, and eventually become one with us, even to the Anglicising of their name; but the French remain a distinct people with little or no prospect of their becoming Saxonised. The gravity of the case is made all the greater by the fact that they are largely found in the one province, where they are overwhelmingly in the majority; thus, holding the balance of power, they could at any time decide the fate of the government of the day, and menace the peace and safety of the country. However, the thing cannot now be remedied, and the best must be made of what all thoughtful persons feel to be an unfortunate arrangement. In any case, Quebec is, owing to its position between the English-speaking provinces in the east and those in the wonderful west, an important part of the Dominion; and every true patriot will seek to promote the best interests of the whole, irrespective of race, language, or creed.

THE COLONEL'S MURILLO.

CHAPTER III.

I WAS thrown down by the impetus, and badly shaken; but no bones were broken, and I soon rejoined the others. The whole affair had happened so quickly that I could hardly realise it; but the idea that I, for the first time in my life, had failed, and that, too, in an affair wherein no honour or glory could be gained, rendered me so savage that for a time I could hardly speak. I even did not notice that some small shot were embedded in my cheek. Nearly all the men had been wounded, two rather severely. They were all furious, and spoke of treachery, and swore at the Spaniards, just as if they had not lost more than any of us. To have renewed the attack would merely have been to court disaster, so I determined to return at once.

'There is treachery somewhere,' exclaimed Largemont, glancing angrily at the two Spaniards.

'Of course there is,' I answered sharply; 'but what's the good of talking?' and I gave the order to fall in and return.

The mystery was, however, quickly solved.

'*Mira esto!*' ('Look there!'), cried Don Ricardo, as we turned a sharp corner, 'there's a fire on the Diente del Perro.' Sure enough, between two triangular peaks, certainly somewhat like a dog's tooth, we saw the warning light which must have been plainly seen from the monastery. Of course, as we ascended we had our backs to it, and in our hurry, as we dismounted, we had not noticed it.

The colonel, in his anxiety to possess the Murillo, came to meet us, and was naturally terribly angry. He swore at me, he swore at Largemont, and all the men.

'I'll have that picture,' he exclaimed, 'if it requires the whole regiment to get it.'

As he got more angry I got calmer. It was not that I cared for the loot; but I was now as anxious to get it as he was, for I was still smarting from the pellets in my face, the loss of a good horse, and above all my failure.

'*Mon colonel*,' I said, 'with sixty men I can tell you how that place can be taken. In fact, it might be taken with a dozen.'

'You are getting clever now,' he answered sarcastically; 'it's a pity you had not all this wisdom before.'

Taking no notice of the remark, I continued, 'The key of the position is El Diente del Perro.'

'Well?' he said.

'To-night you give orders that the reveille sounds at 5.30, and we start for France to-morrow morning at six. This will soon spread, and the spies that the monks have evidently got in the village will be sure to let them know by this evening. At three o'clock to-morrow I will go round with old Tellier and rouse twenty men, and we will quietly lead our horses out of the village and take a guide to show us the way to the Diente del Perro and bind all the men we may find anywhere near the summit. Let Largemont, who now knows the road to the monastery, start with sixty men soon after us. We may take it for granted the monks will be asleep; but, allowing that they are on the alert, let half the men get among the trees opposite the building. Let the attack this time be made with two battering rams instead of one, and this will divide their fire. In any case, our advance in the open will be covered by those hidden in the trees.'

'That sounds sensible,' said my commander.—'Have you any fault to find with the plan?' he added, turning to my brother-officers. They gave their assent. '*Que le parece à usted?*' ('What do you think about it?') he asked of Don Ricardo.

'I quite agree with you all,' said the Spaniard, 'and if you will permit me to take a stroll this evening I will show Captain Lallesan the path to the Diente del Perro, and point out a few landmarks to guide him.'

The order to start for France the next morning naturally caused great disappointment, for the men had had their hopes of plunder raised to such a pitch that they could hardly believe it to be true.

That evening I went for a stroll with some comrades and the two Spaniards. The latter asked to be handcuffed together, and pretended while in the vicinity of the village to be very sulky, as they feared if they appeared to be on friendly terms with us it might get reported to the monks, and they might regret it later on.

When we had gone some way, Don Ricardo showed me all the salient points to be remembered. A small hut, a group of trees skirting a low wall, and a white cottage very high up, which he said was used as a wine-shop by smugglers.

On returning, I changed the billets of those men I meant to take with me, placing them in a barn outside the village. The only man in the secret, apart from the officers, was Tellier. The next morning he and I went round together and gently roused the sleeping men, who, when they were told our object, rose with alacrity. A young lad that the sergeant had heard of was also found. He admitted he knew the way, and was told he would be shot if he deceived us and well rewarded if he proved faithful.

Quietly and quickly, but by a roundabout way, so as to avoid passing more houses than we could help, we started on our journey. The horses were led up to the path, and then the men mounted. At that time of the year it is hardly dark all night, and although we had to go slowly we made fair progress. The hut was passed, we found the wall and the group of trees; in fact, our young guide was quite astonished by my topographical knowledge. The lad told us we should probably find some men at the wine-shop; and sure enough we did, and, what was more, against the walls there were several bundles of dry faggots with which they evidently intended to make another bonfire if necessary. No sooner did I see this than I dismounted some of the men and entered with a cocked pistol. Soundly sleeping, I saw before me—for at that height it was fairly light—five of the most villainous-looking rogues I ever set eyes on. Taken completely by surprise, they offered no resistance as we bound them. They thought they would be hung at once, and said that they had had nothing to do with the fire on the previous day; but they gratuitously told us, and this information proved very useful, that there were three men sleeping in a hut just by the bonfire that had been lighted yesterday. The rest of the ascent of the Diente del Perro I now saw was so fearfully steep that I determined to continue the way on foot, so I left some of the men behind to guard the prisoners and look after the horses.

As we got near the summit I ordered the men to cock their carbines and advance very cautiously. Suddenly we saw the little hut before us. Nearer

and nearer we approached. I wished if possible to seize these men as we had the others. I did not want to fire on them, as I knew how the report of firearms would re-echo in the mountains and give the alarm to some who might get to the monastery ere our men arrived, for they were not to start till after us. Alas! my wishes were not fulfilled, for when we were not thirty paces from the cabin a fellow in a brown coat, who in spite of our caution must have heard us, appeared at the door. He tried to bolt, but a bullet through the heart brought him down, and the same fate befell another; but the third, though wounded, disappeared over the ridge. Rushing to the summit, we saw him clambering down the side that was almost as steep as a wall. I shouted to him to stop, and he hid himself under a projecting rock. He knew he was a dead man if he moved, and he remained where he was till two of my troopers went down and brought him up. His wounds were attended to, we gave him some wine, and placed him in the hut.

The men had found plenty of wine and bread at the *posada*, so, as they had had nothing to eat, they made their meal a little below the summit, while I, lying down with the young guide beside me, surveyed the scene beneath through my glass and awaited events in a very contented frame of mind.

I am no poet, I am no artist; but I doubt if either one or the other could really do justice to the unfolding beauties of the scene before me. The only blot upon it was the work of man—the square fortress-like building of the monastery, which I could just discern through the rising mist. Beyond it rose the purple mountains, whose highest and farthermost snow-capped peaks were flushed by the rising sun behind me. Gradually, as that glorious orb rose, its rays descended even to the monastery, whose windows reflected its bright beams, and the stream like a silver streak at the side of the winding path glittered and sparkled as if it rejoiced in the coming day. The awe-inspiring silence, too, lent a grandeur to the landscape. Looking at my watch, I saw it was a little past four. Pedro, as I called the young guide (it is always safe to call a Spanish boy Pedro), suddenly called my attention to an eagle flying across the valley with a rabbit in its claws; and following its course I saw it alight on its nest, and through my telescope I could clearly see the old birds feeding the young ones. The young lad, who had marvellous eyesight, became vastly interested, till I ordered him to keep his gaze fixed on the pass up which I reckoned my comrades must soon appear. We had not long to wait.

'There they are, *señor capitano*,' he exclaimed, and below I saw the glitter of the helmets of the advance-guard, and the others soon came into sight. As Largemont was so young, the colonel had given the command to a captain of the third squadron, named Braune, who I could see with Largemont and the two Spaniards, and immediately behind them came the mules with the long battering-poles slung on them. Through my powerful glass I could even see the expressions on the men's faces. Largemont was laughing and joking with Podarnez; but there was no smile on the pale face of Don Ricardo. I saw him continually looking up in my direction, evidently drawing the attention of the others to the fact that there was no fire this time. My men had finished their meal, and had now taken up their places on the ridge. Seeing how the helmets of those below us had glittered in the sun I ordered my men to take off theirs for fear by any chance they might be seen from the monastery.

It was impossible to watch the progress of our comrades without a rising sense of excitement. On they went, though sometimes lost to sight as they followed the winding pass; then reappearing again, but ever getting nearer and nearer. At last, and it must have been half-past four by then, we saw them arrive near the summit and dismount, but rather lower down than we had done; and then I saw them unsling the long poles. Fully thirty climbed up the steep side of the pass to take their position among the undergrowth in front of the monastery and cover the advance of their comrades. At this point my eye fell on the carcass of my unfortunate horse, which had not been removed. Remembering my fate, I saw that the two officers preferred to go on foot. As for the huge monastery, now bathed in sunlight, the shuttered windows remained closed, and all was silent as the grave.

The men around me held their breath, for they knew what a few minutes would decide. I saw Braune raise his arm; I seemed as it were to hear his word of command, and in a moment the men had taken up the poles. In another minute they were on the level, and like little ants I saw them run across the open space. The great door withstood the first impact; but the others followed behind, and with a thundering smash broke it, and the men disappeared from view. Those who had been covering the attack rushed across the open and quickly followed the others into the building. A cry of relief broke from us all as we beheld the successful termination of the enterprise. Though there was no longer any need to watch, now that success was ensured, still it was difficult to take our eyes from the spot. At last, however, I gave the order to descend. Turning to take one more look, I saw a small cloud of smoke arise, and I saw men issuing from the door and begin loading the mules. After I had well rewarded young Pedro, anxious to give the news to my colonel, I hurried after my men; and with light and joyous hearts we then hastened down to the village. We could not, alas! bring the poor wretches who had been crucified to life, or the troopers we had lost the day before; but at any rate we had got level with their barbarous murderers. I told our delighted colonel all that had taken place.

'The place is alight, is it?' he exclaimed with a coarse laugh. '*Sacré bleu!* those gentry are getting their roasting before their time.'

We had not to wait very long ere the men with Braune and Largemont at their head were seen approaching. I never saw such a scene in my life.

In front of them the troopers had rolls of golden vestments, some carried silver candlesticks in their hands, and nearly all had bottles of rare old wine slung across the pommels of their saddles. The two mules were heavily laden not only with valuables but also with bullion. What was more, it appeared that the provincial of the order was just then making a call at the monastery, and his fine carriage, drawn by four mules in the most gorgeous harness, brought up the rear.

'Here are your pictures, colonel,' said Braune, as he delivered up the canvases, 'the Murillo, the Membling, and the Hubert Van Eycks; we have done, as you see, no end of "business."'

'Bravo, my boy!' replied his delighted commander. 'There's some good after all,' he added with a laugh, 'in old women being frightened out of their wits on their deathbeds.'

I asked eagerly after the Spaniards; but no one seemed to know anything of them except that they had gone after the prior.

Then, in the *plaza* beneath an old chestnut-tree, with the four corpses hanging above, the loot was piled up and the distribution commenced. As the senior major would have nothing to do with the wicked robbery, as he called it, Midon had first choice and took a very beautiful jewelled monstrance, and the senior captain took a magnificent pair of silver-gilt candlesticks nearly two mètres in height. Then it came to Braune's turn. Now, Braune was a very knowing, reserved sort of fellow. He looked askance for a while at a fine silver lectern; then, as if an idea struck him, he said he would just look in the carriage. As he passed me I thought he winked, but I may have been mistaken; anyway, he quickly returned with a splendid gold chalice studded with jewels, which, I may add, he admitted to me some time afterwards he had carefully placed there himself. The sight of this naturally excited the wrath of Midon, and he claimed the chalice.

'Why, may I ask,' he exclaimed, 'was not the carriage emptied?' The colonel, however, would allow no quarrelling, adding that after all Braune deserved a good prize for having carried out his orders so well, and told me to take the next turn. The vehicle was now emptied; and, as good luck would have it, I got, apart from the colonel's pictures, by far the most valuable article of all—namely, a very fine worked *sobradorada* (silver-gilt) reliquary. It was not as showy as the chalice or the monstrance; but the workmanship was far finer, for it was without doubt made by Juan de Arphea. And so the selection went on. I received besides a beautiful pair of candlesticks and also an embroidered cope so thick with gold that it would almost stand up.

I dare say the bullion which was divided among the troopers amounted to fifty thousand francs. It was difficult to compute the value, as many of the coins were so old and some so thin and worn. There were some especially magnificent gold coins called *onzas* (worth about seventy-five francs each) and gold doubloons and pieces of eight. There were also a large quantity of silver coins. Some of these gold and silver coins bore the effigies of Ferdinand and Isabella and Philip the Fourth. There were also some rare medals, including one issued in 1577 by Pope Gregory the Thirteenth to commemorate the Massacre of St Bartholomew. I bought many of the silver coins from my men afterwards, as the innkeepers, when we got into France, would not look at them. I thought them interesting; but I had myself no idea of their value, and gave them to an uncle who was a collector, and he was so pleased with them that he gave me a beautiful horse to replace the one I had lost.

We had hoped to have crossed the frontier that day; but our progress was slow on account of those who had been wounded in the ambush, and also because of the carriage full of loot. But at last we left the hateful country behind us, and entered *la belle France* in the afternoon of the day following.

Though the landscape was very similar, the same mountains and running streams, how different it all seemed! There were no cowardly assassins behind the crags and no scowling faces to meet in the villages. Never did my beloved country seem more beautiful, the wine more rosy, or the women prettier. There were no frowns for us now in that latter quarter, the girls being as willing to kiss as to be kissed; and we saw life under a roseate hue. We had placed all the colonel's pictures and all the most valuable loot in the very gorgeous carriage that had been taken from the monastery. We found, however, as we travelled along, that the carriage and its gaily harnessed mules attracted too much attention; besides, it was impossible to fasten the doors securely, so we changed it for an ordinary travelling-carriage. We had shutters put to this, and locks on the doors, and the colonel sealed the locks and kept the key; at night, too, it was always put in a secure place. A few days brought us to Toulon, and here a singular incident—and, as it turned out for all of us except the colonel, a regular catastrophe—occurred.

We were seated at *déjeuner* when a captain of Chasseurs happened to come in.

'What, Dolinier!' he exclaimed in surprise, 'is it really you? And I see you have got your epaulettes at last.'

'*Parbleu*, Crampel!' answered our chief. 'Well, I am glad to see you. But I understood you were a major; you ought to be, for we two started together.'

'So I was,' returned the captain in an angry tone; 'but—well, when I was in Spain I did a little "business"—pictures, &c., you understand. As it happened, the Emperor had just written to his brother very strongly about that sort of thing; so

Joseph, that arrant hypocrite, who actually had wagon-loads of loot himself already packed, pitched on me and some others, and we were degraded; and as I had no influence I was sent to this confounded place, and have been here ever since.'

I do not know that I have a keener sense of humour than most men; but I know I never shall forget the expression on the colonel's countenance as he listened to the indignant captain's story of his grievances, the way his jaw fell, and the look of alarm in his eyes. Some of the others, too, were no less affected. How I kept my countenance as I looked at their woe-begone faces puzzles me now; and when I left the room I simply exploded with laughter, though, apart from Largemont, who being a junior had not so much to lose, I found few who joined in my merriment. For the rest of the day my chief was remarkably thoughtful.

The weather was extremely hot, and the next morning, soon after we started, the colonel complained of the heat and got into his carriage. The following day, though the 'medicine major' could not understand his illness, Dolinier said he must stay behind, and gave over the command of the regiment to the senior major.

Now, Colonel Dolinier was very popular, and we all hoped that he would soon recover. With sorrowful faces, we went up to his room to wish him adieu. We found him in bed, apparently very depressed. 'Here, Midon,' he said, in a sad voice, 'you take the key of the carriage. I have taken my pictures out and sealed the door. I fear I shall never see any of you any more. Adieu! I hope you will all have better luck than I.'

THE PASSING OF THE PIANIST.

By T. C. Hepworth.

AMONG the 'true words spoken in jest' is the theory advanced by an American humourist that every human being is at some time of his career possessed of an insane desire to play on a musical instrument. Both among the classes and the masses we have evidence of this wish to make music, or at any rate to make a noise which by courtesy is called music. From the aristocratic amateur, who is often an accomplished musician, we can step down the rungs of the social ladder until we get to the terrible young men of the coster type who march in solemn couples through the streets at eventide emitting raucous duets from cheap concertinas or still cheaper mouth-organs. Or if we ourselves take a walk abroad in these same monotonous thoroughfares of suburbia we note that from various villa residences come the scrapings of violins, the deeper notes from the 'cello, and even the strident tones of the cornet, to say nothing of the tinkle of thousands of conflicting pianos. For the most popular musical instrument of all is the pianoforte, without which the furniture of a house is considered incomplete. Indeed, there are houses where the piano is regarded simply as a necessary piece of ornamental detail in a room. Happy are the folk who live next door to such a silent instrument. But, as a rule, the family piano is kept going from early morn to dewy eve, and a good deal later than that. The children begin before breakfast with Czerny's Exercises, and later on with mutilations of Beethoven; while the more frivolous members of the household finish up the day's performance by excerpts from the comic operas. Even Sunday brings no rest to the family piano, and the performers who execute such wonderful acrobatic feats upon its keys up to the last thing on Saturday night can now be heard painfully plodding through a series of hymn tunes or stumbling over the intricacies of some more ambitious work of a similar serious character. It was not always so. Only a few years ago the possession of a piano meant such a considerable outlay of money that only the well-to-do could command it; but now, thanks to the hire-purchase system, the piano finds its way into the humblest of homes.

It must be confessed that really good players are very seldom heard, except in the concert-room. To attain anything like proficiency on this instrument the player must begin his or her education at an early age, and must devote several hours a day to hard work on the keyboard. There are plenty of mediocre performers who play well enough to appear occasionally on the concert platform in support of some charitable object; and in choosing a title for this article we had these excellent members of the community in our mind rather than those who make a profession of pianoforte-playing. For these are the performers, who are so far above the general level and so much beneath the high standard now necessary to the professional pianist, who will presently find their occupation gone. Their highly accomplished rival is the pianola, a mechanical adjunct to the piano, which in intelligent hands can give a rendering of the best compositions which are quite beyond the powers of any but the most highly accomplished musicians.

Most persons, and certainly those who have any claim to be called musicians, would, a few years ago, have laughed at any proposal to play a piano by mechanical agency. They would have said that nothing artistic was to be hoped for from a mere machine. And, possibly, in support of their unassailable position they would have pointed out of the window to the dusky foreigner grinding out a tune from the organ at the corner of the next street.

It is still called an organ; but, as every one knows, it is in reality a mechanical piano. They would ask whether that horrible hammering upon stretched strings could by any effort of the imagination be called music? Even our law-makers, who are not generally influenced by æsthetic considerations, have recognised the street organ as a possible instrument of torture, and have ordained that, on the request of any householder, the grinder thereof shall be compelled to move away to annoy some one else.

But only those who have never heard the pianola could be ignorant enough to compare it for one moment with the perambulating street horror. It is a most beautiful and highly finished piece of mechanism, and therefore it is strictly correct to call it mechanical. But the mechanism is so under control of the operator that he can direct its movements exactly as if it were an obedient and highly capable pupil. The pianola takes the form of a neat cabinet, which is placed immediately in front of the piano keyboard, and it is furnished with a row of leather-covered fingers, one for each note on the board. At the lowermost part of the cabinet, in front of which the player sits, are two sloping pedals like those attached to a harmonium, only that these act upon suction-bellows, the entire mechanism of the construction being set in motion by the suction of air. Hidden in one part of the cabinet there is a little air-engine, whose duty it is to turn a horizontal cylinder in front of and in full view of the player, upon which the perforated music-scroll is rolled up as the performance progresses. These perforations are drawn over a series of apertures, one for every note on the instrument, and every time one of the apertures is uncovered by a perforation the air is sucked through and the finger associated with that particular note strikes the piano-key. That, very briefly and imperfectly stated, is the secret of the mechanism of this wonderful piece of apparatus; and it is evident that, if it had no other means of control, a perforated record passed through it would result in a performance of much the same character as that of the street organ. And it is very difficult indeed for any one who knows little of the perfection to which machinery is now carried to understand how a thing of bellows and levers can be made the medium of a masterly interpretation of a musical score. Here we come to what may fairly be called the nerve centres and the brain of the apparatus.

On a ledge in front of the player, and just below the cylinder upon which the perforated paper music-scroll is rolled up, are three small levers. That on the left hand is the sustaining lever, which lifts the dampers of the piano, and does the same duty as that performed by what is commonly called 'the loud pedal.' The next, or middle lever, governs the air-supply, and the sounds can by its aid be graduated from *pp* to *ff*, as the lever is urged to left or to right as it is grasped between the thumb and finger of the operator's hand, for according to the amount of air supplied to the mechanism is the force with which the notes of the piano are depressed. The third lever, on the right-hand side of the ledge, acts upon the wind-engine and determines its speed, so that it is in the power of the performer by actuating it to make the piano play slowly or quickly and to accelerate or retard its speed as he may wish. This, the *tempo* lever, has connected with it a stylus which traverses the perforated paper roll above, as it is being rolled off one reel and wound up on another. This metal pointer, or metrostyle as it is named, is the most recent addition to the pianola. Moved in connection with the *tempo* lever, it is made to follow a sinuous red line which is described longitudinally upon every music-roll arranged for the instrument. And to fully appreciate its purpose it is necessary to describe how these red markings are originally produced.

Let us suppose that the particular piece of music in question is one of Chopin's mazurkas. Every one knows that in one of these compositions, as in most other works of the same type, the *tempo* is continually altered; and that although musicians generally will agree upon the way in which it should be played, each master will give his own rendering of it. After the paper roll has been perforated and prepared for the pianola, a well-known professional pianist has been requested to operate the instrument, while a marking-pen has been attached to the metrostyle. As the master has moved the lever to the right or the left with every little change of speed that his taste suggests, the line marked upon the moving roll is shifted at the same time, so that a record is made. This line is printed on every subsequent roll produced of that particular piece of music, and it stands to reason that if the operator is careful to make the metrostyle exactly follow the path indicated for it by the master-mind, every shade of difference in speed is faithfully reproduced. It may be added that each roll so marked bears the authentication of the master through whose hands it has passed; and in looking through some of these rolls we find the names of Paderewski, Moszkowski, Bauer, and other famous players. At the same time, the operator is by no means bound to follow the mark; he may prefer to take his own rendering of the work in hand.

Mention of the names of those who are famous as piano-players will suggest inquiry as to the attitude taken by them towards this new-comer which threatens such serious rivalry. That they are not antagonistic to the pianola is shown by the way in which they have helped it by the metrostyle line. But, astonishing as it may seem, these eminent musicians are employing the pianola as a means of studying the different ways in which a composition can be expressed, and they regard it not as a rival but as a valuable assistant. Paderewski goes so far as to write of the instrument that it executes 'the masterpieces of pianoforte literature with a dexterity, clearness, and velocity which no player, however great, can approach.' And Moszkowski, equally well

known as a composer and a pianist, declares that 'any one hidden in a room near by who will hear the pianola for the first time will surely think that it is a great virtuoso who is playing; but after a while he will perceive his error, because the instrument never plays false notes.' M. de Pachmann gives it as his opinion that the playing of the instrument 'has the characteristics of the work of the human fingers.' It will be seen, therefore, that these eminent men and most capable judges are not grudging in their admiration of the pianola. They do not regard it as a rival, and they are right, for no rivalry is possible where genius of their kind exists. It is, as we have already said, the mediocre player who must fear for his position because of its introduction. And we can only sympathise with those who have devoted half a lifetime to diligent study and hard work at the piano keyboard, and who see in this new thing a rival which in the hands of any one ignorant of music can, with opportunity for practice, excel their best efforts. They are in much the same position as those who a few years ago, having devoted their lives to wood-engraving, suddenly found the art extinguished by photographic process. There are many little hidden tragedies of life brought about by each advance in our arts and manufactures.

The music-rolls are made of a specially thick parchment-like paper which will stand much tear and wear; but, as a matter of fact, there is very little strain in passing one of these rolls through the pianola. The end of the sheet has a little ring attached, which hooks on to the large wooden take-up spool, and as the music is played the paper is rolled up on the spool at the rate of about seven feet per minute. Then, when the end comes, and the piece is finished, the bellows are again worked, a button is touched which reverses the wind-engine, and, in much less time than it takes to describe, the music is rolled up once more in its original form and can be replaced in its cabinet.

These paper music-rolls cover the pianoforte literature of the world, and number at present about ten thousand different compositions, which include not only the sonatas of Beethoven, the nocturnes of Chopin, the rhapsodies of Liszt, and similar works by other composers, but the accompaniment to songs innumerable. Few pianists are there who have the gift of accompanying another performer. The pianola does so to perfection, both time and expression being so completely under control. By an arrangement with the publishers, the owner of a pianola can subscribe to a library which will forward to him or her at short intervals a selection of music-rolls.

No piano in a house need now be silent because the only person who can play it happens to be absent from home. The pianola is not only an expert player, but one which has none of those little airs and graces which some amateurs affect before they can be prevailed upon to perform. One more use has this mechanical player. If there is an exasperating piano next door we might perhaps mitigate its terrors by persuading its owner to adopt a pianola; indeed, in certain cases of extreme aggravation, it might pay to present him with one.

THE CASE OF THE 'MARIE CELESTE.'

AN OCEAN MYSTERY.

By J. L. Hornibrook.

N a certain morning, back in the sixties, the Spanish authorities near the Straits of Gibraltar noticed a vessel in the offing which speedily attracted special attention. She was a brig, with all sails set, and at first sight appeared to be heading direct for the Straits, as though to enter the Mediterranean.

A few minutes' scrutiny, however, revealed the fact that there was something wrong on board—something strange and inexplicable. Though the sea was calm and the weather fine, the brig did not hold straight on her course for two minutes together. She wobbled about and veered round with every changing puff of wind as if bereft of a guiding hand and left to stagger blindly onward of her own accord.

A boat was quickly manned and put off to the vessel, for it was seen by this time that she was not under control. As the men drew near they hailed her more than once, but no answer came back to them from the brig. They now perceived that the wheel was deserted; nor was a single soul observable on deck. Not without a certain misgiving, and an instinctive dread of some appalling sight which might meet their gaze, they boarded the strange vessel. The reality, though it differed essentially from what they had expected, was scarcely less startling. The brig was absolutely devoid of life. The entire crew, from captain to cabin-boy, had disappeared—vanished! A minute examination of the vessel revealed a truly extraordinary and astounding state of affairs. There was not a single boat missing. They were all in their proper places, slung on the davits and stowed on deck in the usual manner. Further than that, not a rope or stay, not a sail or spar, was injured. Everything, from truck to keel, was as sound as the day the vessel had sailed. More astonishing still, the captain's watch was ticking on a nail above his berth, and on the cabin table was found the remains of a half-consumed dinner, apparently as fresh as when it came from the cook's galley. The same thing was noticeable

in the men's quarters, and looked as though the entire crew had been interrupted or startled in the midst of their meal. And that was all. Below, as on deck, there was deadness and silence—a ghostly, mysterious silence, all the more appalling by reason of its inexplicable nature.

The brig was navigated into Gibraltar, and there the American consul came on board, for, as was seen by the name of her port on the stern, she hailed from Boston. He, in turn, proceeded to make a minute and searching inspection, overhauling the vessel from stem to stern, and noting every detail. The only fresh discovery was something which looked like the slash of an axe or cutlass on the bulwark forward; but this, in itself, was calculated to throw little light upon the mystery.

Let us now turn to the commencement of this remarkable voyage, which ended in such a mysterious and unaccountable manner. The *Marie Celeste* set sail from Boston under the most favourable auspices, and certainly there was nothing either in her complement or otherwise to warrant the assumption that the voyage would result in tragedy of any kind. She was an ordinary trading brig, bound for the Mediterranean ports with a general cargo of merchandise. Her crew consisted of seventeen hands, composed chiefly of Americans, Danes, and Norwegians. In addition, there was the captain, his wife, and their little daughter—twenty souls, all told.

Nothing, so far as is known, occurred during the voyage across the Atlantic other than the ordinary routine of life on board a vessel of this class. Not until the brig came within sight of the Spanish coast, or nearly so, did the catastrophe occur; and then it must have been of a sudden, overwhelming, and appalling character. The half-consumed dinners pointed to the fact that the crew were below at the time, undisturbed by any thought of approaching calamity.

From that day to this the fate of these twenty souls has remained an inscrutable and insoluble mystery. Nothing was ever heard of them, though the most searching inquiries were made on both sides of the Atlantic. Every sailors' home was notified by the American authorities, in case a stray seaman from the brig might turn up there. No intelligence ever came to hand. Not even a wave-washed bottle containing a message was cast up by the sea, nor a single body.

Of the various theories advanced in explanation of this singular ocean mystery, many may be dismissed as wholly untenable. Piracy may be put on one side, for piracy was as unknown in the Atlantic in the sixties as it is at the present day. Besides, if pirates had boarded the vessel and murdered the crew they must have left traces of their deadly work; not to mention the fact that they would scarcely have taken their departure without looting her from stem to stern.

It is equally impossible to suppose that the crew deserted the brig in a sudden panic, caused by the fear of her sinking, for not a single boat was missing. Nor was their disappearance due to a storm which swept every soul overboard. Storms leave abundant traces of havoc among sails and rigging.

The idea that every human being on board suddenly went mad and voluntarily cast themselves into the sea is altogether too far-fetched. It has been suggested, on the other hand, that one of the crew may have been attacked by homicidal mania, and murdered his fellows. But if so, where were the bodies? Even supposing that he had succeeded in his desperate attempt—one against seventeen—threw the bodies overboard, and finally plunged into the sea himself, traces of the tragedy would have been noticeable everywhere.

One truly startling and surprising theory would seem to cover the entire facts. American scientists were consulted at the time as to the possibility of the catastrophe being due to the attack of some terrible monster of the deep. They scouted the idea. We have now, however, a much more intimate and extensive knowledge of these sea-monsters; and the theory alluded to attributes the disappearance of the crew to the agency of a huge octopus or devil-fish. The scene might be depicted somewhat as follows:

There is a man stationed at the wheel. He is alone on deck, all the others having gone below to their mid-day meal. Suddenly a huge octopus rises from the deep, and rearing one of its terrible arms aloft encircles the helmsman. His yells bring every soul on board rushing on deck. One by one they are caught by the waving, wriggling arms and swept overboard. Then, freighted with its living load, the monster slowly sinks into the deep again, leaving no traces of its attack.

It may be pointed out, in support of this theory, that the mark of a slash on the bulwark of the vessel would look as if some member of the crew had seized an axe and attempted to chop off one of the threatening arms. If, however, the theory be not accepted, it must be left to the reader's imagination to furnish a better one.

A SUMMER NIGHT.

The blaze of glory in the west
  Pales to a golden afterglow,
  That steeps each hill and silent voe
In deep, soft waves of dreamy rest.

It seems a more than earthly light—
  That magic radiance, that gleams
  On lonely lochs and seas and streams
Throughout the Northland summer night.

The winter's dreary, darksome days
  Have changed into these glowing hours;
  Its driving sleet and pelting showers
Into this tender golden haze.

So oft, in carking cares' despite,
  Afar the clouds and darkness roll;
  And a great glory floods the soul,
As of the Northland summer night.

J. J. Haldane Burgess.

Shetland Isles.

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TALKS WITH GIRLS.

THE TEARS OF MR TURVEYDROP.

By KATHARINE BURRILL.

I SOMETIMES wonder how Mr Turveydrop would have borne it had he lived till the Twentieth Century. Fifty years ago he bewailed the decay of Deportment. What would he say to-day? Imagine his feelings if he saw a bicycle club scorch past his windows! Would he not shed tears—fat, wheezy, Deportmental tears—at the sight of 'Wooman, lovely wooman,' sprinting after an omnibus, or jumping on when it is in motion? I know he was idle, and fear he was selfish; but I cannot join in the wish of the old lady at the dancing class: 'I'd deport him! Transport him would be better.' For one thing, consistency is a very real virtue, and the great Turveydrop was certainly consistent. He lived for Deportment; he *was* Deportment if he did not teach anything; still, as Caddy said, 'His Deportment is beautiful.' Nowadays we teach a great deal (too much sometimes); we learn, or try to learn, a great many things; but our deportment is not beautiful. As Mr Turveydrop himself said, 'A levelling age is not favourable to Deportment.' There is no question that the present age is a levelling one; we are all in such a hurry to jostle our way level with everybody else that we have no time to think how we are deporting ourselves.

Athleticism in women does not tend to grace. A man Athlete is generally extremely graceful, a worthy descendant of the old Greek runners and wrestlers; but the woman Athlete often moves badly, with an ugly gait, and seems to have developed muscle excrescences in the wrong place. I do not care how good an athlete a girl may be, nothing looks so hideous as great lumpy muscles standing out in every direction. It is not pretty to see maidens who, in low-necked frocks, resemble the Infant Hercules! Women were intended to be graceful, to move well, and, as far as they can manage it, look beautiful and attractive. Women also ought to have graceful manners. Skin-deep manners do not go very far; the beautiful manners must come from a beautiful heart. To quote Turveydrop, 'We do our best to polish, polish, polish;' even the good manners that come from a good heart require a certain polish to keep them up to the mark. The words Gentlemen and Gentlewomen not only mean those of gentle birth, but those who are of gentle manner. We hear a great deal about the absurdity of every one nowadays being called a gentleman and a lady. Well, why not? Surely people who are of gentle birth are not so childish and churlish as to object. If it is true that to give a dog a bad name is to hang him, perhaps to give a dog a good name may induce him to live up to it. I was never much impressed with either the good feeling or the kindliness of the Duchess who called the shopman 'the nobleman with the bald head.' Perhaps, if we think it over, it really means more when we say 'man' and 'woman' than when we say 'gentleman' and 'lady.' There are not so very many real men and real women as you would think. However, when a lady *is* a lady, let her 'behave herself as sich;' let her remember she is the Loaf-giver, and not give us stones instead of bread. It is a thousand pities that there are misguided young people who think loud talking, sketchy manners, and boisterous movements indicate Birth and good breeding. They do just the reverse. To see some girls shop is to make you shudder. The noise, the chatter, the vulgar chaff, the absolute inconsideration of everything and everybody! The other day in a shop a Female Person hurrying out, thinking of nobody but herself, pushed through a little crowd at a counter and swung over a chair on which was seated a small child. Naturally, as its poor head came with a bang on the floor, it gave vent to a yell. Now, what did that Female Person do: turn round, pick the child up, comfort it, and apologise? Not a bit of it; she just looked over her shoulder,

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muttered 'Sorry,' and bounced out of the shop. It was the shop-walker who hurried forward full of distress for the accident, and gave the child a box of chocolates to dry its tears.

> When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?

I think we may be quite sure who was the gentleman on this occasion. Perhaps this is an extreme case; not many women are in the habit of leaving chairs and children ruthlessly strewn behind them in their triumphal shopping expeditions. But women might and ought to show more civility and consideration than they do.

Could you imagine Mr Turveydrop, with his snuff-box, cane, and white gloves, condescending to enter an electric tram-car? Suppose he did, would he be likely to sit and allow 'wooman, lovely wooman,' to stand? No; he would rise with much elegance (*and* Deportment), and, with a graceful wave of his hand, offer her his seat. Naturally, Turveydrop would expect thanks if not a swan-like curtsey. What would he receive? Miss would drop into her seat with not one glance in his direction, and not one single word to acknowledge his politeness. This I see every day. Not Mr Turveydrop, alas!—I wish I could meet him—but other men not less polite than the Second Gentleman in Europe, who give up their seats and never hear one single 'Thank you.' When we say the Age of Chivalry is dead, we must remember that if it is so, women by their own off-hand manners and rudeness have killed the chivalrous feelings in man. There is a saying, 'Men worship women kneeling; when they rise to their feet they walk away.' A modern girl would probably remark, 'What awful rot! I don't want to be worshipped. I want to be a real good pal; I'm not a goddess.' My dear young lady, you are *not*. Not in the very least like one; you never said a truer word. But why not cultivate a few goddess-like attributes? You sometimes hear the engaged youth say something like this, 'Yes, she's an awful dear, but not a bit good-looking;' or, 'She's too sweet for words, but of course she's not pretty.' Well, the modern girl may like *that;* I don't. Even when you know (with so many looking-glasses about) that plainness is your portion, it is more comforting to think Love is not a looking-glass, but a dear Blind God who thinks you beautiful. I quite appreciate the desire to be a 'real good pal;' but it is not a bad thing for a maiden to occasionally stay on her pedestal. 'We needs must love the highest when we see it.' It is better to look up than down; let Love soar in reverent worship sometimes; don't keep him always in bunkers. If the modern maid thinks it would be rather tiresome to have a Lover writing sonnets to her eyebrow, she can let him carry the golf clubs and hockey sticks; that will not cause him to break into verse. Moderna may think worship a bore; but would it not be rather nice to have some one think everything we do perfect?

> What you do,
> Still betters what is done. When you speak, sweet,
> I'd have you do it ever; when you sing,
> I'd have you buy and sell so; so give alms;
> Pray so; and, for the ordering your affairs,
> To sing them too; when you do dance, I wish you
> A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do
> Nothing but that.

There speaks the true Lover's attitude. Possibly, though charming in theory, in practice it might be awkward to order the dinner in a burst of song. Edwin would not care for it, and neither would the cook! Still, it would be nice if all Edwins *could* think that all Angelina's 'acts are Queen's,' and her dancing as beautiful and rhythmical as the little summer waves rippling to the shore. It is regrettable that many Angelinas dance as if they were gambolling whales or sportive elephants. Old Turveydrop was right about Dancing; nothing will make a woman so graceful and light-footed, and give her such beautiful movements, as learning to dance. Little girls should be sent to a dancing-class as soon as they can toddle. Three years old is not at all too young to begin. Instinctively a baby dances almost before it can walk. Children dance with joy and dance with rage, and they may as well be taught to dance properly. Women who dance beautifully invariably walk well and gracefully, while a bad dancer is generally a clumsy, lumpy walker. How beautiful the old dances were! The stately Minuet, with its sweeping curtseys, its courtly bows, My Lady sinking to the floor, My Lord bending over the little hand. What clicking of scarlet heels, what flashing of diamond buckles! Did swords flash in the garden afterwards, what matter? 'You have injured a sweet lady, and I challenge you'—to wipe out the injury in heart's blood is a better way than wrangling in a court of law. If they danced bravely and wore their flaunting brocades and laces bravely, they could die bravely, and what can man do more if he lives in an age of satin and velvet or an age of frock-coats and tall hats? They knew something of dancing long ago when even the Highwaymen could trip a stately measure; was it not a Coranto that Claude Duval danced on the Heath? They have all passed away: the Masked Highwaymen; the Beaus and Belles, 'dainty, painted, powdered, and gay;' the gavottes, the minuets, and the Corantos. A fascinating Age to live in, full of romance, and undoubtedly full of grace and Deportment. But there is no question that electric light is an improvement on the tinder-box; and though Dick Turpin is a charming person to read about, I rather doubt his being so pleasant to meet. It's very unromantic; but even for the pleasure of dancing a coranto with an attractive highwayman, I do not think many of us would care to give up express trains for coaches. The coach stuck in the snow makes a pretty Christmas number picture, but it must have been rather a chilly entertainment. We have no time now to minuet with slow

and stately steps through existence, but we need not rush to the other extreme and romp. We need not Kitchen Lancer if we have little leisure to imitate the Pavane. I shudder to think what would have happened if Turveydrop had seen a Cake Walk. I verily believe he would have had a fit, if not died outright.

If modern dancing has in some instances developed into a romp, there are still opportunities for a girl to show grace in her movements. A graceful waltzer is a very pretty sight. There are girls who dance charmingly. Skirt-dancing is an excellent thing to teach young girls; even the most awkward young person can acquire a certain amount of grace. Even if parents look upon dancing as frivolous (can they be so silly?) and do not approve of balls and dances, they should still give their girls dancing lessons. You may think the outward appearance does not matter:

> Rags is but a cotton roll
> Jes' for wrappin' up a soul.

I know that is true; but if you can, why not wrap up the beautiful soul and the kind heart in a graceful, attractive body? If it is important to be nice, it is nearly as important to look nice. I quite appreciate the good heart that moves about like an elephant let loose; but the good heart that moves like a deer will influence for greater good in the long-run. Dancing lessons will help a girl to look charming and to be charming. You may be full of kindliness and desire to make others happy; but if you cannot cross a room without knocking down a chair or two, or answer a question without turning crimson and glaring at the floor, people will never really believe in your good intentions. We can forgive men for being awkward and breaking things; they cannot help it. If you leave a man alone with a tea-table or a breakfast-table, he seems to wreck it; but women have no business to be awkward. 'Wooman, lovely wooman,' should be a model of all the graces. I can remember a dancing-master who, like Prince Turveydrop ('it sounds like a dog, but of course he didn't christen himself'), played a little violin while he taught us to dance. Very vigorous taps he gave with the bow, too, when we were out of step or out of time. He was a Frenchman, and almost as great a believer in Deportment as Turveydrop himself. It was really Deportment he taught, not merely dancing and what was then called Calisthenics. We were put through the most painful ordeals, compared with which walking on red-hot ploughshares would have seemed a pleasant pastime. He would seat himself in the middle of the room, and one by one we had to leave the room, return, and present him with some costly gift that existed only in his imagination and ours. I privately made up my mind never, never to give a present as long as I lived! I do not think I can remember one girl ever leaving the room, returning, or presenting her gift entirely to his satisfaction. But when he showed us how it should be done—Turveydrop was never in it! Such bows, such graceful gliding steps; such smiles; such interest in the (imaginary) present; such apologies for it not being worthy of the recipient (some poor wight was the recipient and accepted it all wrong!): it was a wonderful and beautiful sight. I know now that the dear old man was not really hard on us, and that we were horribly awkward, ungainly, and self-conscious; but it was a weary time while it lasted. How pleased we were when the giving of imaginary gifts came to an end, and we were once more allowed to dance—what do you think?—Mazurkas! Of course we danced other things, but the mazurka was a great favourite. There were other forms of torture, such as introducing Monsieur to a friend, when he was so elegant and so Deportmental that your tongue clove to the roof of your mouth and all bows went out of your head.

It seems almost superfluous to say so, but I suppose every girl knows that you never introduce a lady to a gentleman. I have heard girls say to a girl friend, 'I'll introduce you to Mr Smith;' this is, of course, absolutely and entirely wrong. However, I am not writing a book on etiquette; you can buy one for a shilling at a bookstall, and you will cull some most remarkable information. Another thing Monsieur was most particular about: how would you enter and leave a carriage? I cannot imagine either Monsieur or Mr Turveydrop in a motor; only very 'Cee-springy' high barouches would be worthy of them. All the same, people do bundle into carriages in a most inelegant manner. There must be no catching of feet in the front frills and pitching into the vehicle head first. Your movements must be slow and deliberate (hurry is ever ungraceful), but not awkward. Which reminds me of the Old Highlander who broke his leg getting into his own pony-trap. When asked how he managed to do such a thing, he said, 'Weel, ye see, I wass gettin' in deleeberately but aakwardly.' Don't be 'aakward.' Once in the carriage, do sit properly; don't lounge and don't loll. Lavvy Wilfer's injunction to her mother, 'Loll, Ma, loll,' is not in the least wanted; girls are only too ready to loll. It is great pleasure to see some women driving, they sit so beautifully erect. No one sits more gracefully or bows more exquisitely than our own Queen Alexandra. If Turveydrop could only see her he would no longer think Deportment in a bad way. There are a good many other things girls should remember if they wish to be considered well-mannered and well-bred. A very important one is, look at the person you are addressing. Don't stare at him, which is quite different, but look him politely but squarely in the face. It is very often shyness that makes young people fix their gaze on the floor or the chair legs; but try not to be shy. Shyness is better than overpowering cheek; but there is such a thing as being too shy. If any one speaks to you, look at him when you answer, and do appear to take a reasonable interest in what he is saying. It is most embarrassing to talk to a

person whose wits are obviously wool-gathering, or who is looking out of the window. Children should be taught to speak clearly and distinctly, and to answer at once when spoken to. So many people mumble and gurgle and grunt that it is almost impossible to make out one word they say. Quite likely it is no loss; but still you never know. Parents should see to it that their children's throats, tongues, noses, and ears are all in proper working order, and that they neither have too many teeth, nor teeth in the wrong places. If children have nothing wrong, and yet speak indistinctly and sloppily, then they should be firmly and strictly treated. It is maddening to any one who is a little deaf when people mumble into their chests. Hold your head up and speak out. Choose something in the way of a voice that is neither 'a horrible yell' like King Borrioborrioboo's laugh, nor a little peepy-weepy whisper. If you are good-hearted you will wish to please, and will appear to take an intelligent interest in what is said to you, even if you are bored. Manners, like everything else, mean thinking of other people. Think all the time of yourself, and your manners will not be a success. Because, you see, *you* are not Gentleman Turveydrop. He had magnificent manners, and yet never thought of any one *but* himself. He was a colossal monument of absolute selfishness. Lazy and selfish, yes; but we must forgive him; has he not given us infinite pleasure and infinite amusement? With all his faults I love him still. I sometimes dream of meeting him, of hearing him say with a killing glance and a low bow, 'Distinguished by your presence.' In my dreams he is always at Brighton, always Deportmentally passing the Pavilion, that abode of the First Gentleman in Europe, whose celebrated remarks when he saw the Second Gentleman are so well known: 'Who is he? Who the Devil is he? Why don't I know him? Why hasn't he thirty thousand a year?'

'THE ISLES OF DESTINY.'

CHAPTER IX.

IT was sunset when they reached the little landing again, and the distant islands lay weltering like blots upon the gray water. A dark bank of clouds hung low upon the verge of the western sea, spreading an inky shadow over the wide expanse. The wind had shifted to the north-west, but hardly a ripple broke the oily heave of the water.

Norma, who had foreseen some such change in the weather earlier in the day, had prevailed upon her father not to accompany them to the pier, fearing that the prospect might alarm him. As for herself, her venturesome spirit knew no qualms.

'You 'll gie the tiller to the Captain,' was Donald's peremptory greeting as they stepped aboard. 'And just wrap yourself about in thae ile-skins and keep as quiet as you can,' he added.

She laughingly obeyed, nestling down at Christopher's feet as he took command of the helm.

'Steer me straight and true as I steered you,' she murmured under her breath.

'From shore to shore of the happy isles,' was his rejoinder.

A shiver ran through her. 'Ah! don't say that,' she cried; 'it is unlucky even to mention your happiness here.'

A long keening note of wind from out the black bosom of the west seemed to echo her warning, but even now there was no perceptible stirring of the water. Christopher laughed. Norma could see his gray eyes gleaming in the dusk. There was a triumphant contempt of fate in his expression. A sudden glow of ecstasy rushed over her.

Oh, he had a knightly face, this lover of hers! How often had she not pictured him in her dreams clad all in sombre mail, his lady's badge upon his sleeve, riding forth to do battle for some strange, long-dead daughter of beauty! Then a jealous shudder shook her. He might so easily have been born in those mediæval times, and have lived and died without a thought of her. The next instant she was laughing at her own folly and blessing God that He had given her to live breath by breath with this man. How fast they seemed to be going—though there was scarcely a ripple under their counter—but of course Christopher was at the helm! A little nameless fear crept into her heart again. The day had slipped by so quickly, too. Was this the penalty of happiness, that time should fly and be scarcely realised, when she, like many another, would have it linger and delay for her pleasure?

They would soon be home, and another golden day would have vanished into the past. Suddenly Donald's voice roused her from her foolish dreams. He was shouting directions to Christopher, and there was a new note in it that struck strangely on her ear. She started up and glanced around her. In that brief survey she noted three things: a broken line of water that was advancing steadily upon them from the open sea, and against which they seemed to be driven by some unseen, irresistible force; a lean, snake-like promontory jutting out into the Sound ahead of them—the fag-end of Uist, famous for its deadly surrounding of sunken rocks; and in the northern sky the twinkle of a solitary star that gleamed out for a second through the gray wrack overhead. That was all; but it needed no more to reveal the truth to her practised eye.

Owing to some dire miscalculation, they must have been overtaken by the flood-tide; hence the

astonishing ease and rapidity of their course; and with the waves and wind contrary, the rudder was fast becoming useless.

Norma had often heard of boats so disabled in these perilous waters, but it was not easy to remember an instance of one that had lived out the ordeal. But the star—more significant than the danger with which she had been brought suddenly face to face was that pale, cold emblem of the north, the star of her nativity—set in the steeple of the firmament, perchance to watch her die—white, unflinching as the courage which was her birthright. The bank of clouds in the west had lifted; a cold splash of rain fell upon her face, and the wild cry of a sea-bird beating up against the squall came down to her ears like a signal of distress.

She lay very still, saying nothing because she knew there was nothing to say. Both the men upon whom her life, humanly speaking, depended were straining body and soul to meet the emergency. It was a time for action, not words.

The roll of the incoming waves could now be felt, and as they met the swift force of the tide a cross sea like a precipice arose, upon which the *Minnie* floated helplessly hither and thither with a sickening want of volition; now swung high on the crest of a smooth wall of water, again sucked down into a swirling vortex of darkness, yet always drawing nearer and nearer to the black Tarpeian reef ahead.

Norma could not keep her eyes off it. There was a harbourage, she knew, on the other side; if they were swept past it there was still a chance of safety, but the spindrift flew high over many a sunken danger, and even if they escaped grounding, experience warned her that the *Minnie's* timbers could not much longer sustain the shattering impact of the waves.

Yet she was calm—hideously calm, as it seemed to Christopher. Now that there was nothing more to be done, he longed for her to show a little fear—that he might at least have the satisfaction of comforting her. But some feeling of respect deeper even than his love kept him silent. It seemed to him in that moment as if the girl was on trial to retrieve the lost honour of her family; as if in this hour of naked peril a challenge had come to her, bidding her demonstrate to the death if need be that hereditary courage which had received so mortal a blow in the passing of the last and youngest member of her race.

Christopher knew nothing of the North Star or its influence; he only saw the spectacle of a brave woman looking death in the face without flinching, and the sight awed him to silence. Suddenly, as if she had divined his thoughts, she turned to him and hid her face against his shoulder. In an instant his ready arms were round her.

'It's not that I'm afraid,' she sobbed passionately. 'If it was only death I wouldn't mind—but it's you. I do love you so, and death is separation.'

Here was the cry of the human, and the human in Christopher welcomed it savagely—exultantly. With the throbbings of eternity sounding louder and louder in his ears every minute, he clung to the last spasm of earthly joy he was to feel, and for the time that remained all else was forgotten. The hungry sea, the snarling wind, the black, greedy rocks ahead, all were blotted out by the love that was stronger than death. Not a thought had they, in their young selfish ecstasy, for their fellow-traveller seated solitary in the bow—old Donald, 'Captain of the Fords,' now embarked upon what threatened to be his last voyage. But for himself Donald cared little. An almost divine decorum had made him turn his back upon the pair, and with roughened, toil-worn fingers pressed hard over his eyes, he was praying, 'Dear Lord God, save them baith. Dinna spare one and tak' the ither, nor spier for me, Lord. I've had my day, and a good day it's been from dawn to dusk.' . . .

Closer and closer the lovers strained together, and nearer to the breast of God drew the lonely wayfarer in the bows. Suddenly, loud above the noise of the night, a cry rang out, 'Neil, Neil!'

Norma had torn herself from Christopher's arms, and her white, impassioned face was upturned to the sky above, where a solitary star glimmered through the scudding darkness. In that instant the *Minnie* seemed to stand still, then her bows rose high, and with a shudder from stem to stern she plunged down for the last time.

(To be continued.)

CONSCRIPTS OLD AND YOUNG.

By M. Betham-Edwards.

SOME time since I was leaving a country-house near Troyes in Champagne, when my hostess observed, 'I should have insisted on keeping you longer, but for the next twenty-eight days we shall be without coachman and butler, both having to serve in the manœuvres.' With a smile she added, 'The pair travel to Dijon by the same train as yourself, and a substitute will drive us to the station, a man formerly in our employ. I was much amused just now by his request that he might retain his moustaches; he should not like, he said, to have to take them off. Naturally, I humoured him.'

It may seem odd that sumptuary laws should exist in a republic. So it is, and as I shall show elsewhere, in many respects our neighbours are far more aristocratic than ourselves.

I was awaited by a friend at Dijon; so, finding that they could be of no use to me, the two middle-aged conscripts took leave, looking anything but elate. Both were married men, fathers of families, and occupying places of trust. This recurring interference with daily life, the indescribable fatigues and discomforts of manœuvres under a burning August sun, the physical and mental risks daily involved, might well sober their usually cheerful countenances. How many a man in his prime and in splendid health sets off for his *vingt-huit jours* never to return alive! Sunstroke, dysentery, accidents, excessive fatigue, exact an annual toll. From his majority until the attainment of his forty-fifth year, a Frenchman is subject to this quadrennial ordeal.

No one, indeed, who has not lived in France and among French people can have the faintest idea of what conscription really means alike to the individual, the family, and the home. Nor do we here fully realise the import of that fell term 'armed peace.' It may not be generally known that the high-stepper of the rich and the cart-horse of the poor in France are only up to a certain point the property of their owner. Every year possessors of horses have to furnish the Ministry of War with a list of their animals, one and all being liable to requisition in case of war. Indemnification would be made, but what payment could compensate for the loss of much-prized favourites?

As I shall show farther on, even under the modified military code of the Third Republic, the blood-tax falls heaviest on those least able to bear it—namely, on the artisan, the peasant-farmer, and the labourer. Young men able to pass certain examinations are let off with one year's service, the result being that a very small proportion indeed of the better-off ranks spend three years in barracks. What twelve months of compulsory soldiering is like, in many cases hardships being mitigated by easy circumstances, the following pages will make clear.

From the day of enrolment to that of his discharge the conscript finds himself a prisoner, the conviction being first brought home to him by the matter of clothes. The enormous army stores, thousands—nay, tens, hundreds, thousands of thousands—of képis, tunics, trousers, boots, warehoused in every garrison town are resorted to with due parsimony. In every department of military administration the rule is one of strictest, the most rigid, thrift. Thus on entering the barracks a conscript is not rigged out with a new uniform. He is often obliged to take a predecessor's leavings, pantaloons not being so much as relined for the next wearer. Hence the excessive supervision of dress, the punishments inflicted for grease-stains, a rent, or the loss of a button.

Next to the discomfort of ill-fitting, unsuitable, possibly left-off clothes, is that of sleeping accommodation. Imagine the first night in barracks of a youth not luxuriously but comfortably, or we will say decently, brought up. He shares a huge, bare dormitory with fifty or more conscripts belonging to the lowest as well as the most favoured ranks of society. The pallet next his own may be occupied by one of the unclassed, some rowdy or vagabond; on the other side he may have a hard-working but coarse-mannered countryman. Absolute cleanliness is next to impossible in these military caravansaries; in winter the men suffer from cold, in summer from heat, flies, fleas, and worse nuisances. Intense fatigue will at times fail to induce sleep under such circumstances.

Next comes the question of diet. Such minute attention is paid to cookery by all classes in France that here, perhaps, the artisan and the peasant suffer hardly less than the dandy. 'A soldier can eat anything,' once observed a gentleman-conscript to me. What he meant to say was not that he could always relish barrack fare, but that he could satisfy his hunger with the first dish put in his way. The *gamelle*, or mess partaken of after the manner of the loving-cup, was abolished some years since; each man now has a plate or bowl to himself. It is the monotony that tries the healthiest appetite, a perpetual round of stewed meat and vegetables, no wine being allowed except during the manœuvres.

But the crowning privation is that of liberty. Unseemly clothes, crowded, malodorous, noisy sleeping-quarters, perpetual ragoût washed down with water from January to December, are bagatelles compared to the sense of moral degradation, the fact of being reduced to an automaton. Let me here give a conscript's own views on the subject, the speaker, as I shall show later, having enjoyed many alleviations.

'Well,' I began, 'now, my dear Émile'—I had known my informant from a boy—'now that your garrison experiences are over, tell me what you think of conscription. And what I should much like to know is this: was the probation harder or more bearable than you had been led to expect?'

'Harder—much harder,' was the unhesitating reply. 'No one except those who have gone through it has the remotest idea of what conscription is like. As I had passed certain examinations entitling me to a remission of two of the three years' obligatory service, and as I had money at my disposal, I consider myself exceptionally favoured. For all that, barrack-life to a civilian is a hideous nightmare. There is no other name for it. You feel as if you were shut up in prison to the end of your days. Many young men cannot stand the confinement, and run away. That is a desperate step. If they succeed in crossing the frontier they remain outlaws till they have passed their forty-fifth year. If they are caught or return voluntarily, they are most probably drafted into what is called the regiment of intractables, and despatched to Algeria. The treatment they are there subjected to is often odious. Commanding officers are apt to become hard and unsympathetic in spite of their better nature. In the German army matters are much worse; here they are bad enough, goodness knows.'

'Then your experience is that conscription does not tend to make young men more patriotic, nor to imbue them with the military spirit?'

'Patriotic, indeed!' he replied. 'Conscription, instead, turns them into Socialists and Anarchists. The German army, as you know, reeks with Socialism, and there is plenty of it in our own. As to enforced military service inclining men to soldiering, on the contrary it makes them loathe it. I, for one, am all for disarmament and arbitration. Nothing on earth, for instance, would ever induce me to witness a review. Outsiders have no notion of the sufferings thereby entailed on the men.'

'Anyhow, Émile, you must have learned a good deal during the past twelve months?' I asked.

My young friend's answer was of the briefest, simply the word 'Nothing.' I should here explain that he was no sybarite or victim of too soft bringing-up. An accomplished horseman, an excellent shot, a skilled fencer, accustomed to the life of a country gentleman, in his case the elementary training of a soldier would be child's-play and physical hardships would be borne philosophically. Yet it seemed strange that these experiences should have begun and ended with repugnance only, nothing being left to recall with satisfaction. What he had really found intolerable was the loss of individuality, the derogation of manhood, the extinguisher put upon all that makes life inspiriting and elevating. And again Émile reverted to the deterioration of character brought about by militarism.

'I have heard,' he said, 'an officer rated by his general as if he had been a schoolboy, and in language unworthy of a gentleman. As to the conscripts, they are sworn at, shaken, and half-stupefied by the abuse of the drill-sergeants. Of course they are not cuffed, buffeted, and kicked as in Germany—no French officer is allowed to touch a man; nevertheless, conscription as a system is both brutalising and demoralising.' Then he added as we strolled along the Champs Elysées on the day following his discharge, 'Am I really free? Have I shaken off the fell dream? I do not yet feel quite sure.'

On the subject of promiscuity my young friend spoke with less bitterness.

'Poor fellows!' he said, alluding to the impecunious of his brothers-in-arms. 'How grateful they were when able to earn a few francs by brushing my clothes or rendering any other little service! And one night in winter, when I had a bad fit of coughing, my nearest neighbour, a Breton peasant-lad, took the warm rug from his own bed, and without a word put it on my own. These things one never forgets.'

It must be borne in mind that gentlemen-conscripts can not only obtain a remission of two years' service by the passing of examinations; they can procure many indulgences in the way of food and wine; they are also allowed to hire a comfortable room outside the barracks in which to spend leisure hours. During many months, for instance, my young friend had such a lodging in a hotel, there enjoying the luxury of a bath, an arm-chair, books and newspapers, afterwards dining at the restaurant. From the hours of 5 to 9 P.M. he was often at liberty.

Not all conscripts regard their probation in the same light. Young men of refined tastes naturally resent many things that would not shock a herdsman or carter. The cavalry regiment has often a fascination for city-bred youths, whose only experience of horsemanship has, perhaps, been a turn on the merry-go-round. And many a stripling comes out of the ordeal sturdier, more of a man, than when he first shouldered a gun. But of all the conscripts I have known, and several I have known very intimately, not one ever expressed any enthusiasm for the system or regarded barrack-life as a school of patriotism.

Here a few words on the existing laws relating to conscription will not be inopportune. Irrespective of financial and material considerations, a modification is imperatively called for by reasons of equity. Two years' service obligatory on one and all will remove a grave injustice. As I have pointed out, under existing rules, whilst the artisan, the peasant, and the day-labourer give three best years of their lives to their country, the wealthy and professional classes get off with one, certain commercial and literary examinations procuring the deduction. With the rural and industrial classes such a privilege is unattainable; hence, whilst young men compelled to work for a livelihood, and ofttimes the mainstay of a family, lose three years, those who could best afford such an interference with their avocations sacrifice one only. Never by any chance do you hear of a young gentleman serving the entire term. A more equable, more democratic measure is necessary to the very existence of the Republic.

'Examinations have even been made easier,' writes M. Demolins in his work, *A-t-on intérêt à s'emparer du pouvoir?* 'in order that a greater number of students may obtain the two years' remission.' Examiners have sons, and the paternal prevails over the military spirit. In appearance the military regulations of 1889 were framed on strictly democratic principles. As a friend wrote to me in 1890, himself being an officer retired on half-pay: 'To sum up, the new law is as democratic as possible; the principle of equality has been guaranteed.' Had this good friend lived a few years longer he would have seen but too good reason to change his opinion.

Until 1872 the organisation of the French army was in accordance with that of 1832. Lots were drawn yearly, the highest number entitling the drawer to total exemption, the lowest to seven years' service. Certain exceptions were made in the case of only sons of widows, seminarists, professors, teachers pledged to ten years' public service, and others. In all cases total exemption could be purchased, the agents transacting such substitutions being called *marchands d'hommes* (dealers in men). After the reverses of 1870–71 military organisation

in France was reconstructed upon the Prussian system. Every Frenchman, with very few exceptions, then became a soldier, his obligation being that of five years' service and liability to be called up during the next fifteen years in case of war. Exemption was still accorded in times of peace to elder or only sons of widows, seminarists, and Protestant theological students. Young men who had passed certain examinations could purchase a four years' remission on payment of two thousand five hundred francs. These so-called *voluntaires d'un an* formed a special class; they might, indeed, be called the spoiled children of the army. They were subject to a modified treatment in barracks, which provoked jealousy and the necessity for further reforms.

The law of 1889 introduced, if not absolute, what at that time seemed the nearest approach possible to absolute equality. Every French citizen is now liable to three years' service, and to be called up for exercise or during war until his forty-fifth year. No payment under any circumstances whatever can secure a substitute, the exceptions being as follows: young men under an engagement to serve ten years in educational or philanthropic institutions either in France or the colonies; students who have passed the higher examinations in art, science, or letters, who have received diplomas in national schools of agriculture and in technical schools, or who are preparing for the Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish ministry; lastly, a certain number of artisans selected by a jury of their respective departments, engravers, modellers, decorators, &c. In all these cases the three years' service is reduced to one.

Thus it will be seen that the proposed law—namely, an obligation of two years' service on all citizens of age indiscriminately—is not only a matter of financial economy, it is a rectification of very grave abuses.

THE COLONEL'S MURILLO.

CHAPTER IV.

ONCE more we were *en route*. Sorry as we were to lose our colonel, his absence did not for long affect our spirits. Along the straight, poplar-lined, dusty roads we pursued our joyous march, every day bringing us nearer and nearer to Paris. How lovingly we gazed at the old lumbering vehicle that contained our wealth, and what care we took of it! What various estimates we formed of what it contained! What day-dreams did it not inspire! Ah, the *châteaux en Espagne* we built! My reliquary, I reckoned, must be worth some thousands of francs. I thought of what a lovely necklace I would buy my *fiancée*, and how pretty she would look with it on. I thought, too, how pleased my father would be with the antique silver candlesticks, and how well they would look in the old oak-panelled *salle à manger* of our château. '*Parbleu!*' laughingly exclaimed Largemont, his handsome young face beaming with delight, 'won't I break their confounded bank for them when I get to No. 20.'* And so it was with every one. They seemed already to taste the splendid dinners at the Café Foy and the 'Trois Frères Provenceaux.' But of all, I think 'Père' Midon, as we called the major, was the most excited. He was a man of about fifty, but he looked more. The hair and moustache of the old *roué* were white, and looked whiter from his rubicund countenance. I well remember the evening of the day before we reached Paris. We had finished dinner, and the major had had quite enough white wine. '*Mes enfants*,' he said, 'listen to me;' and he drew out the key of the carriage, tapped the table, and winked at it with his gleaming little watery eyes. 'This little article makes all the difference to me; and when we get to Paris you shall all come to my wedding.'

'Your wedding!' we exclaimed. 'Well, major, you are deep! We have never heard of this. Is she young; is she pretty; is she rich?'

'Well, I kept the news as a surprise for you; but don't all talk at once and I will tell you. She is a young, rich, and pretty widow. Before I went to Spain she said she would not marry me till I was a full colonel; but,' he added, looking lovingly at the key, 'when my little charmer sees the beautiful things I possess, and I tell her how much they are worth, I reckon that, as ladies sometimes do, she will alter her mind. Yes, you shall all come to the wedding, my boys.'

By four o'clock the next morning we were all in the saddle; and when at last, as the sun was beginning to set, the towers of Notre Dame and St Sulpice came in sight, truly our excitement knew no bounds.

Now, if I were not telling a true story I would very much rather drop the curtain here; but the truth must be told. Still, the details of our discomfiture are so unpleasant, so sickening, that I prefer to make them as short as possible. We had no sooner arrived at our destination than, with beating hearts, we surrounded the carriage. With feverish hands, old Midon broke the seal and unlocked the door. For a moment he stood aghast, an oath broke from his lips, his crimson countenance assumed a purple hue, and his eyes nearly came out of his head; in fact, I really thought he was going to have a fit, as well he might, for—the carriage was empty! Yes, *tout à fait vide!* But

* This is a mistake; it was 29, the celebrated gambling-rooms in the Palais Royal on the left-hand side of the Cour de Valois.

there! I would rather not dwell on the scene that followed. If swearing and mutual recriminations could have restored to us our property we should have got it sure enough; but, of course, neither one nor the other was a bit of use.

Little suspecting who was the cause of our trouble, in consternation we sent off a messenger post-haste to Colonel Dolinier, as we thought in our innocence that he ought to know the misfortune that had happened to us. The man returned in a few days with the intelligence that within an hour of our departure that arrant thief, who must have spent the whole night removing the valuables from our carriage to his own, had gone off in a westerly direction, and nothing more was known about him. His words, indeed, had come true when he said that he would probably never see us any more.

Had it been possible we should have liked to keep the whole affair quiet; but that simply was impossible, and the news was soon all over Paris; and we were so unmercifully chaffed that when marching orders came, a month later, for us to start for the German frontier we were only too glad to take our departure.

. . . . . .

Seven years had passed away, and the regiment was quartered in Paris. I was now the senior major, and my brother-in-law, Largemont, was a captain. It was on a bright October day, and we two were sitting outside Tortoni's when a stout, jovial man came hurrying along. Suddenly he stopped, gazed fixedly at us for a moment, and then rushed towards us. 'Lallesan—Largemont,' he exclaimed, 'don't you remember me?'

It was Podarnez. Of course we welcomed him warmly.

'Well, I am pleased to see you,' he said. 'Won't the good colonel be surprised!'

'The "good" colonel?'

'Dolinier, I mean. I call him "good" because I should never have been able to marry my darling Rosita but for him.'

'The arrant scamp!' muttered Largemont. 'Do you mean to say you have seen him? Not in this country, I will warrant.'

'Oh no; in England. You surprise me by calling him a scamp. But look here, I am in a great hurry. I have made my fortune. I have bought a lovely place in Touraine. I have come up to see my notary, Royet. I am going to ask him to dine with me over there' (pointing to the Café Anglais) 'to-night, so I hope you two will be able to come. I have a great deal to tell you.'

We willingly agreed, and the next moment he was off.

In rattling spirits, at the appointed hour we found ourselves at the famous café. Royet the notary was a good-looking, dapper little man with a white moustache, a born *raconteur*, brimming over with fun, though for all that he was a shrewd man of business. Vefours, the 'Rocher de Cancale,' and the 'Trois Provenceaux' all had their admiring *clientèle;* but I would defy any one of them to provide a finer dinner than we had that night. The champagne, too—Chanoine, Jacquesson (both famous brands in those days), and Ruinart—was superb. That snug little *cabinet particulier* on the *entresol*, overlooking the Place Favart, may have had in it many a lively party; but what with the little notary's jokes, the wine, and our natural spirits, it never contained a merrier party than ours.

Of course we wanted to know how Podarnez had made his fortune and how he had met the colonel.

'No, no, *mios amigos*,' he replied. 'I will tell you about that later. Let us hear how you got on; you must have made a *grand coup* at the monastery that morning.'

It was not likely that either Largemont or I cared to say much about the '*grand coup*,' as he called it; but we had eventually to narrate all that had taken place, and how we had been tricked. I have seen fellows laugh in my time; but never in all my life have I seen two men laugh as they did, especially when we came to the *dénouement* and told them how we found the carriage empty. So contagious was their merriment that I could not help joining in.

'Oh, *hombre!* I am glad I asked you two fellows to dinner,' exclaimed the Spaniard as he wiped the tears from his eyes. 'This is the finest joke I have heard for many a day. Sly dog that colonel; he never told us anything about this. I thought he only had the pictures.'

'Is it likely that he would?' replied Largemont, with a sickly grin. '*Parbleu!* he ought to be in *La Force*.'

Unfortunately Largemont could not make himself enter into the spirit of their merriment. The more Podarnez and the notary laughed the less he liked it, and this only made them laugh the more.

'Let us hear how you got on,' he said irritably; 'perhaps we shall have something to laugh at too.'

'*Corriente*,' replied the Spaniard, 'I will begin from the beginning; but before I do so I will just order some *porto* wine. I learned to drink it in England. Have you ever tasted it?' Now, we had had six bottles of champagne, and for my part I would quite as soon have gone without it; but as neither Largemont nor I had ever tasted that wine, and as we did not wish to offend the good-natured fellow, we said we should like to, and so he ordered a couple of bottles, and uncommonly good it was, too. And then he began.

'No sooner did we get into the monastery, while the soldiers were rushing hither and thither, than I and Ricardo (and he knew his way about) went straight to the quarters of his step-uncle the prior. The latter had only just risen. We were dressed, you remember, as dragoons; and he thought his last hour had come, and trembled with fear. When, however, he recognised us, and his guilty conscience smote him, he was so beside himself with fright that he threw himself on the floor and begged for

mercy. Holding a pistol to his head, Ricardo compelled him to get up and write a letter to the mother-superior of the convent, ordering her to set Rosita free and give up all the papers connected with his mother's estate. The poor trembling wretch had hardly signed and sealed this, and had his hand on the paper, when Ricardo, drawing his *navajo*, pinned the prior's hand to the table.

'What a brute!' we exclaimed.

'Yes, he is cruel, is Ricardo,' said Podarnez simply. 'Thank heaven, Rosita is very different. She is very gentle, *muy simpático*.'

'But what was the sense of running a knife through his hand?'

'Because Ricardo knew that the wily prior, as soon as we had gone, would probably otherwise have quickly written another letter, and sent off a messenger to countermand the one we had, and this man might have got to the convent before we did. Then Ricardo made him hand over all the necessary documents pertaining to the estates. To get these we had to pass through some horrible dark cellars full of bats, and in one of them I saw a rack on which many a wretched Jew had been stretched. As I looked on this grim instrument, and thought of their shrieks, I can tell you I was glad to be in the open air again.

'Ricardo had also made the prior give up a gold signet-ring he wore. Armed with this and the papers, we went straight off to the convent. Rosita was liberated at once, the mother-superior gave us all the documents we wanted, and Rosita and I were married that very day.

'To carry out his mining scheme it was necessary that Ricardo should have ready-money, and he was obliged to sell his mother's property for, alas! half its value. We sailed from Lisbon for Peru, and when we got there Ricardo soon got on the trail. He bought the land where he was certain there was silver and lead, and he found it.

'In six years we came back, he with a million and a half of pesetas, and I with a million. We took the first ship we could get, which happened to be going to London. When we got to that city my brother-in-law went off to Paris to arrange for our money being sent there; but as Rosita was not well, we remained in London. And by a perfect chance we met Colonel Dolinier and his wife, a very charming young woman with no end of money.

'He was delighted to see me, but he took an early opportunity to draw me aside, and begged me to say nothing about his nationality or about the monastery, for reasons that I will relate. Of course I promised not to do so, as I owed so much to him. There is no need for me to tell you how some old friend, a brother-officer of former days, frightened him out of his wits at Toulouse.'

'No; we know all that,' remarked Largemont dryly.

'Well, after that he set off for England, and when he got there he pretended to be a Spanish nobleman of very high descent. You need not laugh,' added Podarnez, seeing the smile on our faces as we thought of the pork-butcher at Irun. 'He had been ruined, he gave out, by the war in the Peninsula, and was obliged to sell all his family heirlooms. It was not long before an English nobleman, a real connoisseur, gave him an enormous price for the pictures, &c. Then it was that he made the acquaintance of a Jew named Bernheim. This man, for a Jew art-dealer, was very honest. He had found by experience that it paid best on the whole to be so, and he would in the ordinary way be content with 300 or 400 per cent. profit. It was only when he saw the chance of making a really grand *coup* that the Jew allowed his scruples to get the better of him. He impressed upon Colonel Dolinier what a unique opportunity of doing more business he had; for pictures that no one would look at if he, Bernheim, were to offer them, would be eagerly caught up when coming from a distressed Spanish nobleman.

'Bernheim undertook to procure the pictures, and also various objects of art, if Dolinier would sell them, and he promised to give the colonel 25 per cent. profit. Clever as the Jew might be, the colonel was quite as sharp. He saw at once that if he entered into the scheme he would have the whip-hand.

'"25 per cent.!" said Dolinier softly. "No, no, my oily friend; I will have 50, or none."

'"But I shall have to find de money for de pictures," replied the other, aghast.

'"That 's your affair," returned Dolinier; and as he would of course receive the money first, the Jew could not help himself, and had to submit to his terms.

'Telling his patrons that he was going back to his native country to try and persuade his relatives to part with some more of their priceless family heirlooms, Dolinier—who, by-the-by, called himself the Marquis Debadajo—discreetly retired into the country for a time, while Bernheim went off to Paris and Amsterdam.

'In a few months the latter returned all agog with a fine stock (but not too many, for that would have excited suspicion) of Murillos, Riberas, Velasquez, &c.; and not only pictures, but also Toledo swords and a quantity of armour. The colonel had not much imagination, but Bernheim had. One suit of armour, it appeared, belonged to Pedro the Cruel, another to Ferdinand the husband of Isabella. In fact, every article had a history. One of the Velasquez was only sold by the colonel's brother, under the greatest pressure and with intense regret, to furnish the dowry of his poor but very beautiful daughter. Dolinier, who has more sense of humour than I gave him credit for, roared with laughter as he told me these touching and veracious details.

'By the sale of these *objets d'art* Dolinier had made a large fortune, enough to last him the rest of his days. He went to a fashionable watering-place called Bath, and as a Spanish nobleman who had fought with the English in the Peninsula he was well received. His manners, as you know, were brusque;

but the men rather liked that—they called it "soldierly bluntness;" and he was such a born liar, and so handsome, that he soon became a great favourite with the women, and being able to pick and choose, he selected, after due deliberation, a very rich and charming young widow.

'He is quite infatuated with England and English ways, and all his children are brought up in the most English manner. Rosita and I had a very pleasant time down at his château in the country.

'The colonel is very popular among his neighbours. He rides well; he hunts the fox—a deuced dangerous and silly way of spending the time, it seems to me, and very poor sport compared to our boar-hunting in Andalusia; he shoots and swears and drinks. I have seen him drink three bottles at a sitting of this very *porto* wine we are drinking now. He taught me to drink it, but I shall never be able to take as much as he can. In a word, he is what he wishes to be, quite what they call over there a "country squire." He told me that he is so pleased with his adopted country that he will never go to France again.'

'No, the scamp! he had better not come over here,' remarked Largemont curtly.

'Has he got any Murillos?' I asked.

'No,' replied the Spaniard; 'but he has got a Velasquez. He had sold it to a man who, somehow or other, after a time had some misgivings as to its origin, and he made him take it back. Dolinier, of course, was very indignant at his word being doubted, and was inclined to call him out; but he thought better of it, for if a fuss had been made he might have had some more thrown on his hands.

'This masterpiece of Velasquez now hangs in the fine old hall of the château, and is greatly admired; for,' added Podarnez in conclusion, 'I heard the colonel tell some of his friends one day, in a sad and chastened tone, that in all his misfortunes, in his most distressful days, he never could bring himself to part with that particular picture, in spite of the splendid offers he had had for it, as it was the portrait of one of the very noblest of his famous and illustrious ancestors.'

THE END.

GENTLEMEN-IN-WAITING.

By a Retired Lady-in-Waiting.

STRANGE as it may sound to some unsophisticated ears, there are more enviable persons existing in this world than courtiers. We know, or by this time we ought to have learned, that all is not gold that glitters. Even the dazzling beams which our picturesque imagination causes us to see descending from all royal nuclei upon those who may happen to stand beneath do not always shower unmitigated delights upon the recipients of their bountiful effulgence.

If our country cousins were asked to describe an 'equerry-in-waiting' they would probably launch out as follows: 'He is a very gorgeously uniformed personage, who basks throughout life in royal smiles, is paid a great deal for the little he has to do, and is an altogether to be envied individual.'

Needless to say, this description does not quite accurately sum up the natural history of the man in question. A courtier is born, not bred. He must start his career backed up by certain inherent qualifications which are absolutely essential to his success at Court. As a rule he is a man of good but not necessarily illustrious family. There is not the least necessity for an equerry to be famous in any way save one: he must have a positive genius for patience and conciliation.

The practice of rewarding merit by a place at Court died out to a great extent at the death of Prince Albert, though in foreign Courts the habit is still more or less adhered to. Possibly it was found that those who were capable of brilliant achievement were ill content with the monotony of comparative servitude; and, again, the man who can square a circle may not always succeed in rounding off the awkward corners of a social square.

The duties of an 'equerry-in-waiting,' put as concisely as possible, are: to make his royal master's life as smooth and easy as possible; to be discreetly sympathetic with him in sorrow and in joy; to save him, so far as it is humanly possible, from the trouble of thinking for himself; to know, and have committed to memory, the characteristics and family history of all persons who are worth the notice or friendship of the royal patron; to have ready at finger-tips the truth of all scandals and gossip in the elect circle in which he moves; and to be, in a quiet and gentlemanly manner, surprised at nothing.

The equerry must be prompt and punctual to the moment; he must be endowed with presence of mind and ample self-control; he must look upon his identity as entirely merged in his office. To be a first-rate horseman is a necessity; to be able to hold his peace and at the same time be diplomatically plastic to the blandishments offered from without is also a *sine quâ non*. When abroad with his master, he arranges all railway journeys, hotel tariffs, &c., for a royalty never permits himself to be 'kotowed' to and swindled in the same breath, as does the unsophisticated multi-millionaire. The prices paid are those strictly in accordance with market value, with a small surplus thrown in to outweigh the several disadvantages of entertaining

royalty: such as the number of rooms engaged, but not paying their fully occupied prices; extra attendance; enforced privacy; a very superior *chef;* and several other small details which march inseparably with a royal progress, penalties levied on royal heads which are never expected to produce their equivalent in added pleasures.

The typical equerry is rarely married. As a matter of fact, his duties as a courtier swamp all natural instincts towards domesticity. The unrest of a Sovereign's existence reflects downwards upon his subordinates. The peculiar traits of character, the self-control, which have to be so sedulously cultivated to retain so dazzling a perch on the social ladder, leave little energy or leisure to look round upon the natural fields of manly enterprise in life. The cramping process is too severe to permit of the human instincts to bud and blossom in their accustomed ways. Should the equerry branch out into the bypaths of matrimony, his wife is his wife merely by hearsay; she has no position at Court, and to her husband's master owns no individuality. As the head-coachman's wife is asked to a Christmas feast, so is she bidden, on rare occasions, to a royal banquet. She must always recollect that her husband is but the servant of the king.

Health and strength are essential to the equerry, for never must he present himself under august eyes as either out of temper or afflicted with the ordinary ills which the flesh is heir to. To him, also, night must be as day. He must be a good card-player and reader aloud, and an agreeable conversationalist. No doubt flattery is everywhere serviceable; but the equerry must recollect that so many different samples of the art are served up daily at the royal table that a certain discrimination and connoisseurship, if the word may be coined, has now been arrived at by the royal taster; the coarse and gross type is at once detected; only the delicately flavoured and discreetly liqueured brand will now pass muster. A cryptic stroking down which veils a simulated independence, a *soupçon* of acquiescence, judiciously blended with a subtle appreciation and delicate wit, will tilt the goblet. It is a refined and difficult art, this pandering to princes, for they are very human, and may at any moment turn round upon their sycophants. To be proved no sycophant but a friend is the art of the equerry. There is no dissembling the fact that a 'gentleman-in-waiting' is, or ought to be, a humble imitator and reflector. Common respect due to royalty ought to prompt this virtue in the most obdurate. In the matter of dress the equerry must be as the wild-rose to the garden variety: of the same species and colour, yet of humbler pretensions. In the matter of opinions he must be the judicious echo of his master.

Should an equerry be possessed of property, he must be willing to place it at his master's disposal. During years when some great Court event, such as a coronation or a jubilee, takes place, the equerry, be he possessed of a lordly pleasure-house, is expected to lend it to any foreign royalties who cannot find accommodation in the palaces. Should that property consist of a veritable museum of art and literature, he must be willing to offer it up on the steps of the throne, to be used in any fashion by any barbaric monarch who may announce his august intention of turning that particular spot in England into a slaughter-house. To repair the damage done by a Shah or a Shazadah may run into a matter of several hundred pounds, the devastation of foreign servants may create irreparable damage, all of which must be borne by the owner with a Christian resignation and a cheerful compliance with what must be treated as natural results.

The equerry accompanies his master on all visits which happen to fall due during his three months' consecutive 'wait.' He arranges with the prospective hostess all details as to guests and the engagements which his master agrees to fulfil during his stay. Should shooting be one of the royal personage's pleasures, the equerry must be a good shot, yet always careful not to shoot his master's bird nor yet exceed him in the number of the slaughtered. At the same time, a big bag being the main object nowadays, the equerry must furnish forth his full quota, or possibly some slight unpleasantness might follow.

At all Court functions the gentleman-in-waiting must stand hour after hour without betraying the fact that he is pining for a cigarette or a drink, or even forty winks. To look bored would be an offence against his high office. He must pretend to feel equally happy and comfortable whether standing bareheaded in a violent draught or under a burning sun. Like his master, the equerry must wear out innumerable hats.

Under some circumstances the life of an equerry is one of constant anxiety and dread. Some royal masters lead their attendants a pretty dance, especially if they be young and frisky. To be answerable to a king or emperor, as the case may be, for the good behaviour of an heir-apparent does not conduce to tranquillity of mind. The poor equerry's very life is no longer his own, and he is, by night and by day, a prey to agonised fears and multitudinous suspicions and apprehensions. Every pretty face that is met with is looked at with distrust and dread; every clever, witty woman is the equerry's sworn foe. The female sex has become his *bête noire.* To inculcate and implant in his master's mind the beauties and fascinations, real or supposititious, of the chosen future bride is ever his daily round. To disparage all other members of the fair sex is his common task.

It has been said that an equerry must not look bored, yet a casual scrutiny of the faces of those who have been long in office betrays the fact that nature, after all, asserts her power over artificiality, however hard the striving may be to circumvent her. One of the most surprising facts regarding royal persons is that apparently they never tire of the one particular set who surround them at

home, and whom they ask to meet them abroad. Royalties choose whom they will receive and whom they will meet. Possibly their attendants are of a more unstable mind, and weary of the same old faces which they once knew young. Hence the jaded, weary look so often observable as a settled mask on the countenance of the courtier.

His path through life may be strewn with roses, but they have their thorns. No fool can hope to turn himself into an equerry, though history tells us knaves have found it a very profitable trade. The recompense for all his little hardships resolves itself into a small salary, the envy of his acquaintances, and the patronage of the Crown.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WEATHER FORECASTS.

IT is only within the past few decades that any serious attention has been paid to the possibility of forecasting the state of the weather upon scientific lines. Before the invention of the electric telegraph, by which simultaneous reports regarding the state of the barometer in various widely separated places are now daily received in London, all attempts to foretell coming weather phenomena were little more than guesswork, assisted by such appearances as the eye could discern. No one pretends that the daily forecasts as published in the various newspapers are infallible, but if any one cares to compare promise with performance he will find that they are right about eight times out of ten. The meteorologist has always contended that owing to our insular position he is terribly handicapped in the work of prevision. For the changes in the weather come along from the west, and to the west of these islands of ours, on the broad bosom of the Atlantic, no telegraph stations can be maintained. But now, owing to the possibility of conveying wireless messages from ship to ship and from ship to shore, a new era begins. The London *Daily Telegraph*, by arrangement with the Marconi Company and the Atlantic steamship companies, has arranged to publish every day reports from mid-Atlantic as to the state of the barometer and thermometer, kind of weather, force of wind, and state of sea. It is believed that by means of these data coming storms can be foretold with a certainty never before possible.

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

Forty-two years have passed since the British Association for the Advancement of Science met at Cambridge, and it is a most interesting and instructive exercise to recall the great advances which have been made by science during those four decades. Much might be learned by contrasting the meeting of 1862 with that which has recently closed, and doubtless there will be found writers who will take the opportunity of comparing the 'proceedings' of the two meetings. Liquid and solid air and hydrogen were, of course, unknown, and the text-books still described what they named 'the permanent gases.' The spectroscope was hardly regarded as anything beyond an optical curiosity. Bacteria were unknown, and antiseptic surgery as we know it now quite undreamt of. But it is perhaps in the world of electricity that the most wonderful advances have been made. The period named covers the birth of the dynamo machine, with all its possibilities of electrical locomotion and the transfer of power from place to place. It has seen electric illumination established, and has given us the telephone. And the crowning triumph is found in the discovery of wireless telegraphy. All branches of science have since the year 1862 been sedulously cared for by their several professors, and many of nature's secrets have been divulged. The meeting of the British Association gives a valuable summary of the world's work for the past twelve months; and this year's congress in the university town invites comparison between the present time and that which has long passed.

FIRES ON SHIPBOARD.

In a valuable article published in the new financial supplement of the *Times* on fires which occur on ships in port, there are some valuable hints given as to the best method of extinction of such fires. It is pointed out that the principal loss which accrues to the owners is not from fire, but from damage to goods through water and mud. Taking into consideration that in a large ship can be packed the contents of two thousand railway trucks, it is not extravagant to compare a fire on board to a street alight. But owing to the solid method of stowage and the power of excluding air from the hold of a ship, a fire should not be difficult to deal with. All that is necessary when a fire occurs is to close the hold affected, and to flood the place with an inert gas. There are many fire-extinguishing devices which depend for their efficiency upon the liberation of such a gas, and the application of the same principle by a fixed apparatus should not be difficult. In the article referred to the case of the steamer *Papanui* is cited. This vessel, bound for New Zealand, put into the Cape on fire in September 1898. In order to put out the fire the ship was almost filled with water, with the result that it nearly capsized. The water damage in this case amounted to nearly twenty-four thousand pounds, with nearly ten thousand pounds of incidental charges. Such losses are by no means uncommon, and shipowners would do well to con-

sider whether it would not be better to make permanent provision for liberating into their holds an innocuous gas rather than run the risk of destructive fire and water.

BATTLE WOUNDS.

Inspector-General Suzuki, of the Japanese Imperial Navy, has contributed to the *British Medical Journal* some interesting notes upon the hurts received by his countrymen in the earlier stages of the present war. From the nature of many of the wounds, which he carefully classifies, he assumes that the Russian explosives are not very powerful, and he states that many of their shells failed to explode. It has often been remarked that in the excitement of the battle a man is perhaps seriously wounded without being aware of it himself. The writer instances several cases of this kind which came under his personal notice on shipboard. In one of these, a sailor whose back had been badly lacerated, who had a serious injury above the right elbow, and who also had wounds on the thigh, leg, and arm, on the left temple, and the right cheek and jaw, helped his fellows to launch a boat and pulled an oar in it for about an hour. This man, we are told, did not feel much pain when he was subsequently picked up with his companions by a Japanese torpedo-boat. The Inspector-General recommends that sailors should don clean clothes before going into action, for there is so much risk of pieces of cloth being carried into wounds by fragments of shell. He also suggests that the men should wear masks and jackets of special material as a protection from fragments of shell and from splinters.

A NEW BOAT.

Mr James Taylor, a naval architect of New York, has designed a boat which is propelled upon new lines; and he is said to hold the opinion that it will, in the matter of speed, beat all the turbines. For about two-thirds of the length of the vessel there is a tube, open at both ends, between the keel and the bottom of the boat. In this longitudinal tunnel there are four propellers on a shaft which occupies the centre of the tube. It is believed that by this means the energy of the propellers will be concentrated in one direction, instead of being dissipated on all sides, as in the case of the ordinary pattern of screw vessel. An experimental boat has been built to test the system, and the result of the trials will be looked forward to with interest. If we are not mistaken, the principle of enclosing a ship's propeller has been the subject of previous experiments.

BENEFICENT ORGANISMS.

Although the word microbe carries with it the idea of something undesirable, it is well known that these microscopic organisms are a necessary part of all natural processes, and that without them the higher forms of life would be impossible. An interesting series of experiments bearing upon this subject has recently been conducted by Dr Charrin, who has communicated the results to the Academy of Sciences at Paris. The subjects of the experiments were rabbits, and the intention was to ascertain the value of food which had been sterilised. The animals fed upon vegetables which had been freed from all bacterial life by the most careful treatment soon died from enteric affections due to non-assimilation of their doctored food. But another group of rabbits fed upon vegetables which had been sterilised, but afterwards purposely impregnated with a broth in which bacteria had been artificially cultivated, not only lived, but became fat under this treatment. The inference is that there are certain bacilli which are indispensable to the digestive functions, and that in sterilising food we may be causing more mischief than if we left it alone.

STERILISATION OF MILK.

In view of the results of the experiments just described, are we doing right in our efforts to sterilise milk? The subject is one of such vital importance that it might reasonably be inquired into by a special commission. Sterilised milk is now obtainable commercially, and is produced by heating the milk in closed vessels for a definite time, after which the fluid is carefully bottled. We cannot, unfortunately, kill the germs by heat without at the same time depriving the milk of some of its value as a food. This objection is removed by the electrical method of sterilisation which has been adopted in Brussels by Messrs Guarini and Samarini. By means of a powerful alternating current, the germs in the milk are quickly destroyed, whilst in other ways the fluid is unaltered. It would be interesting to see how calves would thrive upon this electrically treated milk, and possibly experiments in this direction may be tried. Most persons will be inclined to prefer that the milk which they consume should come direct from a dairy where cleanliness is enforced, and without any tampering, electrical or otherwise.

ELECTRICAL DANGERS.

Many lives have been lost both in this and other countries through accidental contact with wires carrying electric currents. An unusual fall of snow, the occurrence of a conflagration, or some other cause has brought down the overhead wires of a tram-line, and horses and human beings have been killed as surely as if they had been struck by lightning. Many tramway lines are now laid on the conduit system, and such terrible occurrences are obviated; and we may regard the various 'tubes' as being free from risk. But now that railway companies are adopting electricity as a motive-power, and are using a 'live' rail on the level of the ground, some protection to life is necessary, especially when the line traverses a populous district. Already, when the electric system is quite

in its infancy, some unfortunate trespassers have been electrocuted by coming into contact with the rail; and although they were doubtless breaking the law, their trespass should not merit the death-penalty. There should be no difficulty in so isolating the live rail that death from accidental contact with it should be impossible.

ELECTRIC POWER.

Only those who are in touch with our manufacturing industries realise to what an enormous extent the steam-engine is being supplanted by the electric motor. In most modern factories fixed wires usurp the place of pulleys and belts, and the steam-engine, with its necessary boiler and furnace, is no longer to be found. In order to educate the public concerning this new advance, an exhibition is presently to be held at Shoreditch, London, by the municipal authorities, which will demonstrate the way in which electricity can be applied to a large variety of different trades. Shoreditch is essentially a working district, in which furniture and all kinds of requisites are made, not always in factories, but largely in the homes of the people. We can imagine how important to these humble artisans must be a motor supplied with energy at a cheap rate from the public mains, which can be made to work the machine and tools employed in such industries as boxmaking, turning of all kinds, printing, glass-bevelling, bootmaking, sewing-machines, wood-carving, and half a hundred other trades. The knowledge that such things are possible can easily be gleaned from the technical journals; but those most concerned have little opportunity for gaining information in that way; and, after all, actual demonstration is far more convincing to them. The proposed exhibition will probably be the pioneer of many others throughout the country.

PHYSICAL DETERIORATION.

The recent report of the committee which was appointed to inquire into this important subject is a very interesting and instructive one, and we trust that it will not, like too many documents of the same character, be pigeon-holed and forgotten. We are glad to learn that there is no evidence to support the belief held by many that there is any general or widespread physical deterioration among the British people; but at the same time the committee have to confess that they had no trustworthy data for comparison between to-day and yesterday. They recommend the establishment of a complete system of weighing and measuring, so that in future inquiries of this nature the difficulty mentioned shall not recur. There are numerous other recommendations which are worthy of attention. Of course the abuse of alcoholic stimulants comes under their condemnation, and we need hardly be told that it is one of the most fruitful causes of physical deterioration. That drinking habits are on the increase among women of the working classes is a terrible thing for coming generations. It is asserted that children who are born healthy, and who have declined by reason of insufficient food or insanitary surroundings, will soon recover their health when these unfavourable conditions are removed. It is one thing for a committee to make recommendations, and another to get their suggestions acted upon. It is quite certain that in the past insanitary houses and other abuses have been permitted to continue by the apathy of local authorities and the pressure brought to bear upon such bodies by vested interests.

ANTHRAX.

Anthrax, or wool-sorters' disease, as it used to be called, is one of those terrible ailments communicable from the lower animals to man, and is very often of a fatal character. The loss of life among sheep and cattle from anthrax was enormous before Pasteur showed the means of combating the disease; but its occurrence among persons who have to handle goods in which may lurk its germs is not infrequent. The latest victim was employed at a wool-warehouse in Liverpool, and Dr Legge, of the Home Office, who was present at the inquest, holds out hope that an efficient remedy for such cases has been discovered. This is a serum prepared by Professor Sclavo, of Sienna, Italy. In one hundred and sixty cases of anthrax occurring in various parts of that country in a certain period, the percentage of deaths has, by use of the serum, been reduced to 6—as compared with the 25 per cent. of fatal cases which have occurred in Britain during the past five years. The remedy may be compared in its nature to the antitoxine which has proved so valuable in cases of diphtheria. It will doubtless receive a fair trial by our medical authorities.

THE PIONEER OF SANITATION.

More than fifty years ago a report was published *On the Sanitary Condition of the City of London*, by Mr John Simon, then medical officer of health to the city. At that time London had had a terrible warning of the consequences of neglecting sanitary laws in an outbreak of cholera, and Simon was one of the few who had the prescience to see the danger of letting things rest as they were. In this report he wrote thus: 'The frightful phenomenon of a periodic pestilence belongs only to defective sanitary arrangements.' Happily his warnings were not allowed to pass unheeded, and when he discoursed on the evils of defective drainage, intramural burials, unhealthy trades, bad ventilation, and the other faults of our social system, he found listeners who were not unwilling to act upon his admonitions. All honour, then, to the memory of Sir John Simon, who has but recently passed away from among us. For the past thirty years his life was spent in the privacy of his home, and to the present generation he was therefore all but unknown. But the name of one who did so much as the pioneer of sanitation, and who proved to demonstration that by adopting certain measures the death-rate of a large city could be reduced by

one-half, deserves at least as good a place on the nation's records as the hero of a death-dealing battle.

VAGARIES OF LIGHTNING.

During a recent thunderstorm at Portsmouth, at the moment that a flash of lightning occurred a radiant object burst from the clouds and shot downwards into the sea. This appearance has naturally given rise to the belief that a 'thunderbolt' had fallen, although it ought to be known by this time that the thunderbolt is a myth. It was in past times impossible to imagine that destruction wrought by storm could be brought about except by some kind of hard projectile. The object seen at Portsmouth was probably what is known as globe or ball lightning. It is very uncommon, and seems to be more often seen at sea than elsewhere. During a storm on the same day in London, a boy fell in the street apparently struck by lightning. Examination showed that death was due to heart failure, and that the lightning had little or nothing to do with it. The old story of lightning impressing the human skin with a picture has recently been revived in America.

IN PRAISE OF THE CHAFING-DISH.

A readable and delightful book, *The Cult of the Chafing-Dish*, has been written by Mr Frank Schloesser, and published by Gay & Bird. The mottoes for the book are from Ruskin and the Ettrick Shepherd. To Ruskin good cookery meant that you give every one something nice to eat, and the Ettrick Shepherd—surely this time the creation of the brain of John Wilson in the *Noctes*—makes every person on this planet prefer eating and drinking to all other pleasures of body or soul. This is a materialistic exaggeration, with more truth in it, however, than most folks might allow. Mr Schloesser tells us that in nine households out of ten in the middle and upper classes the fare, though well-intentioned in design, is deadly in execution, with a total absence of care and taste. If that is so, what of some working-class homes where ignorance and inefficiency hold sway? Mr Schloesser sings, or almost chants, the praises of the chafing-dish, which is put forward as a light and useful household adjunct worthy the attention of bachelors, young couples coming home late who wish a hot supper, yachtsmen, shooting-parties, invalids, and night-workers. It is not a new invention, neither is it an American one, and bears the same relation to kitchen cookery that the delightful art of fencing does to that of the broadsword. It is, in short, a handy thing to have about the house; as handy as the average kitchen-range is cumbersome and extravagant. Recipes are given for soups, fish, and fowl, vegetables and salads, eggs and savouries, sauces and sweets. The chafing-dish is a nickel-plated article on a wrought-iron stand, with a simple spirit-lamp. This Mr Schloesser bought at Harrod's Stores for twelve shillings and ninepence. There are various accessories, such as a hot-water pan, asbestos toastmaking tray, egg-poacher, and casserole. Cookery and eating are high arts as yet not too well understood; hence even Mr Schloesser's hints are welcome. The author is far from being a vegetarian, yet he justly condemns the general ignorance of vegetable cookery. We are good at roast and chops and a few other things; but the average British cook has but one idea with vegetables: to cook them with soda, thus destroying their health-giving properties. Nothing more terrible or depressing can be imagined, says Mr Schloesser, than the usual slab of wet cabbage doled out in London restaurants. 'Vegetables need the kindliest care, the most delicate handling, the most knowledgeable treatment, else they become mere parodies of their better selves.' We are told of the Italian preparations of Tagliatelli and Ravioli, 'a dinner in one course.' This, it seems, if badly cooked, may be described by omitting a letter in the last word of the last sentence. We have such gems of wisdom quoted as, 'Never eat your soup; always swallow it whole;' 'There is only one kind of egg.' The connection between excellence of brain-power and a fish-diet is, we believe, an exploded idea. Here is a story, however, in that connection: A visitor at a Devonshire fishing-village asked the parson what was the chief diet of the villagers. 'Fish mostly,' said the vicar. 'But I thought fish was a brain-food, and these are the most unintelligent folk I ever saw,' said the tourist. 'Well,' said the parson, 'just think what they would look like if they didn't eat fish!' We are all more or less influenced by good and bad cookery, and by the kind of food we eat.

THE GATE TO YESTERDAY.

I know there must be such a gate,
The Fairies told me so;
A gate where all folks can go back
To the joys they used to know.
'Tis made of the moonbeam's cloudy pearl
And the sunshine's golden ray,
And it swings to the touch of music glad:
The Gate to Yesterday.

'Tis there that 'grown-ups' think of their dolls
With a pleasure that's partly pain,
And mothers clasp their girls and boys
Close up to their hearts again.
And little ones have the lovely times,
And play as they used to play
Behind the gate with the golden bars:
The Gate to Yesterday.

'Tis there the old folks rest a while—
The Fairies told me so—
And dream of the rest that is to come
And the friends they used to know.
They can hear the echo of music sweet
From youth's Fairyland far away;
Their wrinkles fade and their hearts grow light
In the Land of Yesterday.

DOROTHY BLAKE.

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Chambers's Journal
SIXTH SERIES.

THE DEAD HAND.

By Mrs J. H. NEEDELL, Author of *Quentin Harcourt, Q.C.*, *Lucia B. Potts*, *Stephen Ellicott's Daughter*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

'MY dear old friend'—the sick lady made an impatient gesture—'you must allow a crotchety old woman to have her way. Your duty is simply to take my instructions and follow them.'

'Quite true; but bear with me a little. Consider the youth, the charm of the young lady, and to what you would condemn her: it is shutting the door of common human happiness against her.'

Mrs Lorimer turned her head, so as to fix her eyes—in which the fires of an ardent temper were not yet extinct—on the face of the old lawyer with an expression of amused contempt.

'You must surely forget to whom you are speaking,' she said. 'That door was shut against me from the hour when I married George Lorimer. As no one knows better than yourself, I have had pride enough and pluck enough to hide the details of my conjugal misery from the world; but all the world knew that what I had to bear was too shameful to talk about. For fifteen years I suffered and was silent, and when death set me free and I rejoiced with my daughter in a new lease of life, what happened?'

Her voice shook with strong feeling.

'What happened?' she repeated sharply, touching his arm with an effort.

'I know, I know,' he said huskily. 'It was hard—very hard.'

'Yes,' she returned bitterly, 'it was very hard; and it is a little strange that I should have to remind you of it. At seventeen my daughter, who was the spring of my poor maimed existence, ran away with Nicholas Vavasour, the handsomest soldier in Her Majesty's Guards and the most profligate gambler in Her Majesty's dominions. Then—do I need to remind you?—Diana repeated my own experience; and I, who thought I had tasted the dregs of human wretchedness, found out that the shame and rage of an injured wife is nothing in comparison with a mother's helpless passion for an outraged daughter.'

'Oh! forget it,' he urged anxiously; 'it is all over now, and this excitement is so bad for you.'

'Over!' she repeated wistfully. 'It is poor comfort when the death of the creature we love best is accepted as alleviation; but I thank God that my darling buried her youth and her misery in a premature grave, and that what has long been over for her is also nearly over for me. I have often felt, with Job, "Let the day perish in which I was born, let darkness cover it"—as it soon will! it soon will!'

She ceased speaking, and the lawyer beside her bed arranged his papers on the table before him and waited.

He was full of sympathy for his client, to whom years of intimate service attached him; but he was still morally averse to carry out her instructions for her will. Further protest, he perceived, would be in vain.

Mrs Lorimer put an approving touch upon his shoulder. 'That is right, Thornton; give up arguing the point. I am about to fulfil a sacred duty by safe-guarding my grandchild from the chance of repeating my own and her mother's history. The matter is absolutely simple; wrap it up in as few obscurities as possible, but leave no room for misconception. All that I die possessed of I leave to Diana Vavasour, on the one condition that she never marries. Should she elect to marry she forfeits all.'

He looked up sharply. 'You will not leave her even a pittance?'

'I will not open a loophole for evasion. Single, she enjoys a handsome inheritance; wed, the man who takes her takes a beggar maid.'

'And the reversion, in case of contumacy?'

She laughed uneasily. 'It shall go to the Chan-

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cellor of the Exchequer towards the liquidation of the National Debt. No belated charities for me, dropped from a dead hand.'

'Are you serious? Am I really to take such an alternative as your deliberate intention?'

'Why not? Should Diana prove contumacious, as you call it, I would much rather do a service to my country than endow asylums or enrich distant kinsfolk, for whom I care much less.'

She turned her head wearily on the pillow, and watched him as he wrote. When he had done, he folded up his notes, placed them carefully in his pocket-book, and rose to go.

'I will be with you very early in the morning, and will bring one of my clerks; your own maid, or Dr Evans should he be here, will serve as the other witness.'

'Wait a few moments,' was her answer, looking into his face with a sudden poignant anxiety; 'you know my granddaughter better than I do, if I can be said to know her at all. You have no knowledge of any entanglement?'

'None—none,' he answered quickly. 'I think I may venture to say that if any girl is fancy free and fastidious enough to make the conditions of your will tolerable, it is Miss Vavasour. She has learnt to distrust men in her father's school.'

'God bless you for that assurance! And—you are a man of honour and my friend—you will never encourage her to backslide?'

'You may trust me implicitly.'

'And, again, you will consent to be my messenger, and bring her home to me as soon as this legal business is over? I long to feel her young arms about my neck. Colonel Vavasour in keeping us apart has paid me back in cruel coin. What a mercy, Thornton, he has died before me, and so left me a free hand to provide for his daughter!'

'He suffered severely; it was a frightful accident. The people at the farm who took them in have been wonderfully good to them,' was his answer.

'Ah! Diana will be well able to make amends. Is she as handsome as she promised to be as a child—as her mother was, and—her mother before her?'

'She is a beautiful young woman. It is in view of this that your embargo seems to me so cruel.'

'My good friend, did the beauty of the women who loved before her save them from heart-break? I am glad she keeps up the family traditions, for a plain or awkward representative would be an anomaly at Fox Hills. For the rest, I care nothing for the mischief her charms may work; let the young warrior string her scalps!'

He shook his head gravely; he did not like to hear a woman sick unto death talk like that.

'Ah!' he returned, 'there were two unrighteous men in the city, and you would consume it with fire and brimstone! You wrong your fine understanding; there are men living, dear Mrs Lorimer, quite capable of making a high-minded woman happy.'

'Not at the Grange farm, I hope?' she asked eagerly; and then as she saw his amused smile, recalling the homely interior, she added:

'You are outside the matter altogether, my friend, for you have been wise enough never to put your manhood to the test of having a woman in your power. Go now and bring the draft deed to-morrow. It may be I shall have suggestions or alterations to make, seeing I have a sleepless night before me for thinking the matter over.'

A week later Mr Thornton arrived at the Grange farm. He had driven over in a station fly from the university city, which was barely three miles distant; but from the environment you might have thought yourself fifty miles from a great centre.

The farmhouse itself stood back from the high-road, from which it was divided by a short carriage drive flanked by a flower-border on the right hand and on the left.

As Thornton glanced up at it he thought, as he had thought before, that it was surely the quaintest and ugliest structure of its kind in England.

It rose sheer from the ground to the height of three stories, the hard, straight lines scarcely relieved by the slight slope of the roof, with its one stack of chimneys set low and square in the centre. The flat façade was not broken by a leaf of foliage, for it was the humour of the owner to forbid a nail to pierce the stone, and the latticed windows and entrance-door were absolutely flush with the surface.

It was a relief to the eye to look away to the mellowed thatch of the homestead beyond. The buildings were extensive enough to suggest plenty, and the new-made ricks glowed warm in the August sunshine.

The door stood open, but there seemed no sound or movement in the house, and the lawyer repeated his knock for the second time and waited. Presently down the winding stair, which gave close upon the entrance, came the sound of a girl's swift footsteps, and in another moment he found himself face to face with Diana Vavasour.

The searching light of the noonday sun fell direct upon her, and her aspect was such as almost drew from the old man's lips an exclamation of pleasure quickened by vicarious pain, for to debar a creature so radiant in health and loveliness from the natural joys of love and marriage seemed to him more than ever a pitiable tyranny.

The girl recognised him at once, as shown by her heightened colour and eager glance; she held out her hand with a touch of reserve. 'At last, Mr Thornton,' she said; 'at last! Please come in. I have been expecting you so long, or, at least, a message.'

She turned and led the way into the pleasant sitting-room with which he was already familiar, and as soon as he was seated she spoke again in the same tone of impatience and displeasure.

'You will see that you are come too late'—she touched her black gown—'to relieve my poor

father's mind. You knew, of course? My grandmother knew? And no word or sign! What should I have done if these people had not been so good to me?'

She stood erect before him, superb in her resentment.

'My dear young lady,' he began, 'pardon my suggesting that you have not yet given me time for explanation. I have been kept in close attendance upon your grandmother since we last met, and in this matter I was under her orders. She did not wish to send for you until certain important affairs were settled, and now'—he hesitated—'I am the bearer of bad news.'

Diana's face changed.

'Can you mean that the end is come and you did not send for me? And I put my trust in you!'

'I hope you will trust me still. I did my best; but so long as Colonel Vavasour lived she would not see you, or rather—— But this is superfluous. Since, her whole time was given to the settlement of important affairs; then, alas! a relapse, and the end came quite unexpectedly just as she was comforting herself with the hope of bringing you home.'

'Home! That is what I have never known and all my life have longed to know. Now I have lost my chance.'

She sat down and bowed her head on her hands. He saw she was not weeping, but had received a blow, and he wondered if the sequel of the news he had to bring would serve for consolation.

While he hesitated Diana looked up with an expression from which the sudden softness had disappeared.

'Why should I feel it so much? I never knew her, and she hated my father to such an extent as to make it hard for her to care for me. Did she care for me, I wonder? It was one of the dreams of my life to make her love me. Has she forgotten me altogether, Mr Thornton, or thought of me, as she ought to have done, as the only child of her only daughter?'

She looked at him steadfastly without a touch of deprecation.

He smiled. 'As for forgetting you, Miss Vavasour, I, who knew the late Mrs Lorimer more intimately than you are aware, can assure you that you were seldom absent from her thoughts and plans; pardon my reminding you that it was not her fault that you were kept asunder; and now it is no indiscretion on my part to tell you that you are your grandmother's heir.'

Diana drew a long breath.

'You mean that I am rich and independent?'

'I mean that you will be very rich,' he said dryly, 'and as independent as you need desire.'

He watched the changes of her face with acute interest, for he was baffled by their expression, and he wondered if she would ask if there were any conditions attached to her inheritance, forgetting that the idea which lay so heavy on his mind was not likely to occur to hers.

'It seems like a dream,' she said slowly; 'a blessed dream come true, and I have no one to rejoice with me. I suppose I shall never more have any anxiety about money, and my mother's home will be mine. What ecstasy! what pain!' Her voice thrilled. 'At last God has been good to me.'

She spoke with such solemnity that he could not forbear a cynical smile.

'Yes,' he said, 'we are all apt to thank God when He gives us our heart's desire; but, Miss Vavasour, I did not know you were so eager to be rich. You will be amply satisfied.'

'No, you did not know, nor did she know who is gone. What should either of you know of a life like mine has been—the ignoble shifts and evasions which I have seen practised from a child? But I do not mean to speak of these things; the grave has made them sacred. One thing you can understand: I want to be good to those people who have been so good to us.'

'You mean the farmer here and his pleasant wife?'

She smiled. 'It seems odd to hear them spoken of so slightingly when they have played such an important part in our lives. My poor father—— But I cannot speak of it!'

Her face had paled and her lips quivered; the lawyer hastened to interpose.

'I am quite sure their kindness has been exemplary. I was grieved, Miss Vavasour, that the end came so soon.'

'It did not come too soon for him,' she answered. 'Words fail to describe what he suffered or how those sufferings were assuaged. Nothing could have reconciled him to life, maimed as the accident had left him. But the people here, Mr Thornton, treated him as if he had been friend or brother, although, as you know, he was a stranger cast upon their charity. What made it more singular was that the two men were irreconcilable in character; for Mr Clive is a saint, and my father—oh, it is not for me to say!'

'I know. I have heard in the locality that Mr Clive is a staunch Presbyterian and a pillar of his Church.'

'He was, but all that is over. You have not heard, then, that since my father's death he has been stricken with paralysis, and now lies on his bed a helpless log, though he has recovered speech and reason? I was in his sick-room reading aloud when you came, and I am afraid I kept you waiting. Mrs Clive is shopping in Oxford to-day, though she seldom leaves the house, and every one else is in the harvest-field: the servants and Dr Godfrey himself.'

'Dr Godfrey! And who is Dr Godfrey, Miss Vavasour?'

Diana opened her eyes. There was an unmistakable note of irritation in his voice.

'Of course you do not know. We all call him Dr Godfrey; he is the honoured son of the house, was an Oxford prizeman, and has been settled in

London in successful medical practice for many years. I should think you must have read of him in the papers.'

'Ah, I see! The doctor is down here in his professional capacity. The harvest-field must be a pleasant change for him. Has he been here long?'

'This is his second visit. He came first to see my father, and I cannot tell you what his skill and tact and kindness did for him. Now his own requires him. Oh, it is all so sad and so unreasonable! Mr Clive is a stern man, and holds the hardest views of duty. He thinks his son ought to give up his profession and undertake the management of the farm, which he is forced to give up; also to be his physician-in-ordinary.'

'But the man has not consented?'

'I do not know. I rather think the inward struggle is still going on. Father and son are a little alike: dour, reserved, inscrutable.'

There was a pause; then the lawyer said gravely, 'I am very glad your sojourn here is ended. It is no fit place for you. It will be necessary for you to go to Fox Hills at once, Miss Vavasour. Your grandmother's funeral is fixed for Saturday, and on all grounds it is right you should be there. I have brought Mrs Grace, who has been Mrs Lorimer's faithful friend and attendant for more years than you have lived, and left her at the hotel. Can you manage to join us there this evening, and return home with us at once? I would not hurry you; but my time is not at my own disposal.'

Diana shook her head. 'Do you think it would be courteous to treat my friends like that? I cannot go to-night, Mr Thornton.' Her tone was so decisive that he saw persuasion would be useless.

'I grant it is short notice, and I will meet your wishes as far as I can. I must go back to Fox Hills to-night; but I will leave Mrs Grace behind, and will instruct her to drive over to fetch you home to-morrow. What time will suit your convenience, Miss Vavasour?'

Instead of answering, Diana walked to the window. It was evident that she was under very strong feeling.

'Home!' she repeated—'home to an empty house, and worse, for I am afraid of my grandmother *dead*. Here is my home, where all feels warm and friendly and familiar. I have changed my mind, Mr Thornton. I don't want to be rich. Leave me where I am.' She glanced at him over her shoulder, and he saw that her eyes were full of tears.

'My dear young lady,' he said kindly, 'all this is very natural; only it is not a matter of choice but of duty. Your grandmother's last consolation was that you should inherit your mother's old home and be happy in it. Friends will soon gather round you. Consider how short the time before the funeral, and you will of necessity have some personal arrangements to make.'

'You are right, no doubt; but my zest is all gone. I feel suddenly afraid. You see, in order to take possession of Fox Hills, I must leave the Grange behind. Still, my courage will come back.'

He smiled and took up his hat to go.

'At what hour shall Mrs Grace come for you to-morrow?' he asked.

'You force my obedience, and I am not used to obey,' was her answer, with a smile half-wistful and half-defiant; 'but I yield. Send the carriage for me at six o'clock in the evening.'

From the spark of humour in her eye he perceived that she was prepared for expostulation on the lateness of the hour; but the old lawyer was too wise for that.

'The days are long,' he said cheerfully, 'and you will then be able to reach Fox Hills before dark; it is but an hour's run from Oxford. There is an express at 6.50, and, with your permission, I shall be at the house to receive you. So also will my co-trustee, Sir Marmaduke Spencer and his pleasant wife, two of your grandmother's most trusted friends. Good-bye;' he bowed over her extended hand.

But Diana insisted upon going to the door with him, and stood there with her hand shading her eyes until the hired carriage was out of sight.

COLOUR-PROBLEMS IN AMERICA.

By JAMES BURNLEY, Author of *Studies in Millionaires*, &c.

I.—THE BLACK MAN.

THREE great colour-problems have presented themselves for the solution of the dominant white race of the United States of America. Two of these have ceased to be troublesome; but the third looms up in more perplexing gravity to-day than ever. The red man has been subdued, if not civilised, and is dying out; the yellow Asiatic, who at one time threatened to overrun the country, is kept in check by drastic but necessary prohibition of entry; but the black man (the negro) still remains the problem of problems for the American people, and constitutes perhaps the most serious racial difficulty that a nation was ever confronted with.

According to the census of 1900, the total coloured element of the United States aggregated 9,312,585 persons, made up as follows: 8,840,789 of negro descent, 119,050 Chinese, 85,986 Japanese, and 266,760 Indians; while the total white population was 66,990,802. To put the matter in smaller compass, there are 1 Japanese, 2 Chinese, 3 Indians,

116 negroes, and 878 whites in every 1000 of the population.

The pressing racial question to-day is the negro, and it is around him that there is probably destined to be much contention. The recent increase in the horrible lynchings of negroes in various parts of the Union, the disclosure of a system of 'peonage' in Alabama which practically re-established the principles of slavery, and the growing intolerance of negro claims to equality in the States where the coloured people are most numerous, show only too plainly that the bond of harmony between black and white is still too slender to bear much strain.

At a gathering in one of the cities of the Southern States not long ago, the position of the negro was under discussion; and after Mr Booker T. Washington—perhaps the most talented negro now living—had delivered an animated address on behalf of his race, a white citizen rose, and wound up a sympathetic and encouraging speech by warning his hearers against expecting too much. 'We gladly admit,' he said, 'that the negro is making progress, and that some of his race show intellectual power that would do honour to any white man whatsoever; we acknowledge that in Mr Booker T. Washington we have one of the greatest orators of our time; but I ask you white men here—and this brings us to the root of the question—which of you would think of asking even Mr Washington himself to occupy your guest-chamber to-night?'

For this sort of antipathy there is no remedy. It is instinctive. It renders racial assimilation impossible; but it ought not to shut the door against such an understanding as would admit of the negro working out his own salvation. His present position in America is not of his own bringing about. He did not originally become domiciled on the American continent of his own free-will. When, at Jamestown in 1619, the Indian and the negro met for the first time there was little to choose between the two in point of intelligence. Both were barbarians. The negroes of Africa are not of much higher culture to-day; but those who have by force of circumstances grown up under the influence of the white man in America—even when suffering from slavery as well as racial antagonism—have shown a capacity and an application to which the red man has been unable to rise. This is enough to prove that within certain limits the negro and the white man can advantageously join forces in the general cause of progress, and that those limits are capable of considerable expansion. Much depends upon the education of the negro to a sense of true citizenship and responsibility, and much upon the patience and forbearance of his white co-citizen.

It should not be forgotten that the negro has been a great economic factor in building up the prosperity of the United States. He was brought over from his native land at great cost; and so well did he fulfil the compulsory duties that were put upon him that his race ultimately came to constitute the bulk of the labouring population of the South. Apart from the iniquity of his years of bondage, and the general demoralisation that it represented, he was all the time an instrument of good, and deserves better of the country he has helped, and which is now his own, than to have obstacles put in the way of his progress.

Counsels of moderation are wanting on both sides. Many who champion the cause of the negro encourage him to higher aims than he is at present equal to; on the other hand, there are many who advocate his being put back into slavery. I remember only a year or two ago hearing the Rev. Henry Frank, at the Carnegie Lyceum, New York, declare that the freeing of the negro had proved a disastrous failure, and urging that a section of country should be set apart 'to which all negroes should be permitted to migrate and there yield themselves as slaves to such persons as would agree to possess them.'

Against this, however, it can be shown that real progress has been made. The negroes came out of slavery without a foot of land, without a home, without a name; even the clothes which covered their poorly clad bodies were not their own. To-day they own land, homes, money. When they gained their freedom they possessed nothing; to-day they have millions of acres of land, pay taxes on property worth millions of dollars, and raise four times as much cotton under freedom as they did under slavery.

In spite of some very notable exceptions, the negro has not made the uses of his freedom that was expected of him. Many of his opportunities have been thrown away, and the time has come when the difficulty has to be faced from a practical and not a sentimental point of view. The Northern Abolitionists of the old days assumed that freedom would elevate the negro to the mental status of the white man, and that noble book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and much kindred literary effort, firmly implanted this idea in the minds of those who did not know the negro at close quarters. In the name of humanity his freedom was loudly called for; in the name of humanity it was granted; and now, in the name of humanity, the people who wronged him owe it to him and to themselves to set him right with the world. It was not enough to give him his freedom. That act turned him giddy, and caused him while still ignorant to assume the airs, manners, and importance of the white man, with of course ludicrous results.

The negro's present unfortunate position, it seems to me, arises from the uncompromising attitude of the Southern white man. There is a good deal of the spirit of Legree still lingering in the South. You are told that the negro will not work unless he is driven to it, that he is naturally lazy and improvident and dishonest, and that so long as he can enjoy himself to-day he does not concern himself with to-morrow. There is much, it must be con-

fessed, in this wholesale arraignment; but what does this condition result from? Long years of slavery bred the habit of servility in the negro, and with it also the habit of escaping labour as much as possible. It is the same with all imperfectly educated people. The like causes are accountable for the negro's general laxity of conduct, and it is only by the slow process of education that he is to be emancipated from his present difficulty. The education that he requires, however, is not the higher education that is given to the white man; to-day he is unfitted for it, and to attempt to instil it into him is to feed him with ideas and aspirations which he will but inadequately realise. Dealing with the negro as we find him, and taking a practical view of the whole subject, it seems to me that the education he requires is that which is elementary and industrial, and will best fit him for the pursuits of agriculture and the mechanical and domestic arts. To this level he can rise with effort and fair opportunity, and thence to such higher altitudes as his expanding intelligence may take him to.

In the case of the negro, not only is the child the father to the man, but he remains the child to the end. The moment you begin to treat him or allow him to pose on the lines of the white man, he flounders, loses his head, and does strange things. The mental ballast is not there to steady him. He is a strongly emotional being; and so long as his emotions are kept attuned to useful ends, and too much latitude is not given him, he is tractable, interesting, and reasonable. I have had opportunities of studying these happy-go-lucky, irresponsible creatures under most of the conditions that prevail in America, South and North, and the emotional side has always been uppermost. They make little attempt to put a restraint upon their feelings; a noisy turbulence sways their most ordinary courtesies, while in their quarrels they are still less under control. Sober seriousness seldom comes to their rescue.

A Bostonian of British descent told me that he once questioned Douglas, the famous negro orator, as to what his hope was in regard to the elevation of the negro race, and the answer was: 'Well, when Julius Cæsar landed on the shores of Britain he found your ancestor there a naked, painted savage. It has taken two thousand years to make you what you are; but I don't think it will take the negro more than five hundred years to come up; perhaps he'll do it in two hundred and fifty.' My Boston friend added with feeling, 'That the negro, who only stood out from slavery forty years ago, and who previously as a husband did not dare to protect his wife from insult nor prevent her or their children from being taken from him at any moment—that this field-hand, debased by not having any rights that a white man was bound to respect, has not leaped into the arena of the races at one bound ready furnished with the mental and moral endowments of the best of them, creates no surprise in those who think of him as one but so lately rescued from the pit of degradation, escaped from bondage from which all whites were freed centuries ago.'

Perhaps it is on the religious side that the negro's emotionalism is most conspicuously displayed. Naturally superstitious, he quickly grasps at any faith that is put before him in a sufficiently rousing manner. If he has to think and reason about it he will let it go by; but pound him with it, shake him with it, and throw it at him as something to wrestle with and shout over, and he accepts it with enthusiasm. 'In Loozyany,' said a keen observer, 'I heard the poor darkeys singing and shouting:

"Gimme Jesus, gimme Jesus,
An' you take all de res'."

And I found the white man took them at their word. He took all the rest.'

But here again a calmer influence is at work. 'I have no patience,' says Mr Booker T. Washington, 'with the fool-preachers who inflame the imaginations of my people by telling about the great white heavenly mansions and the golden slippers over there, while our people are existing in miserable shanties and going barefooted here. I tell them that the transition from a one-roomed log-cabin to a great white mansion would be too sudden. They wouldn't feel at home. Better practise down here on a three or four roomed house, and start a bank account.'

This is the new practical religion that the negro has yet to learn. At present he will join himself with almost any religious faddist who may be loud-mouthed enough to attract his attention, and to those who come along with predictions of the ending of the world at a given date he will generally give ready ear. While I was in North Carolina a certain 'world-end' sect of negroes assembled on one of the mountain-tops near Ashville, and waited for the knell of doom, praying and ejaculating with immense fervour from the going down of the sun until long after midnight. One excited negro mounted a stack of dried grass, and sleep overcame him while crooning his prayers. Some mischievous white boys who had gone up to see the fun came upon the sleeping negro and set fire to the grass beneath him; then they retired to a safe corner to watch developments. Presently the negro was awakened by the glow and the sputter of flame, and, jumping to his feet and throwing his hands up in despair, cried, 'And it 's de oder place I 'm landed in after all. I allus feared it would be so.'

I have been at many negro prayer-meetings, camp-meetings, and revivalist gatherings, and have generally found the worshippers swept by a tornado of religious frenzy into amazing eccentricities. The negro soon catches the trick of religious phraseology; and, though he mixes his Scriptural quotations more than Mrs Malaprop mixed her metaphors, he is often fluent and sometimes eloquent. Marking his pauses by outbursts of fervid exclamation, he progresses by hurried ebbs and flows of words to a terrorising climax that frightens his listeners into epileptic

manifestations of devotion. Often he is humorous and anecdotal, and gives us an odd mixture of the sacred and profane. In prayer he assumes a familiarity with the Supreme Being that would be sacrilegious in a white man—asking for Divine aid in the smallest domestic matters and for castigations upon individuals who have offended. He never neglects to give a good whipping-up for the collection, though, and keeps himself quite independent of the trammels of text and argument. He speaks according to his emotions, and when all else fails him, lets himself loose upon wholesale denunciation. He calls his brethren sinners, miserable sinners, outcasts, trash not worthy to live; and the more he fulminates the more it seems to do him good.

Sometimes the negro preacher's humour carries with it a sting for his oppressor—the white man. For instance, an old black preacher was telling his flock about a terrible dream he had had. He had dreamed he had died and gone to the bad place. 'Any w'ite men dar?' asked one. 'Yes, sho', dey was heaps an' heaps on 'em.' 'Any niggers dar?' 'Yes, sho', dey was acres on 'em; but, look heah, you trif'in' brack trash, ebery single w'ite man dar had hold ob a nigger, holdin' him between him an' de fire.'

Many evidences could be adduced of the waning of sympathy between the black and white races of the South. The white is becoming more despotic, the black more resentful. The latter wants to be a politician; the former does not think him fitted for the rôle, and will not permit him to fill it if he can help it. Now and then matters are aggravated by a negro being appointed to some minor office, and he gets off well if he escapes shooting or lynching because of this recognition of his intelligence on the part of the Government. How the negro is to be helped is a difficult question. There is but one course for him, perhaps, at this juncture of his history, and that is to accept the position of the labourer as his lot until such time as education on the one hand and a better feeling on the part of the whites on the other shall make matters easier for him.

The negroes have among their own race men who will lead them aright if they will only permit themselves to be led. Mr Booker T. Washington is such a leader. His autobiography, *Up from Slavery*, formed the subject of an article in *Chambers's* for 1902. Since, he has published *Working with the Hands*. Mr Paul Lawrence Dunbar the negro poet is another. They rarely strike a wrong note. They see things as they are, and, while steadfastly hopeful as regards the negro's future, are anxious to keep him for the present in the sphere where he can be most useful. 'In the present condition of the negro race,' says Mr Washington, 'it is a grave error to take a negro boy from a farming community and educate him about everything in heaven and earth, educate him into sympathy with everything that has no bearing upon the life of the community to which he should return, and out of sympathy with most that concerns agricultural life.' The result of this process is that in too many cases the boy thus trained fails to return to his father's farm, but takes up his abode in the city and falls into the temptation of trying to live by his wits without honest productive employment. In this way he gets into collision with whites of still sharper wits, and degradation often supervenes. It is from this class that the white hater of the black gets his illustrations of negro incapacity and baseness, not from the splendid evidences of growing intellectuality and advancement afforded by the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, where some fifteen hundred negro students are being instructed, not in theories and 'ologies,' but in sound practical work that will do much for the elevation of the race, making agriculture the first basis of the training, and gradually covering numerous ordinary industries. As this kind of education goes on the lot of the negro must be improved. Said an old, white-haired negro to me in Alabama, 'I'm an ole man, an' I hain't got no eddication. I've known what it was to hev' on'y bread an' water for dinner, an' bread an' water for supper, an' nothin' for breakfast, because of rentin' land an' mortgagin'; but after a while I came to know what to do, an' I did it, an' a year an' a half ago I knowed for the first time what it meant to heah the birds sing "Home, sweet Home." I was old to larn, but I larned; an' what has served me will serve the young ones a thousand times better.' The idea of salvation by work is getting a stronger hold of the negro mind everywhere. 'We used to git up in the mornin' an' jest grunt an' grunt,' said another negro farmer; 'then we jest eat an' eat, then we jest sleep an' sleep; but now we git up an' do somethin', an' we don't need to be poor no mo'.'

While at Charleston I visited a large cotton-mill where coloured labour was almost exclusively employed; and although the black weavers and spinners did not seem to me quite as much in their natural element as when in the plantation, I was told that good results were obtained—of course under white supervision. A factory both controlled and worked by blacks in South Carolina was not a financial success.

There is much to dash the spirit of hopefulness, however, if we take the darker side of the picture. While Mr Roosevelt offers the hospitality of the White House to Mr Booker T. Washington, Mr Root, the Secretary for War, says at a public gathering, 'I fear we have to face the conclusion that the giving to the negro of citizenship, equal rights, and the franchise to secure his rise has failed.' While Mr Paul L. Dunbar and other cultured negroes are preaching submission and patience and industry to their brethren, there are others who answer bitterness with bitterness, hatred with hatred, and thus make the confusion worse confounded. Speaking at a mass meeting of negroes at Brooklyn not very long ago, T. Thomas Fortune fiercely denounced the South, and declared that the negro problem would never be solved without a revolution.

'There were two hundred thousand negroes,' he said, 'with Grant's army when Lee surrendered; and when the great crisis comes in this country, as it will come, there will be two million fighting negroes who will be anxious to get at the throats of the white men of the South.' Then, only the other day, at Wilmington, where a negro had been lynched at the suggestion of a white clergyman, a black parson (the Rev. Montrose Thornton) vented his wrath upon the white man in language that was as dangerous as it was unwise. 'The white man,' he cried, 'in the face of his boasted civilisation, stands before my eyes to-night the demon of the world's races—a monster incarnate. The white man is a heathen, a fiend, a monstrosity before God. The negro is useless anywhere in this country. He is the open prey at all times of barbarians who know no restraint, and will not be restrained. There is but one part for the persecuted negro when charged with crime and when innocent: be a law unto yourself. Be your own sheriff, court, and jury. Die in your tracks, perhaps drinking the blood of your pursuers.'

This condition of things is deplorable enough; but the negro is not altogether to blame for it. While his best friends will not deny that he has not availed himself to any great extent of the chances and opportunities that the act of freedom gave him, it must also be remembered that in the white man of the South he has had an uncompromising foe. When we find a leading Southern official declaring that 'every dollar that is raised for negro education is a dollar taken from the white man's pocket and spent to the white man's disadvantage,' and find Southern planters generally endorsing that view, it is not very encouraging. Worse still is it to find an American senator, Mr Tillman of South Carolina, applauding the Northerners who have recently been lynching negroes. 'That seems to be the only practicable way,' says this negro-hater, 'until the amendment to the constitution granting negroes the suffrage has been repealed. We have shot 'em and hanged 'em and burned 'em in South Carolina until they almost know their places now. Let the good work go on.' For all that, as Mr Root himself says in the same breath as that in which he laments the failure of the negro, the people of the United States can never throw off the responsibility resting upon them for the welfare of the blacks; and the question of what to do 'should occupy the greatest thought of the greatest minds of the country.'

The 'Jim Crow' cars on the railways and tramways of the Southern States, and the 'coloured' waiting-rooms, are not a mere marking of the colour-line, but a mark of hatred and intolerance; and there must be a fair spirit of give and take shown on both sides before the problem gets into line for solution. The terrible lynchings of negroes which now occur with such alarming frequency afford the strongest of all evidence of the racial hatred that exists. In most cases the crime is diabolical and the guilt unmistakable; but the law should be the punisher, not racial fury. It is a sad record, this of the lynchings; but the white man is not altogether irresponsible. His neglect is partly accountable for the low status and lax ideas of the negro. In ten years there have been 1483 lynchings, nearly all of the victims being blacks; and the Southern States are responsible for over 1200 of these outrages upon the law and upon humanity. Georgia has witnessed 161 of these lynchings; Mississippi, 155; Louisiana, 150; Alabama, 145; Texas, 113; Tennessee, 96; Arkansas, 94; and Florida, 81.

The solving of the negro-problem rests mainly with the negro himself, after that with the Southern whites; and all the best influences of the country ought to be exerted to bring about a rapprochement between them. The outlook is not cheering, yet it is not hopeless. Poor as the negro is in the aggregate, a black hand is rarely seen stretched out from a street-corner appealing for charity; and one never sees him mixed up with strikes or labour agitations. It may be doubted whether the negro can ever make himself the intellectual equal of the Caucasian; but it is indisputable that he can be educated to become a useful member of society and a continued power in the labour-market, therefore a prominent factor in the country's prosperity. He cannot thrive under racial hostility any more than he could under slavery.

'THE ISLES OF DESTINY.'

By H. Halyburton Ross.

CHAPTER X.

THE foundering of the *Minnie* created a great sensation in the islands, where a nine days' wonder generally lengthens itself out into the same number of weeks or even months. The Uist folk were still discussing it in their subdued, apathetic way when nearly three weeks later Christopher was recovered sufficiently to listen to the last chapter of the adventure in which he himself had been an unconscious and wholly unresisting participator. During all that time one name had been incessantly on his lips, and now that he had emerged from the world of phantasms and dreams in which he had been plunged for so long, it repeated itself, but with a new anguish of doubt in the sound of it.

'Norma—where is she?'

Madge, his ever-faithful nurse, was by his side in an instant.

'She has had to go home,' she said in her soothing tones, bending to rearrange the pillows and smooth back from his forehead the errant lock of hair which in his late grapple with death had grown long and wayward again. A faint laugh fell from his lips, but the perspiration was standing out upon his forehead.

'Don't trouble to lie to me,' he gasped. 'I shall soon be with her, so it really doesn't matter.'

'Christopher, before God, I swear she is as full of life and strength this minute as she ever was,' cried Madge, but realising at the same time how futile was the assurance without the proof of the girl's actual presence.

'Then why is she not here?' was his unanswerable reply.

For a second only Madge hesitated.

'Her father was ill; she was sent for,' she said then, lying with all her heart and conscience. 'She stayed with you until a few days ago, and then she went.'

'Ah!' His eyes closed; his long-standing faith in the integrity of his only friend had triumphed even in this crucial moment. He was satisfied.

'Tell me about it,' he demanded a little later, opening his eyes again. 'I remember up to a certain point; but unless a miracle happened'—— He broke off with a shuddering smile.

'A miracle did happen,' said Madge softly; and then she told him the whole story. How the *Minnie* had sprung her planks and sunk almost instantaneously, and how Donald had grasped hold of Norma in the water and managed to support her until they were cast by the waves on to one of the tiny islets that surround the reef. How the search-party sent out by Madge, directed by their shouts, had reached them and taken them off; and how, after hours of vain cruising up and down in peril of their lives, one of them had descried Christopher's body lying high and dry on the reef, but so battered and bruised as to be almost beyond recognition. 'Any one else would have been dead,' she concluded, the thrill of emotion still lingering in her voice. 'But you, Christopher, bear a charmed life; at least so all the Uist folk believe. You mustn't be surprised to be canonised a little, dear, when you make your first appearance.'

But though she waited patiently, there was no answering smile on the haggard face lying on the pillows. Christopher's gratitude for his escape, if he felt any, was not yet sufficiently matured for outward expression.

The invalid's recovery was slow—painfully slow, as it seemed to Madge. Now that he had regained consciousness, the ceaseless iterations of his delirium had been succeeded by an impassive silence from which all her endeavours failed to arouse him. As far as her ministrations went he was tractable enough; but there was something dumb and mechanical in his acquiescence that told of thoughts morbidly self-centred. His face, pitifully wan and haggard, the thin lips compressed, the brooding eyes rimmed about with their dark shadows, haunted her day and night; but though she had a shrewd suspicion as to the nature of his trouble, she feared to put it to the test, dreading the inevitable disclosure of the truth which must follow. Even the raging of the winter storms failed to arouse him from his apathy, and never had Madge felt so utterly alone as when she sat with her silent companion in the lamp-lit room and listened to the boom of the surf upon the shore, or the wild venom of the wind shrieking up and down the naked flats.

Like all true Celts, she was intensely susceptible to the moods of nature; but there was a new subjectiveness in her attitude at this time which she could not explain. Some primal and hitherto dormant part of her being seemed to have emerged into consciousness all at once, an elemental memory, whose connotations carried her back through vast oblivious tracts of time. Snatches of wild sea-songs came to her on the hurrying wind, the voices of her Scandinavian forefathers, rude Olafs and Sigurds and Alrics hailing each other across the billows. To her distorted fancy the flame of destiny flickered with each tremendous gust that shook the house.

A nightmare of shipwreck haunted her waking and sleeping. Once, fancying she heard the sound of minute-guns, she rushed downstairs to rouse the house, only to discover that her imagination had played her another trick. The truth was that the strain of the past few weeks was telling on her nerves, and Christopher's silent companionship was not calculated to improve matters. At last, in desperation, she bethought herself of a plan for breaking down the barrier between them.

Ever since his return to consciousness, old Donald had been urgent in his appeals for an interview with the 'captain,' throwing out all manner of mysterious hints as to some secret communication he desired to make. But Madge had sternly vetoed the idea, dreading the effect of any fresh excitement on the patient.

Now, however, she was fain to try the experiment, and accordingly one day approached Christopher on the subject. To her delight, he manifested some eagerness at the prospect; but her hopes were doomed to speedy disappointment. The first glimpse of Donald's crestfallen face as he emerged from the sick-room at the close of the interview warned her of the failure of his mission.

'It wasn't any guid, mistress,' said the old man despondently, following her as he spoke into the little study where Christopher had discovered her on that first eventful day of his arrival. 'He wad talk o' naethin' forby sealin', an' me wi' sic a deal to tell him. Ye see, it was this way,' lowering his voice to a confidential pitch. 'There was a' those hours on the bit island wi' Miss Norma that nicht, an' I was sayin' over an' over to mysel' the hale time, "Mind ye, Donald Farspach, you're juist

hearin', nae listenin', man, an' ilka word the puir lassie says is to be kep' up for the captain's ear alane," though I had sma' enou' hope o' ever layin' eyes on him again at that time—it 's what they ca' daein' proxy, if ye understan'. But, pity o' me, nae suner did I start my discoorse than he turns awa' wi' a thrawn-like smile an' commences speerin' aboot the seals again. The very craig face micht hae been black wi' the critters for aught I cared; an' it was in me to tell him sae, tae.'

'Never mind, Donald—never mind,' said his mistress, striving to speak cheerfully in spite of her disappointment. 'You have done your best, and so have I. We must just trust to time.'

'Ay, to steal him awa' afore our very een,' interrupted the old man bitterly. 'I ken fine what sort o' cantrips time plays gin ye dinna tak' him by the forelock, as the sayin' is. I tell ye, mistress, the lad 's no fey—he 's no fey,' shaking his head prophetically as he spoke, and sending a shiver of superstitious dread through his listener's heart. . . .

A snap of arctic cold succeeded the storm. The fords assumed a glassy calm, and the islanders, with a characteristic shrug of the shoulders, resigned themselves to their winter privations. It was on the second morning of the frost that Christopher's tongue was loosed. He was sitting propped up by pillows in his invalid-chair by the window looking out over the waters which had so nearly proved his grave, and Madge's quick eyes read a new expression on his face. The trouble which had been so long brewing had come to the surface at last.

'I want to tell you something,' he began abruptly, signing to her to take a seat by his side. 'It is about that night, the last thing that I can remember.'

'I know,' she interrupted softly. 'Norma has told me.'

So her suspicions had been correct after all.

'I can hear her voice now,' he continued, with a shudder. 'It has been in my ears ever since. Madge,' turning to her with sudden vehemence, 'did she give you no explanation of it?'

Madge was silent. The moment she had so long dreaded had arrived.

'Yes,' she said slowly at last, 'she did give me an explanation. Do you want to hear it, dear? It is not a pleasant thing to have to tell you; but perhaps'——

'There is no perhaps,' he broke in with all his old imperiousness. 'God knows, anything would be better than what I have been enduring.'

'Well, she felt—she felt,' began Madge, with a courageous attempt to steady her voice, 'as if in some unaccountable way she was being disloyal to Neil, as if he was near her, watching her through the darkness with sad, reproachful eyes; and then she looked up and saw the North Star. It is the emblem of her race, and there is a tradition that it always comes out to watch them die, and that made the feeling of reproach stronger. She didn't understand it at the time, but afterwards she did.'

'What do you mean?' queried Christopher sharply.

'Oh, Chris dear, how can I tell you?' cried Madge, bending over him with an access of motherly tenderness. 'But when you were ill, in your delirium you let it all out about Neil and his disgrace, and your contempt, and the likeness, and'——

'Is that all?' interrupted Christopher mockingly, though the clay whiteness of his face betrayed him. 'God, the irony of it!' he muttered a moment later. 'That she should have heard it from my own lips, and I would have died to shield her from it.'

'But she might have found out afterwards, some other way,' protested Madge weakly.

'Never,' he almost shouted. 'I had taken a vow. It was my greatest happiness to feel that I stood between her and that knowledge, and now—now—don't you see what I have done?' he broke off wildly. 'I have killed what I coveted most in her—her "morning soul"—so wonderful, so wonderful! Madge, Madge,' covering his face with his hands, 'could you have done nothing for me?'

'I was too shocked myself at first,' was Madge's sorrowful reply. 'I had always looked upon Neil as a champion, one of our best and bravest, and I wanted to make excuses for him. I insisted it was panic, a hundred things, but Norma would listen to none of them; she was too brave, too faithful to her ideal; but oh, the look on her face!'

'And yet she blamed me,' groaned Christopher. 'She left me for the sake of that—that'——

He started forward in his chair, his hands clenched, his eyes gleaming, and then fell back, a white dew rippling over his forehead.

'Hush!' said Madge authoritatively. 'Remember that he was Norma's brother, a part of herself.'

'He has come between us from the beginning,' muttered Christopher, paying no heed to her remonstrance. 'First the likeness—then that night in the valley of death he parted us—and now—he has taken her from me altogether.'

'Not altogether,' said Madge, with calm conviction. 'Don't you see, dear, it was natural she should leave you for a time; she was simply obeying a primal instinct in doing so—the instinct of the wounded animal that creeps away to its lair. That is why I let her go. For such a hurt as hers time is the only cure. Some day in the future she will return to you, or you will go to her.'

'If she has not found another comforter by then,' said Christopher, his lacerated soul quick to perceive new dangers. 'You needn't look so shocked. Is it any wonder I am sceptical? God knows I have reason enough. Eric'—pronouncing his rival's name with difficulty—'would never have broken her heart even unwittingly. Eric and Luaig together may succeed in mending it.'

But Madge's soft fingers over his mouth made him pause.

'Don't say that,' she cried. 'Whatever has happened, love is best, and Norma could never have given Eric the love she gave you—still gives you.'

Christopher's lean hands went up and seized her fingers in a tight clasp. 'Say that again,' he cried hoarsely.

Madge repeated the words as if they had been a passage of Holy Writ. There was silence for a moment. All at once he leaned forward again, his eyes gleaming strangely. 'If I win this time—and, please God, I shall win—it will be for ever,' he murmured. 'This time for ever, with truth on my side—truth and honour.' His voice died away.

Madge smiled to herself as she listened. Truly, sorrow and shame as well as happiness can kindle the divine flame within a man; and once kindled, neither sorrow nor shame has power to quench it.

THE CONQUEST OF THE AIR.

By JOHN BACON, M.A., Author of *The Dominion of the Air*, &c.

IT has been said that all those who have sought to sail the skies divide themselves naturally into two great schools: the 'lighter-than-airites' and the 'heavier-than-airites.' The former, which is by far the larger class, maintain that you must start with something that is lighter than air—essentially a balloon—something that will raise itself into the air, and then you must either let it drift with the wind, or, better if you can, try and drive it in any desired direction irrespective of the wind. The opposite school maintain that this method will never wholly succeed, nor will any great advance be possible in this direction; but that you must begin with a machine that is heavier than air, and this for a double reason: first, weight for weight, it will have less bulk, and therefore offer less resistance to the air; and, secondly, you can afford to make it both stiffer and stronger, so that, on the one hand, it will not be liable to give way under the stress of wind-pressure, and, on the other, you will be able to apply a greater lifting and driving force to it. Of this latter school Sir Hiram Maxim is perhaps the greatest champion, and he puts the case, as it appears from his point of view, in a nutshell. 'Go,' he says, 'to nature. In all nature you will not find a single balloon. All her flying-machines are heavier than air, and depend altogether on the development of dynamic energy.'

Apparently we find attempts at human flight in very early days. Thus, in the days of Nero a daring individual succeeded in gaining the attention of the Court by an exhibition of so-called flying. Again, there is a record of an English monk who flew from the top of a tower in Spain; and the same feat is said to have been performed from the top of St Mark's at Venice. But in all these cases we must suppose only some primitive form of parachuting. There is a tradition that the parachute was known from ancient times in the East; but, if so, it would seem to have become forgotten, judging from the following facts: Ten years ago a friend of the writer's attempted a professional tour in China, and the first parachute descent that he made caused the wildest excitement, so that forthwith a number of natives, seizing large Chinese umbrellas, commenced jumping off the tops of their roofs, with the result that half-a-dozen broke their legs. Then the excitement grew, and after the next descent others commenced jumping off the tops of their pagodas, with the result that a score broke their necks. Thereupon the governor of the garrison sent down a file of soldiers, explaining that a few Chinamen more or less were not of much consequence; but that sort of thing must not go on, and the aeronaut was forthwith conducted out of the province. This would seem to prove that the parachute was a novelty in China ten years ago.

As soon as the air-pump had been invented, one Father Lana hit on a brilliant idea. A cask with the water run out of it will float in water, so he argued that if a thin copper globe had the air pumped out of it, it would float in air. His device was a failure, however, because he forgot that as he pumped the inside air out the outside air would infallibly crush his globe in.

It was about two hundred years ago when the first flying-machine worthy of the name was invented by a French craftsman, Besnier. It consisted simply of two light double-bladed paddles harnessed one over each shoulder and worked by arms and legs reciprocally. It can hardly be reckoned a success. With the utmost exertion the inventor might raise himself to the top of a house; but no one cared to adopt his method, it being found more convenient to get a ladder and ascend by that means. After this the flying-machine went out for a century and a half; but some eighty years later—that is, in 1782—two young Frenchmen, the brothers Montgolfier, got the idea that smoke or other product of combustion ought to be capable of raising bodies into the air. All the world was waiting for that idea, and in only a few months the first passenger balloon, inflated with hot air, was in the sky; and then so fast did things move in the aeronautical world that only a few months later the hydrogen balloon followed its rival, and so the fledgling in one twelvemonth had become a full-grown bird of the air, and has remained almost unaltered to this hour.

But in 1852 a man essayed the feat of driving the balloon where he and not the wind listed. This again was a Frenchman, M. Giffard, the famous inventor of the injector as still used in steam-engines. Building an elongated balloon, he applied the only available motor of that day—namely, a steam-engine of three-horse-power—and with it gave to his machine a speed of seven miles an hour. Thirty years later Tissandier, using an electric-motor, attained a some-

what higher speed; and directly afterwards Messrs Renard and Krebs, officers in the French army, reaching fourteen miles an hour, managed to steer their clever craft back to its shed five times out of the seven that it was publicly taken out—a record practically never beaten. In 1900 Count Zeppelin, with an air-ship the size of a man-of-war, met with no success; and then Santos Dumont cut in with a mere toy craft, but possessing the great advantage of the modern petrol-engine. With this he circled several times round the Jardin d'Acclimatation, Paris, till his engine ceased working. Then, after building no less than five more navigable balloons, he essayed to compete for M. Deutsch's prize, which required that the aeronaut, starting from the grounds of the Aero Club at Longchamps, should circumnavigate the Eiffel Tower and return to the starting-point in thirty minutes. In his first trial Santos Dumont completed the entire course in safety, but eleven minutes behind time. Later, another determined attempt was frustrated by mischance, and the bold Brazilian was caught against the roof of a house, where he hung in a perilous position. Then, building yet another ship, Dumont met and overcame various mishaps, till he found opportunity for one more strenuous struggle for the prize. Reaching and rounding the tower in quick time, he seemed to have success within his grasp, until his machine, buffeted with the wind, became deranged and caused him to reach his goal late, as it was stated, by thirty seconds only. These were perhaps the most noteworthy of Dumont's many and brilliant performances. Mr Stanley Spencer and others have followed suit; but so far no one is prepared to accommodate passengers with any certainty by this mode of flight.

It might almost seem, then, that the navigable balloon has been fully exploited, and has reached its limit. But this, at any rate, is not so with the flying-machine. At first experiments with models appeared to offer small encouragement. These would scarcely sustain more than fifty pounds per horse-power, whereas even a clumsily flying bird will sustain one hundred and fifty pounds per horse-power, while a locomotive can haul four thousand pounds per horse-power along a level track, and a steamer can propel the same weight through water at fourteen knots an hour. It looked, then, as if the problem were hopeless; but Maxim grappled with it. His machine was a true leviathan, consisting of a combination of superposed aeroplanes; it weighed more than three tons, and was driven by an engine run up to three hundred and sixty horse-power. This raised itself in the air; but, being held in restraint, its very lifting power caused it to give way and become crippled. This was ten years ago, and the problem as attacked by Maxim has never been more successfully handled.

But there is another plan which is now being pushed with great promise by the 'gliding' aeronauts—that is, those who, starting from some eminence, learn to make themselves glide to earth through air with suitable apparatus. Thus, instead of first building a mere guesswork machine, and then trying to make it fly, they first build a machine which, they know, will float properly, and then apply the power. This seems beginning at the right end, and implies that you must have your machine properly designed first before you can go any further. Nature herself has taught the same lesson. The young bird has a perfect flying apparatus provided first, and even then has to be taught by the old bird how to use it.

One most curious fact relating to a large proportion of those who have sought to conquer the air is that they have had but the vaguest notion of how to set about it. To give an example: a modern inventor, speaking of his invention before a scientific society, said he was confident of success because he had been so careful about details. He had actually made all his rods hollow, and filled them with hydrogen! But another showed still greater lack of mechanical genius; for, having a cylinder, and finding that when he had filled it with hydrogen he had lessened its weight by one pound, he argued that if he were to pump ten times the amount of hydrogen into it he would *reduce its weight by ten pounds!*

But equally curious are the false deductions which even aeronauts of experience will make. For instance, Tissandier is in a balloon eating chicken and drinking a bottle of wine. Presently he throws the chicken-bone overboard, and discovers, as he supposes, that the balloon, having been most delicately poised, as a consequence immediately rises thirty yards. I have always thought this wonderful observation had more to do with the bottle of wine than with the chicken-bone. It was simply a false deduction. There was once a man walking over London Bridge all-unconscious that a Thames steamer was passing just underneath. It chanced that he sneezed—nothing more, but bystanders saw him turn deadly pale. Then he hurried home, went straight to bed, and sent for the doctor. His respiratory organs, he said, were in an appalling condition, and he must be dying. The whole fact was that just as he sneezed the steamer had blown its hooter underneath, and he had drawn a false conclusion. It was the same with Tissandier. A balloon is never poised, but is continually either ascending or descending, owing to change of temperature or chance currents, and discarding a small bone would be perfectly trivial in its effects.

Another of the very commonest misconceptions is that a balloon in an ordinary way will obey a rudder. It will do nothing of the kind. This is but another false conclusion. It is the same as with a boat. If this were being swept along with and at the same speed as flowing water, then it simply travels along as an integral part of the water, and no rudder can affect its course in the slightest. But if by aid of wind or steam the boat be made to go either faster or slower than the water, then the water flowing past the boat gives it 'steer-

age way,' and the rudder acts. Andrée made use of this principle by slowing down his balloon with a rope dragging on the ice, and the feasibility of this method up to a certain extent gives to the balloon proper a promise of useful work in directions not as yet fully exploited. Not only for the purpose of exploring inaccessible country, but as a means of conveying intelligence in time of war, the balloon may be made to play an important part. And there is yet another practicable mode of directing a balloon's course which may be reasonably reckoned upon. This is by taking advantage of the general circulation of air constantly prevailing over the earth's surface, and giving rise to dominant air-drifts always somewhere in evidence, which must be distinguished from mere local and inconstant winds, on which small reliance may be placed.

In the first place, there is unquestionably a pretty constant and universal wind blowing from west to east at high altitudes, this being theoretically a consequence of the earth's rotation, and also being clearly proved by the persistent eastward sweep of the high cirrus clouds and by the drift of volcanic ashes whenever these are thrown up to a vast height. But it would appear that this wind is often to be traced at a far more moderate height in our own latitudes. Charles Green, whose experience as an aeronaut and observer can be placed second to none, has left on record that he 'always found a current from the westward if he went far enough, but that nearer earth he found more than one current before he reached the westerly.' The experience of the writer goes largely to endorse the above testimony.

But there is yet to be reckoned with that general and never-ceasing circulation of air which, resembling the circulation of an ordinary domestic hot-water system, rises off the tropical belt, and flowing as an upper current towards the poles, becomes thereafter a return lower current of contrary direction. When due investigation has so far improved our knowledge of the dominant air-streams that their courses can with confidence be sought and found, then aerial navigation within practicable limits will already be an accomplished fact.

Doubtless a yet more important advance towards the true conquest of the air will be made when a new form of motor has been invented which shall give increased efficiency without adding to weight; and for constant improvement in this direction we have never looked in vain.

PATMOS: ITS MONASTERY AND PASSION PLAY.

By Sir J. William Whittall.

AVING heard from a friendly Orthodox bishop that a curious ceremony, if it might not be styled a Passion play, was, and had from time immemorial been, enacted on Greek Maundy Thursday at Patmos by the *caloyeri* or monks of the great monastery of St John the Evangelist there, and feeling convinced that a description of it would interest English friends, I decided to attend it, and I did so under unusually favourable circumstances. Patmos is not at all times accessible, and I had a conveyance of my own to go in. I knew Greek well, and could converse direct with the monks, to whom, as well as to others at Patmos, I had very strong letters of introduction.

The Monastery of St John was built in 1085, in the reign of Alexius Comnenus, by a native of Trebizond, John Christodoulos (servant of Christ), who was afterwards canonised, and whose mummified body, preserved in the church in a silver coffin with the face exposed, is said to be gifted with great miraculous powers. The building was erected on the site and with the materials of a temple dedicated to the goddess Artemis, and occupies an imposing position on a hill about six hundred feet high. It is more like a grand old medieval castle, with turrets, &c., than a monastery, and the strength of the building saved it at times from the inroads of pirates and freebooters. Although this monastery was built in honour of St John the Evangelist, the true site of the divine's dwelling, in which he wrote the Book of Revelation, is shown in a small monastery lower down, now used as a school. This, in my humble opinion, rather tends to confirm the authenticity of the site, for if it had been at any time in dispute it would most certainly have been claimed by the great monastery above, which quite overshadows the lowly one below. The cave or grotto in which St John saw the vision is here shown. It is in a rock, the upper part of which is rent in three pieces. The tradition is that St John, lying on the rock below, was awoke by great thunder and a convulsion of nature, which rent the rock above in three, to denote the Holy Trinity and the Unity at the same time (for the three rents join in one), and then saw the celestial vision which he wrote down.

On our arrival at Patmos my yacht was greeted with warning cries of 'Beware of Kinops!' Now, Kinops, according to tradition, was a leading demon who haunted the island and inveigled men by revealing to them their dead friends restored to life again. On St John's arrival at Patmos, Kinops cursed him and tried to prevent his landing, upon which the saint hurled him into the sea and converted him into a rock, which, just visible above water, constitutes a danger to navigation, and is still called Kinops.

I spent a fortnight at Patmos, Passion and Easter week, living half the time in the monastery itself, in continuous communication with the *caloyeri* and the chief inhabitants of the town. I not only saw

everything that is shown to strangers, but a good deal that is not. There are many valuable treasures in the monastery, including remarkable antique ecclesiastical vestments, crosiers, mitres, gold and silver plate thickly encrusted with jewels, and numerous manuscripts and books. The mitre, crosier, and vestments of St John Christodoulos are first shown, and so are those of a series of patriarchs and bishops extending over the last nine hundred years. I was especially struck by the crosier of the patriarch Neophytus, who lived about three hundred years ago, which he got from the heirs of a famous bishop called Musselim, of an earlier age, and for which, the *igoumenos* told me, Rothschild, who visited the island, offered an enormous price. It is in gold-and-blue enamel of most exquisite workmanship. Some of the early episcopal robes were also of wonderfully fine brocade, and looked quite new. It appears that many of the dignitaries of the Orthodox Church were originally *caloyeri* of the monastery, attached to which in past times there was a theological school renowned for its learning, and which it is now sought to re-establish. These dignitaries were obliged by religious custom to leave all their ecclesiastical belongings to the monastery they hailed from. Hence this vast collection of treasures, which has been preserved intact since the eleventh century; for, although the monastery was at times attacked, the monks managed always to save their treasures, which cannot be said of most of the other monasteries in the Levant.

Perhaps the most remarkable treasure in the monastery is the famous Codex N of the fourth century, a marvellous artistic manuscript on thin purple vellum, with the letters in silver, those referring to God and Christ being in gold. Leaves were often torn out of this manuscript in past ages, and were given as credentials to monks sent as envoys on special missions to Russia and other parts of Europe. In one of the manuscripts just deciphered, embodying a curious petition addressed by the monks to the Emperor Charles, and begging for his support against piratical inroads, it is stated that the monks in charge of the petition were bearers of a leaf of the manuscript for presentation to His Majesty. These leaves have excited the wonder of ecclesiastical students for many years past. Six of them are in the Vatican, which published an elaborate work on the subject, reproducing the pictures in full; six are in England, and two in Vienna. A few years since, some of the leaves were privately exhibited for sale at Constantinople, and were strenuously competed for by agents from the United States, England, and Russia. Although both Americans and English had given orders to bid extreme prices for them, the Czar got the leaves by political influence for a consideration of one thousand pounds sterling and a set of valuable ecclesiastical vestments. These leaves purported to come, and I believe did come, from a Greek church at Cæsarea in Asia Minor. Those now existing at Patmos are thirty-three in number (I counted them), containing parts of the Gospel of St Mark. Why this manuscript should have been thus split up between Patmos and Cæsarea the monks could not tell me, nor how many were the leaves of the original manuscript, and only quoted the authority of two versions on the subject, one of which made the leaves one hundred and eighty-two in all, and the other four hundred and ninety.

If the piety of a place may be gauged by the number of its churches, then undoubtedly Patmos is the most pious place on earth, for within its limited and rocky surface three hundred and sixty-six churches and chapels are contained, or about one to every ten inhabitants. This extraordinary wealth of ecclesiastical buildings demonstrates the great prosperity of the little island in days gone by. That for its size it was astonishingly wealthy is proved also by the great number of valuable relics of the past in the shape of furniture imported from Europe one hundred and fifty to four hundred years since, jewels, gold and silver ornaments, embroideries, &c., still existing in private houses, though the island has been the prey of collectors for many years past. Some of these relics would not disgrace a royal palace. The past prosperity of the place is easily explainable. Under the shadow of the great monastery, which was recognised and in a measure respected by its Turkish sovereigns, who confirmed to it the privileges granted by Alexius Comnenus, Patmos was one of the few spots in the Levant in which during the early and middle ages Christians could dwell in comparative safety. Rich Greeks, therefore, congregated there, and brought their treasures with them; they became large shipowners and traded with Europe. Many of them were evidently men of education and cultivated taste; they established a school renowned for its learning.

Now, owing to security in regions more favoured by nature, and to the decline of the sailing marine, the people are fast leaving the island. There are quite large colonies of them in America, Smyrna, Alexandria, &c., and few return to their native island. A few of the old families, dating from early centuries, still exist, and it is melancholy to see them gradually becoming extinct, the few that are still left dwelling poverty-stricken, yet full of pride, in their ancestral houses, among the remains of their ancient grandeur, which they very reluctantly sell off piecemeal to buy bread with.

It is also sad to realise that the old artisans who ministered to their wealthy compatriots by their exquisite work in the form of gold and silver and embroideries have totally disappeared, their art being lost with them. What especially attracted my notice were the models in gold and silver of antique Greek galleys and other things thickly encrusted with exquisite enamels, and the embroideries, called Rhodian, but of which the finest were made at Patmos. The artisans in gold had undoubtedly inherited the art of the Greek jewellers of the Hellenic period, whose

work excels the finest of which modern jewellers are capable. A very few specimens of these arts are now left; in a few years there will be none.

The whole of Passion week was spent in constant services in the church of the monastery, and a terribly hard life it was for the *caloyeri*, who had to be up all night, slept very little by day, and lived on one daily meal, consisting of dry bread and boiled vegetables. With all the attenuation which followed on so hard an existence they preserved a serenity of soul which was truly remarkable, and I have to thank the *igoumenos*, Aghathangelos, his nephew, and all the *caloyeri* for the most courteous hospitality. The *caloyeri*, who are all more or less men of education, often discussed with me the union of the Anglican Church with theirs. All, without exception, expressed their earnest wish for such a union, and their conviction that it would be brought about some day. They also gave me some of the reasons, chiefly political, why the movement has been so far retarded; but I scarcely think it would be right to refer to them.

The monastery possesses, besides the body of St Christodoulos, several wonder-working relics, notably the skull of St Thomas, got from India, and presented by Alexius Comnenus, which is preserved in a golden casket and carried about in solemn procession whenever a great calamity befalls Patmos or the neighbouring regions. Some years since a plague of locusts settled on the island of Samos. A deputation thence, accompanied by *caloyeri*, solemnly took the relic to the scene of the locusts' ravages, upon which the swarms immediately quitted the island, and flying towards the sea, were drowned. That this did take place there can be no doubt, for there are thousands of eye-witnesses of the fact still living; but as locusts do often quit the land and fall into the sea, this may only have been a happy coincidence. Other remarkable cases of miraculous power exercised by the relics were related to me, and are undoubtedly firmly believed in by all. One of these, which is peculiarly quaint, occurred only a few years since. The captain of a sailing-vessel took advantage of the attending monk's inattention to chip off a finger from St Christodoulos' body, which was exposed at the time. He then went down to his ship, rejoicing over his acquisition, and started for his destination with two other ships. The latter sailed off with a favourable wind. His vessel could not make any way at all, being beaten back by currents. For three days in succession the ship would not move, until at last he bethought him of the sacrilege he had committed; and returning to the monastery, he confessed his sin, restored the finger, and then was allowed to proceed on his voyage. The finger is now preserved in a separate receptacle.

And now let me describe the ceremony to see which was the principal object of my visit to Patmos. It is called the Niptira, and is regarded with such interest that many hundreds of pilgrims from the neighbouring regions defy the elements and attend it, arriving in frail native craft over what is frequently a stormy sea in the spring months. The ceremony takes place in a small square, one of the very few level bits of land to be found in the town of Patmos, which is built on the precipitous sides of what may safely be styled a steep pyramid capped by the stately monastery. There was much excitement in the little town over what was reckoned to be the great event of the year. For days before, whitewashing was the order of the day, until the whole place was so dazzlingly white that the eyes could not rest on it for more than a second or two. A square temporary erection of poles, festooned with garlands of flowers and surrounded by a little forest of crosses, ikons, and ecclesiastical ornaments, was the scene of operations. Within this enclosure there were thirteen seats, the one to be occupied by Christ being in the centre. Everything being ready, the thirteen performers, headed by the *igoumenos*, with our deacons bearing crosses and swinging censers, and all dressed in purple vestments embroidered with gold, came in procession from the monastery church, and as they approached the enclosure, were ushered into it two by two by the four deacons, swinging their censers, on each side of them. The *igoumenos*, who wore more gorgeous robes than the others, represented Christ, one of them took the part of Judas, and the others the parts of the other Apostles. The rôle of Judas up to two years since was taken by one of the laity; but there was great difficulty in finding a man to assume so repulsive a part, and since 1902 perforce one of the monks has to represent the traitor. The *igoumenos* first rises to pray a dedicatory prayer; and the choir, which is outside standing on a slight elevation, then join in a rather long chant on the love of the brethren. The *igoumenos* then rises again, and holding his crosier, calls for a blessing on the ceremony. Then commence the actual proceedings, which begin with the words of Christ: 'With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer;' and after the agony on Gethsemane, end with the words, 'Rise, let us go; lo! he that betrayeth Me is at hand.' From this my readers will understand that the whole of the scenes occurring in the four Gospels between the saying of the above words are enacted, and this is done in strict accordance with the four Gospels in the most appropriate sequence of them that could be adopted. Thus the prospective betrayal, the strife as to who should be greatest, the asseverations of faithfulness, the washing of the feet, and the scene in the Garden of Gethsemane, &c., are all given chiefly in the form of dialogues between Christ and His Apostles. Of course, the principal part amongst the Apostles is given to St Peter; and after the *igoumenos* has laid aside his robes and girded himself with a velvet apron embroidered with gold, the scene of the washing of the feet is very graphically enacted by a literal reproduction of the dialogue between Christ and St Peter: 'Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?'

'What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.' 'Thou shalt never wash my feet.' 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me.' 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head,' &c. But it must not be supposed that each Apostle does not also act an individual part. Thus, when Jesus uses the words, 'One of you shall betray Me,' each Apostle in turn springs forward and asks the Saviour, 'Is it I?' When this questioning ends, St John is seen lying at Jesus' feet, with his head leaning on Jesus' breast, and says unto Him, 'Lord, who is it?' Jesus replies, 'He it is to whom I shall give a sop,' &c.; upon which follows the scene with Judas. The asseverations by St Peter of his fidelity to his Master and the prophecy, 'The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice,' are also graphically given. The scene of the agony at Gethsemane is the last of all. It is not enacted on the stage, but on a spot outside of the enclosure, to which Christ retires with the three Apostles. Christ prays and the Apostles slumber. The closing words of the ceremony are, I repeat, 'Rise, let us go; lo! he that betrayeth Me is at hand.'

What contributed to make the whole performance most quaint and primitive was the constant interposition between each performer's participation in the scene of the solemn chant of a monk called the Evangelist, who, standing on a little height some twelve yards from the sacred enclosure, and dressed in full canonicals, introduces, as it were, the performers to the crowded audience by solemnly chanting each time, 'Listen to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ,' or the Apostle Peter, or John, or James, &c. On the whole, this ceremony or play, if I may so call it, is a most curious, primitive, and interesting one. It certainly greatly impressed the audience. Although it was lacking in the effectiveness of perfect acting, as at Ober-Ammergau, it certainly was not wanting in solemnity, dignity, and earnestness. The performers, too, were clearly impressed with the parts they were acting, and there was none of the levity I have witnessed in Eastern services at times. It was a reproduction of the scenes, as well as it could be given, not by actors dressed for the occasion and acting as actors would, but by monks in inappropriate sacerdotal vestments, all moving within a very limited space, which could not have covered more than a hundred square yards, if so much. All the performers knew their parts by heart, and I saw no references to books. It struck me, however, that one of the deacons who held a book in his hands did act in a measure as prompter.

Immediately after the closing scene the performers seated themselves on their chairs in the enclosure, and the director of the theological school, which is in the lower monastery of the Apocalypse, already referred to, who is called Alexander Dhilanas, doctor of divinity and a deacon, a nephew of the famous Bishop Lycurgus, delivered the sermon of the occasion on the duty of humility. It has seldom been my good fate to listen to so truly, eloquent and absolutely evangelical a discourse, in the course of which he by turn addressed the people and the monks, calling upon them to follow the example of Christ in His great humility. He finally wound up his address by a stirring appeal to the audience to exert themselves to restore their holy island, the scene of God's great revelation to St John, to its pristine pre-eminence as a champion of the faith of Christ. What especially struck me and the English friends with me was the remarkable fact that only the name of Christ as a pattern was mentioned in it. I might mention here that this eloquent divine gave up a remunerative and easy post in another more favoured locality to take up that of Patmos, which brings him nominally five pounds per month, but in reality only about three pounds in cash, on which he has to live and clothe himself. He sacrificed himself for the love of his religion, purely and unselfishly.

Certainly my visit to the monastery and my long conversations with the monks gave me a much higher opinion of them than I previously had formed from hearsay. That they are unselfishly and sincerely devoted to a life which is terribly hard none can deny. That some of them, at least, are men who do not take to it because of their ignorance of the world is beyond doubt, for many are gentlemen who have been well educated and have travelled. One of them was Orthodox chaplain at New York, and knows English. I was glad to notice that increasing interest is being taken in their valuable library, of which an extensive catalogue has been printed. Still, it is not quite complete, and my special friend, Ayios Theofilos, is now engaged in remedying the defects by a careful study, and in some cases transcription, of some of the more undecipherable manuscripts, of which the contents had not been fully studied. I trust this may lead to important discoveries in time. One of the manuscripts may turn out to be of historical importance, for it purports to describe the taking of Constantinople by the Turks.

IN AUTUMN DAYS.

Although the way be long, and my path lie
Across the wide, wide heath, burnt brown and bare
By the past summer's sun; although the air
Be full of driving dust to blind the eye
And parch the pallid lip; although love die,
Since those who started with me at the fair,
Sweet dawn of morn have failed me in noon's glare,
And left me lonely 'neath a darkening sky,
Yet will I on! For, ah! mine eyes can see,
On distant mountain-top, bright glints and gleams,
The waving foliage of fern and tree;
I catch the cadences of far-off streams;
And, mingled with their sound, the melody
Of music which God gives me in His dreams!

KATE MELLERSH.

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THE RACE FOR SEA-POWER.

By ARCHIBALD S. HURD, Author of *Naval Efficiency*, *The British Fleet*, &c.

SIX years have elapsed since the Czar's Peace Rescript to the nations raised confident hopes that the costly contest for naval and military power was about to be checked, and that some basis of agreement would be found for limiting the growing expenditure in this direction. The message came at a moment when the campaign between the United States and Spain had just drawn to a close, when Lord Kitchener was on the eve of hoisting the British and Egyptian flags over Khartoum, when an encounter between Great Britain and France over Fashoda seemed inevitable, and when the outlook in the Far East was growing increasingly threatening. The world welcomed the invitation to consider some more rational method of settling disputes than an appeal to the arbitrament of arms. This feeling of weariness found expression in the meeting of the Peace Conference at the Hague in the following year, 1899, when twenty-five countries were represented. It was then discovered that any measure of disarmament was impracticable; but on all hands the anticipation was expressed that the interchange of views had at least paved the way to a limitation of the expenditure on great armies and navies. Moreover, machinery for voluntary arbitration upon disputes was set up, and it was claimed that the first step had been taken towards a more rational method of arranging international differences.

How cruelly have the most moderate hopes been falsified! The Conference at the Hague was, in fact, the signal for fastening still heavier and more costly armour of defence on to the peoples of Europe, America, and Japan. The conversations at the Hague appear merely to have deepened international distrust in several quarters; and from the day that the delegates parted, the Governments of some of the leading nations, especially Russia and Germany, evinced a firmer determination than ever to continue the race for military power ashore and afloat, whatever the outlay might be and however grievously the people might cry aloud under the burden. In these past few years the maintenance of peace has been more costly than the waging of a European war itself a century ago. The Conference marked the turning-point in the policy of the Powers. Hitherto Europe had been massing an increasing number of land soldiers. She awoke to the fact that the future lay on the seas. One after another the great Powers hastened to modify the period of land-service which is enforced from their citizens so as to render military duty less irksome. Simultaneously they turned attention to their fleets. Russia in 1898 had adopted a special scheme for building a number of new warships to cost nine millions sterling in addition to her ordinary expenditure; after the Conference she hastened the work, seeking the assistance of shipbuilders in France, Germany, America, and Great Britain, since her own resources were inadequate. Germany in 1900 followed with plans for more than doubling the size of her fleet and increasing her dockyard accommodation at an aggregate outlay of seventy-three millions sterling; and France, in spite of the crippled state of her finances, felt called upon in the same year to emulate her neighbour's example, and decided upon the expenditure of over twenty-one millions sterling upon new ships, so as to keep pace with Germany's expansion. Great Britain did not bind herself to a definite programme, but announced once more her intention to build at such a rate as to ensure her ability to meet any two battle-fleets with a good hope of victory. In the Far East, Japan expedited the great programme of shipbuilding to which she had already put her hand, a plan entailing the expenditure of twenty-one millions two hundred thousand pounds sterling; and in the Far West, the United States, as a result of her victorious struggle with Spain, awoke to the need of a great fleet to secure inviolate the Monroe Doctrine and the security of her over-sea possessions, especially those in the Pacific, where she rubs shoulders with the naval forces of the world which have gathered round the Sick Man of the Far East. In this way was

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the conclusion of the labours of the Peace Conference at the Hague celebrated. The contest for sea-power became immediately more severe than at any previous period in the world's history.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century only three navies were of importance: those of Great Britain, France, and Spain, the last even then showing signs of decay. Gradually Spain sank back into great inferiority, and Russia in a measure took her place, with Italy as fourth in the race. As late as 1889 France and Great Britain, it was claimed, were on something of an equality afloat, and many Englishmen believed that the former country had a slight margin of superiority; certainly France and Russia could have 'commanded the seas,' but they were not then allies. The British Naval Defence Act was passed. In the intervening years other Powers have entered the contest for sea-power. The German Emperor began his reign determined to do for the German navy what his grandfather did for the army. President Cleveland, by reviving the Monroe Doctrine at the time of the Venezuela trouble with England in 1896, fired the American people with a desire for a great navy. When Russia, with the assistance of Germany and France, interfered to rob the Japanese of the spoils of the war with China, that people, practically at the birth of their civilisation, were set on the road of naval aggrandisement. The general trend of events has led other Powers to spend and be spent in the endeavour to increase the strength of their fleets. Consequently, in the spring of 1900, when Mr (now Viscount) Goschen introduced the British Navy Estimate of that year into the House of Commons, he explained that it had been prepared after examination of the proposals not of two or three but of six of the leading naval Powers, all of first rank—France, Russia, Germany, Italy, the United States, and Japan. Among the navies of the world, that of Great Britain is still first; but instead of being first among two, or at most three, she is first among seven, and is faced by powerful alliances.

No more noteworthy illustration of the lengths to which naval aggrandisement has gone has been furnished than the assembly of men-of-war which took place at Lagos, on the Portuguese coast, at the conclusion of last summer's British naval manœuvres. Without withdrawing a single ship from the seven foreign stations—China, the East Indies, the South Atlantic, the Cape, Australia, the Pacific, or the North Coast of America—the British Admiralty collected at Lagos twenty-six first-class battleships, all but two of which had been constructed since the passing of the Naval Defence Act of 1889, and forty-one cruisers, all except three built in the past fifteen years. Nineteen torpedo craft were also present, the main body of the British torpedo boats and destroyers, over one hundred pennants, being at the moment manœuvring in the Irish Sea. The ships at Lagos formed one great tactical unit under the supreme command of one officer, Admiral Sir Compton E. Domvile, seven junior flag-officers controlling groups of the ships. All the vessels were complete with stores, ammunition, and the warheads for the torpedoes; the officers and crews on board numbered over forty thousand men: veritably a great war-fleet in its grim gray paint. Inshore lay thirteen colliers with twenty-six thousand tons of coal, the store-ship *Tyne*, and the distilling-ship *Aquarius*, equipped to make good any deficiency of fresh-water in the fighting vessels. This was no mere assembly of vessels specially prepared for sea to provide a spectacle to arouse the amazement of the world, but merely the four British squadrons which cruise in the Mediterranean and the English Channel year in and year out, always on active service, always ready for the call to join battle, and always preparing for the stern duties which must devolve upon them when the diplomatist has said the last word and the gage has been thrown down. In face of such an array of fighting strength—the nine sea-lanes of ships representing an expenditure on hulls, machinery, and guns of close upon fifty millions sterling—in the knowledge of the seven British squadrons patrolling other ocean highways, and in the recollection of the many men-of-war under repair and of those others building in Government and private dockyards, the spectator could not fail to ask himself, 'When will this international contest for naval power have some limit placed to it?'

The haste of the nations in acquiring naval power cannot be shown more effectively than by a reference to the sums which were being spent by the leading nations upon their navies in 1898, when the Peace Rescript was published, and the provision for the financial year 1903–4. In the past five years the aggregate sum spent by Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Italy, Austria-Hungary, and the United States has increased by over twenty-nine million pounds sterling, or 46·4 per cent. In 1903–4 these Powers expended a sum of over ninety-two millions sterling on their fleets. The figures are appended:

Country.	1898.	1903.	Increase.	Increase per cent.
Great Britain	£23,880,000	£34,457,000	£10,577,000	44·2
France	11,988,000	12,538,000	550,000	4·5
Russia	9,028,000	12,349,000	3,321,000	36·7
Germany	6,083,000	10,252,000	4,169,000	68·5
Italy	4,000,000	4,710,000	710,000	17·7
Austria-Hungary	1,200,000	2,030,000	830,000	69·1
United States	7,000,000	16,200,000	9,200,000	131·4
Totals,	£63,179,000	£92,536,000	£29,357,000	46·4

Nothing could indicate more conclusively the redoubled efforts which the great Powers have been making in the past five years to increase their naval armaments than the above figures. If there was need for a Peace Rescript in 1898, how much more the need to-day, when the burden which presses upon the peoples of Europe and America owing to

this competition has increased by no less than 46·4 per cent.! The significant fact is that all this colossal outlay has been relatively effective only in the case of a few countries; the United States has begun to forge ahead, and Germany has improved her position, while France is receding from the pre-eminence as a naval Power which she occupied throughout the greater part of last century. Italy has also failed to maintain her position. Germany and Russia, and in lesser degrees other Powers, having imposed increased naval burdens upon their peoples, Great Britain, acting on her policy embodied in the 'Two-Power standard,' has followed their lead, and last year spent on her fleet over ten and a half millions sterling more than she did in 1898.

Unfortunately there are no signs that any of the nations are prepared to give up the struggle, though in more than one country the financial pressure is so great that each year seems as though it must be the last of the mad career for naval power. Germany, in spite of such indications of discontent as the late elections revealed, is hastening her ship-building in anticipation of the programme dates; Russia has this year decided upon another construction scheme, and since the war began so disastrously, has decided to expand her original programme, which now includes eight first-class battleships; America, whose expenditure for army, navy, and pensions already amounts to seventy-seven million pounds sterling (not dollars), is building or has projected four more battleships than Great Britain at this moment, and intends to double the size of her battle-fleet; Japan, even at the moment when she is at war, has put her hand to a new programme which will increase her navy and extend her arsenals at a cost of twelve million pounds sterling; Austria-Hungary is quietly strengthening her squadrons; and Italy and France are straining their utmost to keep up in the race. According to figures supplied by the Admiralty, the number of battleships building for the United States, Russia, Germany, Great Britain, and France is: United States, fourteen; Russia, nine; Germany, ten; Great Britain, ten; France, six. The total tonnage of the warships at present being built for the several Powers, including battleships, cruisers, and torpedo craft, is:

Class.	United Kingdom.	France.	Russia.	Germany.	United States.
Battleships	184,400	87,800	112,730	103,976	193,180
Cruisers	189,760	78,483	26,177	49,200	149,780
Other vessels	37,025	1,130	14,486	2,064	2,344

These are days when, in a contest for the potential instruments of naval power, a long purse is more than ever necessary. The *Victory*, Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar, and one of the largest and most expensive vessels then present, cost, complete with guns, one hundred thousand pounds sterling. She was forty years old on October 21, 1805, and yet she was still considered suitable to bear the flag of the commander-in-chief. To-day her successor is a first-class battleship. Were war to occur in 1905, the flag of the admiral in supreme command of the British fleet would probably be borne in the *King Edward VII.*, of sixteen thousand three hundred and fifty tons displacement, or one of this ship's seven sister-vessels. By the time she is at sea with stores and guns complete, the *King Edward VII.* will represent an expenditure of one million and a half pounds sterling. At the most favourable estimate, she will be regarded as a fully efficient ship, fit for the line of battle in one of the principal squadrons for a matter of fifteen or twenty years. The British Naval Defence Act authorised the building of men-of-war costing twenty-one million pounds sterling. That was in 1889. In the present year not one of these ships is in the first line; the battleships have already become antiquated in comparison with the newer ships, and the cruisers are getting quite out of date. More and more the contest for sea-power is becoming a competition in which only the nations with the longest purses can compete, and yet there is not a country in the world with a few miles of coast, excepting a few South American republics, which is not striving its hardest to make as brave a show in this handicap as its resources will permit. Great Britain has the longest purse in Europe; she has also the most skilled workmen, and, in proportion to their output and the quality of their work, the cheapest. In England a battleship costs at the rate of seventy-one pounds per ton, in Germany the figure is about seventy-five pounds, in France and Russia it rises as high as ninety-two pounds and a hundred pounds sterling respectively, and in the United States the figure is from eighty-five to ninety pounds. A modern battleship is not only expensive, but an experiment in defence which has not yet been adequately tested in actual warfare; it is a marvel of mechanical ingenuity, the product of successful industrial combination. For the construction of a fleet great financial resources are essential, and also an organisation of skilled labourers which cannot be created in a month, a year, or even a decade, but must be the growth of many years and the result of long-applied effort. For these reasons the poorer Powers are severely handicapped in the rivalry which is engaging all the nations of the first rank. They cannot hope to equal richer and better-organised countries, but they do endeavour to prevent the margin of superiority from increasing. Holland, Sweden, Norway, Spain, Roumania, Portugal, Denmark, and even Turkey are spending much larger sums to-day than they were spending as lately as five years ago when they took part in the Conference at the Hague, which aimed at establishing courts of arbitration where might should not be right, and the smallest and weakest Power could look for a just settlement of any quarrel, however rich and strong her antagonist.

If we bear in mind the relative wealth of the respective countries, their industrial resources, and the stakes they defend, the sums which some of the small nations are devoting to their fleets are altogether out of proportion to their wealth. Spain

and Holland each spend one million and a half sterling annually on naval defence, and Norway and Sweden somewhat in excess of this sum. Portugal manages to find seven hundred and twenty-seven thousand pounds sterling, Turkey over five hundred thousand pounds (roughly), Denmark three hundred and ninety thousand pounds, and Greece two hundred and ninety thousand pounds. The fourteen navies of Europe entail an annual expenditure of eighty-three millions sterling. In the Far East, Japan is spending three millions sterling, and China half a million. In the Far West, the outlay of the United States amounted to over sixteen millions sterling in 1903, and will this year be over twenty millions; the expenditure of Brazil is one and a quarter millions sterling; of Argentina, nine hundred and twenty-one thousand pounds; of Chili, six hundred and fifty thousand pounds; and smaller sums are spent by Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia. On the American continent and in Asia twenty-three millions sterling are poured out annually for the purpose of naval defence. From the latest official figures, therefore, the cost of the measures of protection by all the nations of the world against each other amounts to no less than one hundred and six million pounds sterling each year; and this year the total will rise to upwards of one hundred and twelve million pounds.

Nearly one-half of this colossal sum represents the naval expenditure of Great Britain and the United States. No one can doubt that the Anglo-Saxon fleets are destined to dominate the seas, and the time is inevitably coming when these two Powers will be in a position—though the will may be wanting—to act in conjunction against the rest of the world in the defence of a down-trodden people or any principle of freedom which may be in danger.

It may be objected that the expenditure of Great Britain and the United States proves these two countries to be the worst of offenders in the wild race for naval power. A little consideration will show that this conclusion is ill-founded. Great Britain did not join in the contest until her fleet had sunk practically to the level of France and the prospect was opened up of an alliance between that republic and Russia. In face of such a combination, which in 1888 would have been far superior at sea to the British fleet, and in view of her immense commercial interests in all parts of the world, and her widely separated colonial empire, Britain was bound to take action. She adopted the 'Two-Power standard,' a margin of superiority over the next two strongest battle-fleets, and she has built merely as others have built, repeatedly expressing her willingness to stay her hand when they give any encouragement. Again, in the case of the United States, the American Government has not been an offender. So long as Germany and Russia had almost purely defensive fleets, ships which could not cross the Atlantic to fight, she could rest content with a comparatively small navy. When these and other Powers showed their determination to build ships to go anywhere and do anything diplomacy demanded in any part of the world, the American continent was drawn nearer to Europe. This fact could not be ignored if the Monroe Doctrine was to be more than a pious wish which could not be supported with force. Subsequently, when Spain became an unwelcome and dangerous neighbour by reason of her ill-government of her colonial possessions, and Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico fell under the protection of America, the United States Government were in honour bound to provide adequate means for their defence, especially as Germany's activity in the Pacific was of a sinister character. In the contest for naval power, therefore, Great Britain and the United States seem to Anglo-Saxon eyes to have been victims of European ambitions; they have been compelled to forge instruments for their own protection.

In several instances the sacrifices which are being made by small nations to support their navies is explained by the action of neighbours; but in other cases it is due to the belief that in time of war between two great Powers an opportunity may offer of lending a hand to one of the antagonists with every likelihood of a rich return. In the case of Spain, the latter cause no doubt operates. Already a plan has been prepared for rebuilding the fleet which the United States crushed. The renewed activity of Spain will not fail to influence the naval authorities in Italy, where, in consequence of financial straits, the outlay on the navy has been rigorously kept down. Roumania is one of the most ambitious of the second-class Powers; but her plans are purely defensive, and include the construction of eight monitors and twelve torpedo-boats, with eight torpedo-launches, for the Danube, and six coast-defence ships, four torpedo-boat destroyers, and twelve torpedo-boats for the Black Sea, where Russia is now becoming more active than for many years past. Turkey, having neglected her fleet until it had become the byword of the seas, has now obtained sufficient money to reconstruct and modernise her more serviceable battleships and to build a few cruisers, one being now in hand at Newcastle-on-Tyne and another at Cramp's at Philadelphia.

In northern Europe, where the menace of the German navy is affecting the policy of the lesser Powers, money which can be ill spared is being laid out on new ships. Holland is busy carrying out a scheme for strengthening the fleet in home waters and for improving the means of defence in the Dutch East Indies, involving an expenditure of three and a half millions sterling in addition to the ordinary naval votes. In consequence of the recent development of the Swedish navy, which is still in progress, that country has to face the task of providing a new dockyard situated nearer Stockholm than the existing base. Norway, also, is devoting increased attention to her navy, and

Denmark has in hand some additional ships, including two ironclads of five thousand four hundred and seventy tons displacement.

The only quarter of the globe (curiously enough in view of history) where naval retrenchment and reform is the motto of the day is South America. How far the Monroe Doctrine and the growth of the navy of the United States and its protecting influence are responsible for this change must be evident. The republics, for the time at least, have settled their differences, and Argentina and Chili in particular would be delighted to dispose of some of their men-of-war. Four of the Chilian and Argentina vessels—two very powerful battleships being completed in England and two armoured cruisers built in Italy—were sold recently to England and Japan respectively, and others are in the market.

With the exception of these countries, all the nations of the world are intent on naval aggrandisement. The evil, as has been indicated, has grown immensely since 1898; but to-day no ruler raises his voice in appeal for a limitation of this outpouring of the resources of the nations, rich and poor, large and small alike.

'THE ISLES OF DESTINY.'

CHAPTER XI.

THERE was a thin powdering of snow on the ground when Christopher paid his second visit to Barra. The winter had set in with unusual severity, and the low, chimneyless dwellings of the fisher-folk looked more than ever like potato-pits with their fast-closed doors and windowless walls.

Not a sign of life was there about as Christopher hastened solitary up the village street; but even had there been prying eyes to watch his progress, few would have recognised in the bent, emaciated figure the tall, supercilious-looking stranger who had traversed it scarcely two months before. But as a matter of fact the Christopher of to-day was in many respects a far happier and more sanguine individual than his prototype of the past. Paradoxically, with the destruction of his former security a more durable ground of hope had arisen within him. No longer was there any secret to cast its foreboding shadow over his happiness. Norma knew the worst, and it was his mission to overcome that knowledge by love. That he was strong enough for the task morally he felt sure, but physically he had his doubts. The rheumatic fever which had been only one consequence of the night's exposure had left his heart very weak, and, to his own horror and disgust, he had distinguished himself by fainting several times during his convalescence.

Madge, fearing one of these attacks, had done all she could to delay his visit to Barra; but the suspense and anxiety were telling upon him and retarding his progress towards recovery, and she had at last unwillingly given her consent.

As to the result of his mission, she hardly dared allow herself to think. Her chief hope lay in an appeal to the girl's pity. How could any one look upon this altered Christopher and not be overwhelmed with tenderness and remorse?

After all, a living love is more imperative than a dead faith, and Neil, with his broken honour and bedraggled fame, had passed beyond all earthly needs, while Christopher remained dependent not only for happiness but, as Madge firmly believed, for very life itself upon her mercy.

His spirits received their first check when he arrived before the gate of Creagan-Islair to find the gray stone house shut up and deserted. The shock of the discovery stunned him for a moment; then he fell to laughing. It didn't matter how insane or reasonless his merriment appeared; there was no one at hand to overhear him or inquire as to its cause. What a hoax it was! His long, lean body swayed to and fro in the mirthless paroxysm, and he caught at the paling to steady himself. What a hoax! Don Quixote even could not have looked more foolish.

A heavy footfall on the snow behind him made him turn sharply. Fresh disappointment awaited him in the guise of a peat-cutter journeying with laggard steps towards the village. There was an expression of blank amazement on the man's face, which changed rapidly to pity as he noted the haggard misery in the eyes of the eccentric stranger.

'Ay, young Glencoridale came and fetched them away a week ago,' he replied in response to a sharp interrogation from Christopher, nodding his head meaningly as he spoke towards the narrow, zig-zag path which led to the castle. Then, as if the statement might require still further elucidation, he added, a slow smile breaking over his face the while, 'It is destiny;' and before Christopher had time to say a word, was trudging unconcernedly on his way.

Christopher's heel dug into the powdery snow. The significance of the man's meaning was too palpable to be ignored.

'Destiny!' How the word had haunted him since he had first set foot upon these bleak and barren shores, and not in any meaningless sense, but with an almost malignant intent and purpose! Well, he was done with it. Here was the end at last; those blank walls and shuttered windows before him were typical of the *cul de sac* into which fate had been relentlessly driving him all these weary weeks. But now it was his turn. He would show this mocking invisible power what he could do—so

revenge himself upon it that it would have no strength left to torment him in the future.

But even as he made the resolve there came the echo of a low, passionate voice in his ears, 'If all my life were to be as rough and thorny as this road, I would rather be your wife than the queen of any castle;' and half blindly, half unconsciously, he stumbled forward in the direction of Luaig.

The narrow path seemed to have become much steeper and more precipitous since the golden autumn evening he had climbed it by Norma's side; but he supposed the snow was responsible for the difficulties of the way. Again and again he paused to look back, and as he gazed out over the wide seascape stretched beneath him, with its island chains melting away on every hand towards dark, snow-laden horizons, something of the wizardry and glamour of the north overcame him, and his sense of trespass was merged for the time being in one of actual kinship. At last the summit was reached, and he stood tingling with self-consciousness from head to foot in full view of the castle.

To his sensitive eyes the gray old fortalice seemed to be all windows. What if Norma were to spy him from one of them and send down to say she could not see him? It took all his strength of will to cross the shingly plateau that alone separated him from the goal of his endeavours, and by the time he had reached the grim entrance he could hardly command his voice to speak her name.

With a sense of reprieve he learned that the family were out, but this was quickly succeeded by a feeling of acute and unreasonable disappointment. The servant, discerning something of his state of mind, hospitably invited him to come in and await their return. The proposal occasioned another fluctuation in Christopher's mood, and for some moments he stood hesitating, then with sudden desperation made up his mind, and was soon following his guide across the wide hall and up what appeared to be endless flights of narrow stone stairs until he found himself standing at last in the centre of a small octagonal room.

'Excuse me, sir, for bringing you all this way,' panted the servant apologetically; 'but I understood it was Miss MacAlan you asked for, and she always likes to see her friends in this room. I'll tell her you are here, the moment she comes in;' so saying, he closed the door softly, leaving Christopher gazing stupidly around him.

A bright fire blazed upon the hearth; a tea-table was drawn up before it. Norma's possessions were scattered everywhere—her work, her photographs. This was no guest-chamber, but the sacred sanctum of the future lady of the castle. As the realisation flashed into his mind Christopher made a plunge towards the door, then checked himself and sank down helplessly on the nearest chair.

Of course he saw it all plainly enough—the wounded spirit taken on the rebound and yielding to importunities long resisted. The thing had happened scores of times before, was happening every day. His old, time-worn revolt against the trite and obvious surged over him again. It was always in moments of greatest crisis like the present that the absurd prejudice made itself felt. Well, the object of his mission was changed; that was all. He had come to conquer; he remained to congratulate. Please God, he would do it with as good a grace!

Mechanically he rose to his feet, straightening his bent shoulders as he did so, with a pathetic imitation of his former proud air. A photograph in a prominent position on the mantelpiece attracted his attention. He moved across and stood before it. Had his suspicions required further proof, the blunt, kindly face of the portrait would have supplied it—his rival, Eric Forsyth, future Lord Glencoridale and heir to Castle Luaig, with all the lands, fiefs, and baronies pertaining thereto; and the most honourable of gentlemen, Christopher was fain to acknowledge, even in this moment.

With a sigh he turned away, half dreading, as he moved aimlessly about the room, to come upon some likeness of the author of all his trouble—the blanched, terror-stricken face seen for a brief moment beneath the glare of an African sun, but limned upon his memory for all time. By what malignant ordering of destiny had their lots been intertwined, these two men, strangers but for that one scarifying second of intimacy? How little did either dream that the tragedy then enacted was to bear consequences so vital, so far-reaching! But the room contained no such reminder, and at last, wearied by his inspection, Christopher paused before a pair of tapestry hangings that cut off one corner of the octagon from view. He felt strangely weak; the old clutching pain had seized his heart again. He grasped the curtains for support; as he did so they parted, disclosing a turret window, deeply splayed, through which, far below, could be seen a vista of wide, white moorland, and beyond, wider still, the sea. A book lay face downwards on the cushioned window-seat. The spot was evidently a favoured retreat of the owner of the room. Christopher staggered forward. All the varied emotions of the day seemed to have culminated in one overwhelming sense of failure and weakness. Then the floor rose—rocked—he was falling—falling—and he knew no more.

. . . . . .

The door of the room had opened.

'Come in here, Eric; I have something to tell you,' said Norma, crossing over to the fire as she spoke.

Eric followed her obediently.

'Jove! old Redmond knows how to keep up a blaze,' he said, sinking down on his knees on the hearth-rug, and holding out his reddened hands to the warmth. 'How jolly and cosy this room looks since it has been used again!'

'It is the nicest room in the house,' the girl agreed in her listless, altered voice. 'I can't think why your mother doesn't approve of it.'

'It's too high up; it makes her giddy,' replied Eric. 'And I must say, looking down from that favourite nook of yours, one feels as if Providence had hardly acted fair in not bestowing wings upon one.'

Norma made no response. Indeed, she seemed to be hardly aware of her companion's presence, and Eric's heart sank as he noted the sad mournfulness of her expression.

'I had a letter from Madge this morning,' she volunteered at last. 'He is going away, Eric,' with a little frightened catch in her voice.

Eric was silent for a moment. It had come, then, the revolution in her feelings that he had both dreaded and longed for ever since her tragic return home. The sorrow and shame for a shattered ideal which at first had filled her mind to the exclusion of all other considerations, deadening even her powers of loving, was being gradually overcome by the fear of another loss, the happiness that her youth and womanhood had still vitality enough to claim as their birthright. Well, it was natural that such a reaction should have taken place; and if he, himself, had had any hopes to the contrary, they were traitorous and unworthy of him, with which mental adjuration he braced himself to meet the coming crisis.

'Going away,' he said, repeating her words in his most optimistic tones. 'That's good; proves at least that he has recovered.'

'And doesn't care,' she added bitterly.

'And has some pride,' he corrected.

'Do you call that pride, never to have written or'——

'My dear girl, I am quite ready to grant that some people have extraordinary methods of disguising their feelings,' conceded Eric blandly. 'Who, for example, would imagine from your conduct that you cared two straws about the man? He, poor fellow! lets out something in his delirium which it was a credit to him to have concealed for so long, and off you go at a tangent without even a good-bye.'

'Then you don't believe that I love him?' Her voice rang out passionately now.

Eric winced as if he had been struck; but the next moment he was smiling again. 'Your looks alone carry conviction,' he said thoughtfully. 'But'——

'But you would have had me say nothing,' she flamed—'condemn him to marry me realising how acutely he felt the shame—the disgrace of it—without even giving him a chance of freedom?'

'But you seem to forget that he was aware of all this *before* he proposed to you,' expostulated Eric, just a shade of impatience betraying itself in his voice.

How much longer would he be able to withstand the strain of the situation? he wondered.

'Yes, that is the mysterious part of it,' she agreed hopelessly, 'that he should ever have thought of marrying me.'

'And you believe a man's love is such a machine-made article as that,' said Eric, rising heavily as he spoke, and standing with head averted from her, one arm resting on the mantelpiece. The hand that hung by his side was tightly clenched—the kind, weather-beaten hand that had so often been stretched out to succour and protect her. A sudden wave of remorse swept across Norma's heart as for the first time she saw her selfishness in its true light.

'Eric,' she cried softly, a world of tenderness and pity in her tone, as she bent towards him.

But before he had time to realise this new temptation a slight noise behind the curtains made them turn simultaneously in the direction of the sound. As they did so the heavy hangings swayed forward, then parted, revealing Christopher's tall, gaunt figure standing there. His hands were clutching them for support, and there was a dazed, semi-conscious look in his eyes.

'I have much pleasure in congratulating you both,' he said, the words dropping slowly from his pallid lips.

He had that moment recovered consciousness, and his last waking resolution still governed his mind.

'I congratulate you both,' he repeated, with a pitiful attempt at a smile.

Even at this critical juncture his subconscious eye was open for effect, and condemned this feeble reality in comparison with the *tour de force* he had planned. Why did they remain so silent and unresponsive, those two inarticulate figures upon the hearth-rug?

He was summoning his strength for a third repetition of the formula when Norma made a sudden movement towards him, and then checked herself. The nearness of his presence had literally blotted out all other considerations from her memory.

'Christopher! Christopher!' she cried in sharp, pained accents, 'why have you come?'

Christopher gazed vaguely from right to left.

'I—I—think I must have fainted,' he said, passing his hand wearily across his forehead. 'I remember going behind the curtains, but nothing more. I—I—am very sorry for startling you, but'——

At this moment Eric, who had been standing a silent and unheeded spectator of the scene, glorified the opportunity in his own characteristic way. 'On the contrary,' he said, and his voice rang out genial and debonair as of old, though an unusual pallor still lingered on his face, 'you appeared in the nick of time. Norma and I were on the verge of an awful quarrel. Welcome to Luaig!' he added, taking Christopher's hand as he spoke, and guiding him over to a chair. 'Now that we have got you here, you will stay, of course,' as if there had been nothing at all unusual in his guest's manner of arrival.

'No—no, thanks. I am afraid it is impossible,' muttered Christopher. 'Donald is waiting for me at the pier, and'——

'I'll send a messenger down at once,' said Eric,

with quiet decision. 'But wait; hadn't somebody better write a line to Madge?' casting a half-irresolute glance at Norma, who had retired in constrained silence to the background.—'I won't ask you,' smiling at Christopher as he spoke. 'With all due apologies, I don't suppose your writing would be legible.—Norma'—and there was a hint of quiet authority in his voice that the girl would not have dared to oppose—'just sit down and scribble off a few lines. Christopher here will tell you what to say;' and before either of them had time to expostulate he was gone, closing the door gently behind him.

'Well?' said Norma a few minutes later.

She had sat for some time, pen in hand, in front of a blank page, and was growing a little impatient.

'Tell her to expect me to-morrow,' said Christopher from the hearth-rug, where he had taken up his position.

Norma wrote for a few moments obediently; then she flung down the pen, and pushing back her chair, crossed over and stood in front of him.

'Did you really come all this way to congratulate me?' she demanded, raising a pair of stern blue eyes to his face. Christopher returned her gaze, striving hard to disguise the longing in his own.

'No,' he confessed laconically; 'I came to ask your forgiveness.'

'Forgiveness?' she echoed blankly. 'And you believed I had forgotten—so soon?'

She turned away and crossed over to the writing-table again. This time he followed her, resting one hand on the back of her chair.

'Norma,' he said in the old dictatorial tone she loved to hear, 'tell me the truth. I have a right to ask it.'

'There is nothing new to tell,' she said. Her head was bent; she was covering the blotting-paper with aimless letterless signs as she spoke. 'Truth is unchangeable. For me it has always been the same.'

'And for me,' said Christopher, simply bending down and making prisoner of the hand that held the pen. Obedient to his guidance it traced three words upon the open page.

When Norma read them she smiled.

'It is destiny,' she repeated softly.

THE END.

FANTASIES WHICH HAVE COME TRUE.

By T. C. Hepworth.

A PROVERB, which by constant reiteration has become somewhat musty, tells us that 'Truth is stranger than fiction,' and we have constant evidence of this outstripping of romance by reality. It is not so generally known that romance has often anticipated sober fact; but such is the case, and I propose in this short article to enumerate a few instances which appear to me to be of unusual interest.

In the year 1869 the Suez Canal, one of the most important engineering enterprises ever undertaken, was opened to the world's traffic. It was foreshadowed as long ago as the sixteenth century by Christopher Marlowe, one of the early English poets, in the following lines:

> Thence marched I into Egypt and Arabia,
> And here, not far from Alexandria,
> Whereat the Terrene and the Red Sea meet,
> Being distant less than full a hundred leagues,
> I meant to cut a channel to them both,
> That men might quickly sail to India.

It may be urged with reference to this quotation that so soon as it became possible to make an approximately correct chart of the world, the advantage of cutting through the isthmus must have been apparent to many, and that Marlowe merely reflected the thought of others. This, of course, is likely to be the case; but no such plea can be urged against the very curious anticipation of wireless telegraphy by Strada the Italian historian, who was born at Rome in the year 1572. Addison quotes Strada in one of his noted essays; but we need hardly say that in doing so he had no notion of any anticipation of the electric telegraph, for Addison died just a century before communication by that means became possible. Addison writes thus:

'Strada, in one of his prolusions, gives an account of a chimerical correspondence between two friends by the help of a certain lodestone which had such virtue in it that if it touched two several needles, when one of the needles so touched began to move, the other, though at never so great a distance, moved at the same time and in the same manner. He tells us that two friends, being each of them possessed of one of these needles, made a kind of dial-plate, inscribing it with the four-and-twenty letters, and in the same manner as the hours of the day are marked on the ordinary dial-plate. They then fixed one of the needles on each of these plates in such a manner that it could move round without impediment so as to touch any of the four-and-twenty letters. Upon their separating from one another into distant countries, they agreed to withdraw themselves punctually into their closets at a certain hour of the day, and to converse with one another by means of this their invention. . . . By this means they talked together across a whole continent, and conveyed their thoughts to one another in an instant over cities and mountains, seas or deserts.'

It will be seen how close is the description of this dial instrument to the A B C telegraph of Wheat-

stone, which, until it was superseded by the telephone, was in common use in many offices. But as there is no mention of any conducting wire between the two friends in communication, we are justified in regarding this as being prophetical of the more recent invention of Marconi.

Roger Bacon (1214–94) may have foreseen the possibility of making dynamite and other powerful explosives when he wrote the following words: 'A small portion of matter, about the size of the thumb, properly disposed, will make a tremendous sound and coruscation, by which cities and armies might be destroyed.' But he does not go so far as to hint that it would ever become possible to throw small parcels of explosive matter upon a doomed place from a distance of seven miles or more, a terrible example of the power of propellants which we are witnessing to-day in Eastern waters.

Reference to the war in the Far East reminds us that the torpedo was very well described by Ben Jonson nearly three hundred years ago, as the following bit of dialogue taken from his *Staple of News*, produced in 1625, will show:

'*Barber.* They write here of one Cornelius-son hath made the Hollanders an invisible eel to swim the haven at Dunkirk and sink all the shipping there.

'*Pennyboy.* But how is't done?

'*Cymbal.* I'll show you, sir. It is an automa, runs under water, with a smug nose, and has a nimble tail made like an auger, with which tail she wriggles betwixt the costs [ribs] of a ship and sinks it straight.

'*Pennyboy.* A most brave device to murder their flat bottoms.'

This extract calls to mind an amusing story which was current a few years back with reference to the origin of the steam propeller. A fisherman out in a small boat had the misfortune to lose the cork from the small hole near the keel, with which such boats are always provided. Having nothing else at hand to stop the leak, he thrust into the hole from the outside a lively eel which he had just caught, and the motion of the creature's tail, in its efforts to get free, propelled the boat home, and gave its owner the first notion of the screw.

This story is quite apocryphal; but no doubt can be entertained regarding the reality of the various devices described and illustrated in the work by Hero of Alexandria, who flourished about 100 B.C. In this book may be found the prototype of the steam turbine, the new form of engine which has recently been applied to the service of several Channel steamers, and which is presently to be used for carrying Cunarders across the broad Atlantic.

Turning over the pages of Hero's work, we are reminded that the penny-in-the-slot machines which seem to us moderns such a new way of dispensing small articles are by no means new in principle. Here a machine is described and figured which is provided with a slot, the dropping of a coin within which will cause a measured quantity of liquid to flow out.

According to a correspondent of the *Lancet*, a strange foreshadowing of the X-rays is to be found in a book by a Dr Andrew Blair, entitled *Annals of the Twenty-ninth Century*. The date of the work is not given, and I find no mention of it in the catalogue of the library at the British Museum, so that I am unable to verify the quotation given, which runs as follows:

'I perceived the Secundines could not only make glass and stones and all inorganic substances malleable, but possessed a power undreamed of by man of making them transparent. I was shown animals upon which the youths were taught zoology and comparative anatomy, in some of which the skin was like a glass case, showing beneath the working of the muscles. In others the skin and muscles were pellucid, showing the circulatory system. In others all was perspicuous save the bones, with the view of their being subservient to the study of osteology.'

When the X-rays were first detected by Professor Röntgen by their action upon a fluorescent screen and upon a photographic dry plate, the newspaper scribes gave the discovery the erroneous title 'the new photography,' quite ignorant of the fact that the dry plate was no more than a recorder of the phenomenon. Strangely enough, what we may call 'the old photography,' by which I mean the usual process with camera and lens, was the subject of premonstration many years ago. This is perhaps not so remarkable as the instances of prediction already given; for although the invention of the *camera-obscura* is commonly attributed to Baptista Porta in the sixteenth century, its principle was well understood many hundred years before his time. And we may feel confident that many must have dreamed of the possibility of making the images formed by the sun take a more permanent form. Especially would this be the case after Scheele the Swedish chemist had shown in the eighteenth century that silver chloride would darken under the action of light. La Fontaine, who died long before Scheele was born, gives in one of his fables a method of picture-making which may be regarded as foreshadowing the beautiful art which is now of service to mankind in so many different ways. It occurs under the title '*Voyage Supposé*,' and a description runs as follows:

'There was no painter in that country; but if anybody wished to have the portrait of a friend, of a picture, a beautiful landscape, or of any other object, water was placed in great basins of gold or silver, and then the object desired to be painted was placed in front of that water. After a while the water froze and became a glass mirror, on which an ineffaceable image remained.'

With this extract from the well-known book of fables I bring to a close this budget of odds and ends, which I think may fairly be numbered among the curiosities of literature.

THE DEAD HAND.

CHAPTER II.

GODFREY CLIVE was walking to and fro in the thirty-acre corn-field which his father held to be the finest bit of arable land in the length and breadth of Oxon. This year it had been sown to wheat, and the ruddy grain was falling in ranks and files under the sweeping shears of a powerful reaping-machine.

The man had his eye on the process, but his heart was not in it, although the crop was good and the August sun propitious. There was no traditional light-heartedness in the harvest-field nor much call for the stalwart labour of old times; the area was so large that the men engaged in binding into sheaves the serried lines of wheat as they fell from the knives of the reaper were able to keep pace with no undue pressure; and as it was an unbroken law at the Grange farm that no alcohol was distributed or allowed, there was the absence of all artificial stimulus to hilarity. Mr Clive was a just and even a tolerant master; but he inspired no loyalty amongst his workmen—a result not unusual to even-handed administration. The men were working under the master's eye, or at least under the eye of the master's son; but the personal note of zeal and interest was lacking.

As for his son, whose natural distinction of face and figure was strongly marked, his feelings, it must be owned, lacked equally the divine spark of personal devotion. He had always regarded his father as an upright, God-fearing man, with a conscience as clear and almost as hard as crystal, fearless of results in pursuing the right course, but prone to limitations in defining it. His physical condition, so unexpected and distressing, filled him with natural distress, the more so as his professional knowledge taught him it was irremediable; but the sacrifice demanded of him was so arbitrary and absolute as to justify an indignant repudiation. And yet there was much to be said on his father's side.

The Grange farm had been in the Clive family for generations; but a long succession of bad seasons and careless proprietors had mortgaged it almost up to the hilt, and it had been the passion of the present owner's life—perhaps the only passion he knew—to free the land from bondage. By his energy, self-denial, and intelligence he had gone a long way towards reaching this end when a mysterious Providence struck him down. Was it asking too much of his son, who was the only representative of his race, to carry out the purpose of his life, which no hireling could do effectually; to supply to his deep bodily need that skill in the healing art for which his own self-denial had qualified him; also to be the prop and solace of the mother who adored him?

As Diana had said, the struggle was still going on. At the moment Godfrey had two letters in his pocket, received by that morning's post, which quickened its severity: one was from an eminent surgeon whom he had often met in consultation, asking if there were any truth in the rumour that he was throwing up his profession for family reasons, and characterising such an intention as 'an act of lunacy.' The other was a kind note from the head-physician of his own beloved hospital, expressing regret at his protracted absence, 'as he left a gap difficult to fill.'

As he walked to and fro, with his hat pulled low over his sombre brows, he owned that the ethical problem was hard to solve. Presently he looked up sharply; the gate had clicked, and the figure of Diana Vavasour appeared. He was at once aware of an instantaneous reaction in thought and feeling: that, as he went forward to meet her, his face had brightened and his figure, bowed in anxious cogitation, had sprung erect. Was she to become an unconscious factor in the solution of his difficult position?

The field, as we have said, was wide; and as they approached each other he marked with practised keenness all the points presented by the advancing figure: the turn of the wrist as she held up her long black skirt over the white embroidered slip, showing the slim ankle and finely modelled foot. Her gait might have been that of some young goddess endowed with immortal health; her wide-brimmed hat shaded her face, but by this time Godfrey Clive knew every line and curve.

From some instinct of reverence for the charm and beauty of the girl, he not only raised his hat but stood bareheaded as they met.

Diana, however, was prompt to protest.

'Oh, do not do that; the sun is too hot,' she cried. Then, glancing round the field, 'What a shame it seems! This morning the golden stalks stood up so gallantly and made such a splendid show, and now how ruthlessly you have cut them down!'

He smiled without reply; and Diana, who had excitement to work off, went on:

'But I have remarked, Dr Godfrey, that farmers have no tender mercies; you know you will lay low the stateliest tree because you say the blessed shade makes the land sour, and you rear your Juno-eyed heifers with no other purpose than to sell them to the butcher, without a single pang. All that you sow, plant, or nurture is done for profit.'

He raised his eyebrows.

'Why all this "muchness," Miss Vavasour? I think I have observed that no bread is too white or fine for your taste, and that you share the not unreasonable antipathy to a tough beefsteak.'

'I never eat it!' she cried indignantly, and then laughed. 'Oh, I am out of tune, and what I say then does not count. I am come out to tell you some strange news which I cannot keep to myself

an hour longer. Your dear mother is just come in, and she seemed so sweet and kind and glad to see me after even this short absence that I had not the heart to tell her. But I need not be afraid to tell you.'

'Let us get under the shade of the hedge,' he said quietly, 'and I will anticipate your news.' He had just received a blow, but he was not of those who cry out when they are hurt. 'You are going away; your grandmother has sent for you. I saw the carriage pass to the house this morning with a stranger in it, and one of the men in the field told me who it was. It seems that he knew that Mr Thornton had been to see you before.'

They were not yet under the shadow of the hedge; but Diana stood still with a little gesture of indignation.

'And you are not a bit sorry?' she demanded.

'No,' he said, meeting the fire in her eyes with his cool, level glance, 'for the sorrow we shall all feel can scarcely be measured.'

She smiled as one pleased.

'That is better, and kindly spoken. I was not quite sure whether you would look upon my going as a deliverance or otherwise, for I have been able to do nothing for all the goodness that has been heaped upon me. In the future'—— She stopped, feeling that the words on her lips had better be left unsaid, and added, 'I will tell you everything, Dr Godfrey;' and she related the interview between herself and the lawyer.

'I could not help myself,' she concluded, 'though it seems ungrateful to go away so soon—barely one more long summer day.' She looked wistfully around her. 'I have never been so happy as at the Grange.'

'Nor my mother, nor my father, as since you came; but it has only served you as a quiet resting-place for a season. It will not be long before you will learn to wonder how, even for a season, you could be content with such a life as ours.'

'Ah!' was her eager rejoinder, 'that means you are not content with it. Must you stay here, Dr Godfrey? And yet how could they live without you?'

'I think it was an open question until this moment; but your going, Miss Vavasour, seems to make my duty plainer: they would be doubly bereaved. I am shut up to the conclusion that they ought not to be left alone.'

Diana looked at him with ironical tenderness. 'And your compensation will lie in doing the thing that you think right?'

He smiled grimly. 'That is theory, not experience, and you must not go away with any mistaken notion that I am a willing martyr to duty. No man could be more desperately reluctant than I to remain here as my poor father's bailiff and my father's nurse, and what keeps me is nothing higher than the sense of shame that prevents the recruit from running away when the battle begins.'

She made an impatient movement. 'Your ethical distinctions are too fine for me. I judge you by what I have seen. Shall I ever forget that you were beside my father's bed of torture? And I have seen you, too, in attendance on your own father, who is a saint, no doubt; but saints, I have observed, are apt to be even more provoking than sinners. I ask of mortal goodness nothing more than you showed to both; and when I am at Fox Hills it will damp my happiness to think of you as still here.'

He did not venture to look at her.

'You go to-morrow?' he asked a little irrelevantly.

'Yes. I wonder how things will work? You will have to come and see me at Fox Hills, and teach me how to order my household and administer a great fortune. You will not refuse?'

'No; I shall come, assuredly, if only to see how well the new environment suits you. But a great lady like yourself will soon discover that she can dispense with advice and direction.'

Diana threw up her head.

'A great lady! Yes; that has been the dream of my life. My grandmother was a great lady, with great social gifts, able to hold her own with famous men and famous women. I have heard that her London *salon* was a centre for wit and genius. But how shall I manage, Dr Godfrey—a half-educated girl, as you know, and with the taint clinging to me of a scrambling, impecunious life amidst dubious surroundings?'

'The taint,' he said, 'has no more touched you than did the smell of fire touch the Hebrew princes who defied the Babylonian furnace. Besides, Miss Vavasour, without flattery, you are better equipped than most girls for society; there are few ladies with four foreign tongues at command.'

'Colloquially,' she interposed. 'I know just a little of the literature, but nothing of the grammar of any of them.'

'No such test is likely to be applied. And what of your singing voice, so perfect an organ and so admirably trained?'

'Ah! that will count,' she said brightly. 'I owe it entirely to the dear old choirmaster at Bologna; we lived there two years, and he taught me every day. I own that I can sing;' and then she added, 'I can play too, and have often regretted here that I had no piano. I should like you to have heard me.'

'If I had only known, or not been so selfishly preoccupied!'

But she interrupted him. 'You have nothing to regret, for it will only give greater zest to my new privileges. You shall hear me in the music-room at Fox Hills.'

She put her hands before her eyes as though she saw a vision, then dropped them with a smile.

'Don't be disgusted, Dr Godfrey, if I own that, after all, I am glad that I am rich. I have dreamed such dreams in the old ignoble days, and now my fairy-godmother has waved her wand and they are become realities. I have a great capacity for enjoying

myself, and I used to fret miserably at all my denials. I love music and art; I delight in dancing and pleasure; I like praise and social triumphs, fine clothes and dainty food, the pressure of my knee on the silken flank of a thoroughbred, and the joy of independence. Imagine what it will be to be able to do the thing I want to do without check or hindrance!'

'I see,' he said, 'it is quite superfluous to doubt your qualifications for a fine lady.'

'You are cynical, but I don't mind. The news stunned me at first; but now I am recovered, and I repeat that I rejoice that I am rich. I have fasted ever since I was born; now the very wine of life is to be pressed into my cup, and I am eager to drink it.'

Her face was alight. He looked at it, and forbore to check her exuberance; but she guessed his thoughts.

'You think me selfish and unworthy,' she said; 'but it is human nature, and I am very human. Still, I will not be selfish only. I will do good to myself, but I will do good to others too. I will drink deep of the joy of being, but that means that I shall mix gratitude and love and friendship in the draught.'

'Love!' he repeated.

'Yes; the love of all things that are lovely and of good report, not the selfish passion for the individual. I have seen enough of that; it narrows life, and I want freedom and expansion.'

His attention was diverted by a sudden stoppage of the reaping-machine; something was wrong with the machinery, and he must assist the man's investigation.

Perhaps he was not sorry for the interruption.

'I think you had better go in,' he said. 'This meridian sun is too much for you, and you see I am wanted. May I suggest that you should break this news to my mother as soon as you can? It will be a severe blow, and there will not be much time for her to get over it.'

THE CANADIAN LIFE-SAVING SERVICE OF SABLE ISLAND.

By Arthur P. Silver.

THE Atlantic coast of the maritime provinces of Canada is remarkable for the presence of a series of shoals or submarine banks of enormous dimensions, composed of immense accumulations of loose gray sands, the débris from melting icebergs, and fragments of shells and rocks carried hither by the strong drift of the Arctic current. These shoals lie submerged beneath a depth of water varying from thirty to seventy fathoms, and are all of them famous fishing-grounds because of the vast quantities of animalcules which attract a teeming fish-life. Nature has elsewhere provided no waters so perfect in every condition for maintaining an almost inexhaustible supply of the valuable food-fishes of commerce.

Of this series of submarine beds the largest is the famous Grand Bank of Newfoundland. Other well-known banks are named Quero, George's, and Sable Island Bank. The two latter are especially interesting to navigators, for the shoals of George's Bank rise dangerously near the surface, so that in heavy weather the roar of their breakers can be distinctly heard many miles distant, while the Sable Island Bank is capped by a long, narrow sand-spit with a ghastly history of drowned men, which has earned for itself the sinister title of 'the Graveyard of the North Atlantic.'

Sable Island, so called because it consists practically of pure sand, is shaped like a bow, concave to the northward. The north and south sides of the island are formed of two nearly parallel ridges of hills, steep towards the sea, but sloping gradually inward. The whole length of the island, following the curve and including the dry parts of the bars, is twenty-three miles; its greatest breadth is one and one-fifth miles. In most parts it is wholly or partially covered with grass; but in some places the sand is scooped out by the winds into crater-shaped hollows, or thrown up into hills varying in height to a maximum of one hundred and ten feet above high-water. Some of these hills are frequently changed in position by the wind. Between the bordering ridges a long pond named Lake Wallace, gradually filling with blown sand, but still in some parts twelve feet deep, extends from near the west end to a distance of ten miles; and a low valley continues from six miles to the north-east end of the island. Lake Wallace is sometimes connected with the sea by means of a channel through the south bar; at other times the channel is entirely closed by storm. When there is no channel, the sea flows into the pond over the low sandy beach only during high tides and heavy gales.

When seen from the north, from a distance of nine or ten miles, the island presents the appearance of a long range of sand-hills, some of which are very white. On a nearer approach many of the sand-hills are seen to have been partly removed by the wind, so as to form steep cliffs next the sea. In most parts the island is fringed by a broad beach, which, however, cannot be reached without passing over bars of sand covered with only a few feet of water. These bars, which are parallel to the shore at distances not exceeding one-third of a mile,

form heavy breakers, and are dangerous to passing boats.

The quantity and variety of vegetation on this gigantic sand-bar is extraordinary. Besides two kinds of grass, there are wild-peas and other plants, affording sustenance to wild ponies as well as to the domestic cattle. There are four or five kinds of edible berries in great abundance, and many flowers and shrubs, but no trees except in a plantation experimentally established in 1901. There are good gardens at the several stations. The climate is much milder and more equable than on the neighbouring mainland; but high winds are frequent, and in winter storms salt spray is carried across the land, scalding and destroying all but the hardiest vegetation.

Fresh-water can be obtained in almost any part by digging down a few feet into the sand in the flats or from the numerous ponds. Seals and abundance of wildfowl frequent the island in their seasons. The fisheries around the island are exceedingly valuable; but the danger of remaining near its formidable bars has hitherto restricted the number of vessels engaged in them.

The establishment on Sable Island for the relief of shipwrecked persons is supported by the Government of Canada, with the assistance of an annual grant of four hundred pounds by the Imperial Government; a small revenue is derived from the periodical sale of wild ponies, cranberries, &c., and occasionally from salvage on the sale of wrecked vessels and their cargoes.

Four lookout stations, together with two lighthouses, form a chain of posts from which the shores of the whole island with its bars are watched in clear, and patrolled in thick or bad, weather. No wrecks can take place on the island at a greater distance than five miles from some one of these posts.

The main station flagstaff on Sable Island is in lat. 43° 56′ N., long. 60° 2′ W. The distance of the island from the lighthouse on Whitehead Island, the nearest part of Nova Scotia, is eighty-five miles.

Sable Island has been compared to a sea-monster with open jaws crouched low on the water, lurking for its prey directly across the line of commerce between the Old and the New World. Its treacherous sand-bars, which stretch out from twelve to fifteen miles from the sloping sand-dunes, have wrought more havoc with ocean shipping than any other danger-spot of equal dimensions in the known world. The first wreck of which we have a chronicle is related in Hakluyt's *Voyages* (1583). In graphic language and with an unaffected strain of piety, the quaint, old-fashioned chronicler relates the circumstances which attended the loss of the *Delight*, or *The Admiral*, as she was also called, of the hapless flotilla of that accomplished gallant of the Court of Queen Elizabeth, Sir Humphrey Gilbert. He tells how the brave knight himself went down standing at the helm of the *Golden Hind*, sorely wounded in his foot, Bible in hand; how the last words heard from him ere his vessel foundered were that famous message of high courage: 'Heaven is as near by sea as by land.'

The writer cannot forbear quoting the historian's simple and touching language, in common use during the spacious days of the great Elizabeth, which carries a flavour like the bouquet of some rare old wine:

'Sabla lieth to the seaward of Cape Breton about 45°, whither we were determined to go, upon intelligence we had of a Portingall, during our abode in St John's, who was also himself present when the Portingalls, about 30 years past, did put into the same island both neat and swine to breed, which were since exceedingly multiplied.

'The distance between Cape Race and Cape Breton is 100 leagues, in which navigation we spent 8 days. Having the wind many times indifferent good, but could never obtain sight of any land all that time, seeing we were hindered by the current. At last we fell into such flats and dangers that hardly any of us escaped. Where nevertheless we lost our *Admiral*, with all the men and provisions.

'Contrary to the mind of the expert Master Cox, on Wednesday, 27th August, we bore up toward the land. Those in the doomed ship continually sounding trumpet and drums. Whilst strange voices from the deep scared the helmsman from his post on board the Frigate.

'Thursday the 28th, the wind arose and blew vehemently from the south and east, bringing withal rain and thick mist, that we could not see a cable-length before us. And betimes we were run and foulded amongst flats and sands, amongst which we found flats and deeps every 3 or 4 ships' lengths. *Immediately* tokens were given to the *Admiral* to cast about to seaward, *which* being the *greater* ship, and of burden 120 tons, was perforce most upon the beach. Keeping so ill a watch they knew not the danger before they felt the same too late to recover, for presently the *Admiral* struck aground, and had soon her stern and hinder parts beaten in pieces. The remaining two ships escaped by casting about E.S.E., bearing to the south for their lives, even in the wind's eye. Sounding one while 7 fathom, then 5, then again deeper. The sea going mightily and high.'

Fifteen years later another awful tragedy was wrought on this desolate island. Is it surprising that this place of horrors has a weird fascination for those who visit it? The first settlers on Sable Island became such not by their own free-will. In 1598 the Marquis de la Roche, having been made Viceroy of Canada and Acadia, set sail for his new territories with a shipload of convicts released from royal prisons. Whether owing to mutinous conduct, or to the desire of first preparing for the hapless prisoners some stronghold on the mainland, he left them all here to their fate. It is said that De la Roche made a vigorous attempt to return, but a succession of gales kept him off the low shores with their surrounding tumult of dangerous

shoals, and drove him back to France. Landing on the Breton coast, he was made a prisoner by the Duc de Mercouer, at that time in arms against the king, and held in durance for five years. Meanwhile the unfortunate men, left to their own resources, formed a shelter for themselves from the timber of wrecked ships. They killed seals and the wild cattle then found on the island, using their flesh for food, but varying this animal diet with the wild berries which were everywhere abundant. They could get fresh-water by digging anywhere to the depth of a couple of feet, but they had no means of making fire, which must have been a terrible hardship in the long tempestuous winters of these latitudes. Small wonder that they waxed quarrelsome, as we are told, and that disputes were often settled with the knife. In a short time their clothes were worn out and their savage appearance enhanced by their appearing clothed in the skins of seals. Seven years afterwards, brought back to France by royal command, they were presented to the great King Henry as they had been found. With shaggy, tangled masses of hair and beard, and surrounded by the minions of that splendid and luxurious Court, they told their piteous tale of hand-to-hand contests with huge seals and walruses for bare existence and for skins wherewith to defend their bodies against the incessant fury of the terrible gales for which the island has been ever noted.

A free pardon and fifty golden crowns apiece attested the depth of royal interest. Strange to say, these galley-slaves of France returned once again to the scene of their exile, and afterwards accumulated a quantity of valuable furs.

One of the most notable wrecks of Sable Island was that of the Government transport the *Francis* in 1799 on her voyage out to Halifax conveying the equipage of His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, father of the late Queen Victoria, at that time in command of the forces in British North America. The horses, plate, library, collection of maps, furniture, and outfit of the Duke, valued at eleven thousand pounds, were all lost, and every soul on board, to the number of two hundred, perished. About that time piratical vagabonds used to frequent the island; and it is generally supposed that some of the poor people of that unfortunate ship reached the shore in safety, but were murdered by the wreckers for their property. Among those lost were the surgeon of the Prince's own regiment, together with his wife and children, His Royal Highness's coachman and gardener, and several military officers.

The Prince sent down Captain Torrens of the Nineteenth Regiment, in the brig *Hariot* of Newcastle, to inquire after the fate of the hapless ship. She too was driven by the gales upon the sand-flats, and few of her crew were rescued before she went to pieces.

The record of wreckage is too long to be recounted here; but many will remember the loss of the *Moravia*, three years since, bound for Antwerp from Boston, the last important disaster of the tragic series.

To the visitor at Sable Island, the island first appears as half-a-dozen low hummocks on the distant horizon, scarcely to be distinguished from dark masses of fog, which even in fine weather near the edge of the Gulf Stream dodge about like grim spectres. As he draws nearer he makes out the sloping sides of the sand-dunes, and he sees the long line of breakers dashing over the submerged sand-bars for many a mile seaward. He can make out the bright-red English ensign floating from the tall flagstaff of the lookout, called the 'Crow's Nest,' erected upon the highest hill midway on the island. At a respectful distance, be the day ever so fine, the anchor is let go, while a well-manned surf-boat is seen approaching rapidly to the side of the packet-ship. Eager the men are for news of the outside world, for it may be that many months have elapsed since the last visit, and no cable can exist amid the incessant fretting of the terrific breakers which widely margin the shore. News is told and letters are delivered, while the visitor is lowered into the boat which is to return to the island. The lifeboat enters the perpetual fringe of the surf, the crew bend to their oars, the helmsman standing high in the stern, and giving his orders in a stentorian voice, and at length the great buoyant boat goes riding on the back of a huge wave, and is carried high up on the beach amid a cascade of white, foaming water. To spring from their seats into the surf and hold hard the boat to prevent its being carried back by the receding wave is the work of only a few moments. Presently she is dragged high up on the beach out of danger.

The visitor is now conducted towards the residence of the superintendent at what is called the Main Station, where a kind welcome is extended alike to idle curiosity or to real distress. He notes the neat, well-kept buildings, the large stores and boat-houses, the sailors' home for shipwrecked men, the white column of the lighthouse, and the cattle lowing around the well-stocked barns. He might fancy himself many miles inland, so sheltered is the scene, were it not for the incessant roar of the surf as it comes dashing again and again along the beach.

He is next taken to the flagstaff, and climbing into the 'Crow's Nest,' surveys the desolate scene. He looks out upon the crescent-shaped outline of the undulating sand-bank covered with a carpet of coarse, rank grasses, cropped here and there by shaggy ponies. He sees the middle of the island occupied by a large and shallow lake, in which perhaps wildfowl are swimming. By the help of a glass he can see the flagstaff at the foot of the lake, the burial plot of ground amid the long grass on the slope of a hill consecrated to the repose of many a storm-tossed body, and here and there along the beach the ribs of unlucky vessels half-buried in the shifting sands.

Troops of the wild ponies are seen moving among the more fertile patches at the edges of the numerous fresh-water ponds; seals may be made out basking on the warm sands or showing like ledges of dark rock along the shore.

The establishment kept at Sable Island for the relief of shipwrecked crews consists of the superintendent and his family at the headquarters, with a boat's crew, cowherd and teamster, and cooks for the men's messes; an outpost-man and his family at the south side, another family at the foot of the lake eight miles distant, and another at the eastern extremity—in all, with women and children, about forty souls. Their duty is to keep perpetually on the lookout for vessels in distress, and to render every assistance in saving life and property. In fine weather the lookout men from the various stations can see the entire circuit of the island. After storms and during thick weather they are obliged to patrol the whole island at least once a day.

By the evening fire, before a hearth glittering with sheets of burnished copper torn from some shipwrecked keel, in a room where the light plays on the rich Spanish mahogany facing of carved lockers, and touches with a golden salience billets of English oak perforated with many a nail-hole, the stranger listens to tale after tale of hairbreadth escapes or sad stories of ocean's havoc, not without a due touch of the supernatural. It may be the story of the Paris gentleman who always appears to wrecked Frenchmen and bitterly complains of Henry IV. for banishing his wife with the convicts of 1598. It may be one of the regicides of Charles I., who, tradition says, made this island his hiding-place, and lived and died here. This spectre on the 29th of May marches round beneath a broad-brimmed hat, singing psalms through his nose so loudly as to be heard above the storm—which, by-the-bye, is something of a performance, for steam-sirens are here rendered nugatory from being drowned by the roar of the waves.

If it were not for the hardy grasses of the island, no herbivorous animals could here exist; but fortunately the sand keeps perpetually clothing itself with a panoply of beach-grass which serves as a coat-of-mail against the attacking winds.

Great vigilance is exercised near the stations to guard against any breach in the sod, which is quickly repaired, else the gales would discover the weak spot and proceed to scoop out a hollow, and eventually undermine the buildings. One night's drift of sand will often bury a telephone-post entirely out of sight.

The wild-grass roots itself very firmly and is probably superior to the recently imported Falkland Island tussock grass which has been planted by way of experiment as a safeguard against the devastating powers of winds and waves. The beach-grass during spring and summer grows to the height of about two feet. The sand may be heaped over it to a great depth, yet it forces its sharp-pointed spears to the surface and sprouts from the summit.

Two years ago the Minister of Marine and Fisheries Department in Canada sent experts to France in order to purchase every kind of tree and shrub that had been found serviceable in staying the inroads of the sea on the coasts of Normandy and Brittany. Every variety of the pine was sent out: cluster pine, Scotch fir, Australian pine by the ten thousand each, with lots of five thousand and two thousand and one hundred each of other pines. Spruce, cedar, and juniper were planted almost as profusely. To these were added all the common trees of the ordinary forest, rose-bushes, creeping plants, flowering shrubs, pea-vines, hawthorns, honeysuckles, and whortleberry bushes. The great enemy to vegetation is the cutting and stinging of wind-driven sand-blasts. Their force may be known from the fact that many panes of glass in the station buildings cease to be transparent, and become opaque as frosted or 'ground' glass. The effect of sand driven by wind on wood is also most curious, the erosion often shaping a beam as if it had been under the turning-lathe. The dry gales of August are found to be destructive to many of the weaker shrubs. The cluster pine that flourishes in Brittany seems so far to thrive in Sable Island. The matting of the fallen foliage with the sand may, it is hoped, give the banks a firmness which they do not now possess, and go a long way towards averting the dread catastrophe which some prophets of evil pronounce inevitable in the long-run—namely, the total submergence of the island beneath the surface of the sea.

Since 1852 the sea has encroached on the land and covered places where grass formerly grew. The west sand-bar changes in size and shape with every severe storm. It still shows ordinarily nine miles of heavy breakers, succeeded in bad weather by seven more miles where the depth increases from five to ten fathoms.

Since the lighthouses were established in 1873, it has been necessary to move the west end lighthouse eastward on two occasions, and the continuous wasting of the west end will soon render a third removal unavoidable. From a wreck-chart prepared in Canada, it appears that the number of known wrecks on Sable Island and its bars for each decennial period of the last century is as follows: Ending 1810, eleven; 1820, nine; 1830, eighteen; 1840, twenty-five; 1850, twenty; 1860, twenty-three; 1870, eighteen; 1880, nineteen; 1890, ten; and 1900, twelve.

Heaven help the shipwrecked sailor should the time ever arrive when Sable Island will lapse into a mere treacherous shoal of quicksands, swept by furious and dangerous seas, with no human aid possible for the hapless castaway!

THE PNEUMATIC-TOOL WORKS AT FRASERBURGH.

A NEW INDUSTRY.

THE east coast town of Fraserburgh, hitherto associated with fish and fishing, and more recently with wireless telegraphy, has now become the seat of a new industry, which promises to be of great value not only to the town and district, but also to the country at large. The industry in question is the manufacture of pneumatic-tools; and seeing that the British Government has recently voted a sum of three hundred thousand pounds for the equipment of our warships with these tools, 'the Broch'—to use a familiar term—has certainly something to say on behalf of her new venture. In English shipyards and in Aberdeen granite-yards these tools are now extensively used, and they are also coming to be largely employed by the German, French, and Russian Governments. Compressed air is the motive-power, and it has the advantage over steam that it can be carried five miles and only lose a pound of the pressure per mile. The most delicate carving on granite can be rapidly performed by the pneumatic-tools without the least risk of injury to the stone, so rapid and so light are the strokes; while in riveting, the work can be far more expeditiously done than is at all possible by manual labour. In the interesting domain of wood-carving, pneumatic-tools have, it is believed, a future before them.

The Fraserburgh works, which are to be conducted on what may be described as an American principle, will, it is expected, afford employment for over a thousand men. Houses for the workmen are to be built in a field near the works, and on the premises several hundred 'lockers' are provided in which the men may, if they choose, change their working clothes for more dressy habiliments. These 'lockers' are thoroughly ventilated, so that the clothing put off by the men at night in a damp condition are thoroughly dried by next morning. Lavatories are also supplied, in order that the workmen may enjoy a refreshing wash after the labours of the day. There is also a bicycle store and a gymnasium, in which the men may hold club or social gatherings. The building in which the machine-shop and bench workshops are placed is one hundred and seventy-five feet in length by ninety feet broad, and its 'saw-toothed' roof is said to be unique in this country. The machinery is to be driven by electricity, and the offices and shops are to be warmed on the hot-air system. Three automatic fireproof doors separate the machine-room from the store; and the latter, one hundred and seventy-five feet by fifty feet, has sidings leading on to the adjacent railway line, for the receipt and despatch of goods.

The works are situated just outside the town, and some fifty acres of land have been leased by the company, about one-half of which will be occupied by dwelling-houses.

The buildings, which are of Bora and New Pitsligo granite, have cost in all about sixteen thousand pounds.

In this connection, it is of interest to note that the harbour at Fraserburgh has been greatly improved by the action of the pneumatic rock-drill, supplied by the Pneumatic-Tool Company to the Harbour Commissioners. The entrance to that otherwise splendid harbour was obstructed by hundreds of tons of sunken rock of a very tough character, which proved 'a menace to craft and a serious hindrance to traffic in the herring season.' The drill is doing remarkable work in removing the rocks which have proved so troublesome.

To Mr A. W. Maconachie, M.P. for East Aberdeenshire, is due the credit of having brought the works to Fraserburgh. While Aberdeenshire workmen may be relied upon for industry, steadiness, devotion to duty, and other good qualities, it is claimed that, as labour is cheaper in the north, the cost of production will be much less than it would be in some other parts of the country.

Fraserburgh, although set among somewhat bare, and in bad weather dreary, surroundings, is not wanting in attractions of its own. A halo of romance and legendary lore envelops the ruins of the Wine Tower of Inverallochy, at the entrance to the famous Moray Firth; while the living present is found in the golf-links of the town, with its pretty club-house, as well as in the course at Inverallochy, the home of the well-known golfing fishermen, a few miles farther down the coast, but now connected with 'the Broch' by the recently constructed St Combs Light Railway.

BESIDE THE ALPS.

A SUMMER Sunday evening, warm and fair,
Bright is the sun and gently breathes the air;
Soft fleecy clouds float slowly o'er the blue,
And from my vine-wreathed porch, with joy, I view
The distant mountain-summits white with snow,
Whose crests against the sky like silver glow.
And, hark! the music of the Alpine horn,
By sweet reverberating echoes borne!
Like distant martial strains it dies away
As sunset's colours melt in evening gray.
On such a night it was, that happy year,
That, from yon lowly trellised cottage near,
Your voice—an English voice—I heard prolong
The pensive notes of that old English song
Which thrills the hearts of Britons when they roam,
With mingled joy and sadness: 'Home, Sweet Home.'
That song my lodestar was, your voice so sweet
Led me a willing captive to your feet;
The charm was doubled when I saw your face,
My soul was ravished by its tender grace.
'Here,' said I, 'I remain, no more to roam;
Your land my country, and your heart my home!'

ALEX. SMALL, B.L.

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FIVE-HEAD CREEK.

By Louis Becke.

PART I.

I HAD ridden all day through an endless vista of ghostly gray-gums and iron-barks, when I came in sight of the long, wavering line of vivid green foliage which showed me that I had reached my destination—a roughly built slab-hut with a roof of corrugated iron. This place was to be my home for six months, and stood on the bank of Five-Head Creek, thirty-five miles from the rising city of Townsville, in North Queensland.

Riding up to the building, I dismounted my wearied, sweating horse, and taking off the saddle and my blanket and other impedimenta, led him to the creek to drink, and then hobbled and turned him loose to feed on the soft, lush grass and reeds growing along the margin of the water. Then I entered the empty house, made a brief examination of it, and wondered how my mate would like living in such an apparently comfortless abode.

I must mention that I had come from Townsville to take charge of Five-Head Creek cattle-run, which had suffered so severely from a terrible drought that it had been temporarily abandoned. We were to look after and repair the fencing (many miles' length of which had been destroyed by fire or had succumbed to white ants), to search for and collect the remnant of the cattle that had not perished in the drought, and see after the place generally. My mate was to follow me out in a few days with a dray-load of stores.

I lit a fire, boiled a billy of tea, and ate some cold beef and damper. Then, as the sun dipped below a range of low hills to the westward, I filled my pipe, and walking down the banks of the creek, surveyed my environs.

'What a God-forsaken-looking country!' I thought as I gazed around me; and indeed the prospect was anything but inviting. On both sides of the creek the soil showed the evidences of the severity of the past drought. Great gaping fissures—'sun-cracks' we called them—traversed and zigzagged the hot, parching ground, on which not a blade of grass was to be seen. Here and there amid the gray-barked, ghostly gums were oases of green—thickets of stunted sandalwood, whose evergreen leaves defied alike the torrid summer heat and the black frosts of winter months; but underneath them lay the shrivelled carcasses and whitening bones of hundreds of cattle which had perished of starvation—too weak even to totter down, to die bogged on the banks of the creek. As I sat and smoked, a strong feeling of depression took possession of me. I already began to hate the place, and regretted I could not withdraw from my engagement.

Yet in less than a week I began to like it; and when I left it I did so with some regret, for I had made friends with sweet mother Nature, whose loving-kindness is with us always in wild places, though we may not know it at first, and take no heed of her many calls and silent beckonings to us to come and love and rest and dream and be content upon her tender, mighty bosom.

My horse, cropping eagerly at the soft grass and salty pigweed, suddenly raised his head and pricked up his ears. He had heard something, and was listening; and, looking across to the opposite bank, I saw a sight that lifted me out of my sudden fit of depression and then filled me with delight.

Two stately emus were walking along in single file, the leading male-bird holding his head erect and marching like the drum-major of a regiment of grenadiers. On the margin of the bank they halted and looked at the horse, which now stood facing them; a minute's scrutiny satisfied both parties that there was nothing to fear from each other, and then the great birds walked down the bank to a broad, dry patch of bright-yellow sand, which stretched half-way across the bed of the creek. Here the male began to scratch, sending up

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a shower of coarse sand, and quickly swallowing such large pebbles as were revealed; whilst the female squatted beside him and watched his labours with an air of indifference. Her digestive apparatus was, I suppose, in good order, and she did not need three or four pounds' weight of stones in her gizzard; but she did require a sand-bath, for presently she, too, began to scrape and sway from side to side as she worked a deep hole beneath her body, just as a common hen scrapes and sways and ruffles her feathers in the dry dust of the farmyard. In less than five minutes the huge bird was encompassed in a cloud of flying sand, and working her long neck, great thick legs, and outspread toes exactly as an ordinary fowl. Then, having thoroughly covered herself with sand from beak to tail, she rose, shook herself violently, and stalked away up the bank again, to where her companion soon followed her; and I lost sight of the pair as they strode through the thick green of the she-oak trees.

As darkness fell I built up a larger fire, and spread my blanket beside it, to sleep under the open sky instead of in the deserted house, for the night was soft, warm, and windless. Overhead was a firmament of cloudless blue, with here and there a shining star beginning to show; but away to the south-west a dark line of cloud was rising and spreading, and I felt cheered at the sight, for it was a sign of rain. As I watched it steadily increasing, the first voices of the night began to call—a 'possum squealed from the branches of a gray-gum in the creek, and was answered by another somewhere near; and then the long, long mournful wail of a curlew cried out from the sun-baked plain beyond. Oh, the unutterable sense of loneliness that, at times, the long-drawn, penetrating cry of the curlew, resounding through the silence of the night, amid the solitude of vast Australian plains, causes the solitary bushman or traveller to feel! I well remember on one occasion camping on the banks of the Lower Burdekin River, and having my broken slumbers—for I was ill with fever—disturbed by a brace of curlews which were uttering their depressing cries within a few hundred yards of me; and how I at last became so wrought-up and almost frenzied by the persistency of their doleful notes that I followed them up with a Winchester rifle, mile after mile, wasting my cartridges and exhausting mind and body in the vain attempt to shoot them in the dark. There is to my knowledge nothing so mournful as the call of the curlew, unless it be the moaning cry of a penguin out upon the ocean when a sea-fog encompasses the ship that lies becalmed. There is something so intensely human about it, as if some lost soul were wailing for mercy and forgiveness.

But on this night the cry of the curlew was pleasing to my ear, for, as I lay and watched the rising bank of cloud, I heard others calling from the opposite bank of the creek, and then a parrot screamed shrilly; and I knew that rain was certain.

I jumped up, carried my blanket, saddle, and gun into the house, and then went out to collect firewood. My horse, as he heard my footsteps, bounded up, hobbled as he was, from the bed of the creek, and neighed to me in the darkness. He, too, smelt the coming rain, and was speaking to me out of his gladness of heart. I called back to him, and then set to work and soon collected a number of dry logs, which I carried into the hut and threw down on the hard earthen floor of pulverised ant-heaps, just as the welcome thunder muttered, away off in the distance.

I brought a burning brand from the fire, threw it inside, and then called to my horse. Taking off his hobbles, I slipped the bridle over his head and brought him in under shelter of the veranda, where he stood quietly, with a full stomach and contented mind, watching the coming storm.

Half-an-hour later the corrugated-iron roof of the house was singing a sweet, delightful tune to the heavy down-pouring rain, which, till long past midnight, fell in generous volume, the dry, thirsty soil drinking it in with gladness as it closed up the gaping fissures, and gave hope and vigour and promise of life to the parched and perishing vegetation of the wide plains around.

With supreme contentment I sat at the open door, and smoked and watched, with my fire blazing merrily away; then, before it was too late, I stripped and went outside and let the rain wash off the dust and dirt of a day's journey under a fierce, baking sun. How cool, delightful, and invigorating it felt!

I dried myself with a spare shirt, and then lay down on my blanket beside the fire to listen contentedly to the sweet clamour of the rain upon the roof. About one in the morning the downpour ceased, the sky cleared, and a fair half-moon of silvery brightness shone out above the tops of the white-leaved gum-forest. Fifty yards or so away, in front of the door, a shallow pool had formed in a depression of hard, sun-baked soil, and as the soft light of the moon fell upon it there came a whir of wings, as a flock of night-loving spur-winged plover lit upon its margin. I could have shot half-a-dozen of them from where I sat, but felt that I could not lift gun to shoulder and slaughter when there was no need, and their shrill cries as they ran to and fro afforded me an infinite pleasure.

I took my horse outside, put his hobbles on again, rubbed my cheek against his warm, moist nose, and left him. An hour before daylight he stepped quietly inside, and stood near the fire. The mosquitoes were annoying him, and he had come in to get the benefit of what little smoke was arising from the burning logs.

At dawn, as I lay half-awake, I heard a sound that made me jump to my gun: the soft quacking of wild-duck in the creek. Stealing cautiously down through the fringe of she-oaks, I came to a fine broad pool, in the centre of which was a small

sandbank, whereon stood a black duck with a brood of seven half-fledged ducklings around her, dabbling merrily amongst the weed and débris of the margin. Of course, no one who *thinks*, unless impelled by sheer hunger, would shoot either an incubating or 'just familied' duck, and I laid my gun down with an exclamation of disappointment. But I was soon to be rewarded, for a minute or two later five beautiful black-and-white Burdekin ducks flashed down through the vista of she-oaks and settled on the water less than thirty yards away from me. They lit so closely together that my first barrel killed two and my second dropped one of the others as they rose. I waded in and brought them ashore. The name 'Burdekin' has been given to these ducks because they are so common on the river of that name. Their wings are a pure white-and-black.

I wonder how many people know how to cook and eat wild-duck as they should be cooked and eaten, when they are plentiful, and when the man who shoots them is in his way a gourmet, and is yet living away from civilisation and restaurants? Pluck the feathers off the breast and body, then cut the breast-part out, sprinkle it with salt, impale it upon a stick—if you have a stick or branch of any kind—and hold it over a fire of glowing wood-coals. If you have no skewer, then lay the red, luscious-looking flesh upon the coals themselves, and listen to it singing and fizzing as if it were impatiently crying out to you to take it up and eat it!

When I returned, the sun-rays were piercing through the gum-trees and dissipating a thin mist which hung about the green, winding fringe of she-oaks bordering the creek. From the ground, which now felt soft, warm, and springy to my naked feet, there came that sweet earthy smell that arises when the land has lain for long, long months under a sky of brass, and all green things struggle hard to live. As I drew near the hut I saw that the flock of spur-winged plover were still standing or running about the margin of the newly formed pool. They took not the slightest notice of my approach, and I was careful not to alarm them, knowing that as long as the water remained they would continue to haunt the vicinity of the pool, and besides that I already had three plump ducks which would last me at least till the following morning.

After breakfast I set out to make a detailed examination of the creek for a distance of three or four miles towards its source. I was glad to find some very extensive water-holes at intervals of a few hundred yards; then would come a stretch of sand from bank to bank, for, owing to the want of rain, the water had fallen very low, though it was still flowing by percolation through the sand. Yet in time of flood the whole of the flat country was submerged, and some of the large gum-trees growing on the banks held in their forks, thirty-five feet from the ground, great piles of dead wood and tangled débris that had been deposited there in a great flood of two years before.

I was not long in making a very pleasing discovery: all the pools contained fish, some of which were of good size, for the water was so clear that I could see them swimming about, and I remembered now with satisfaction that among the stores coming on in the dray was a bundle of fishing-tackle which I had bought in Townsville. Bird-life all along the creek was plentiful; but this was to be expected, as the long drought had naturally driven game of all sorts towards the water. I saw two or three small kangaroos, and everywhere along the margin were bandicoot holes, where the little pig-like creatures had been digging for roots.

Two miles from the hut I came across a well-constructed native fish-weir, and near by I found the site of a camp; evidently a party of blacks had been enjoying themselves quite recently, fishing and cattle-killing, for under some scrub I found the head and foreleg of a young steer.

As I walked my horse slowly over the sand or along the bank under the fringing oaks, I made the unpleasant discovery that snakes were altogether too plentiful—not only the harmless carpet-snake, but the deadly brown and the black-necked tiger variety; though against this were a corresponding number of iguanas, both of the tree-climbing and water-haunting species. The latter, to which I shall again allude later, is a particularly 'shudder-some' reptile. I had never before seen these repulsive creatures, and indeed had never heard of them although I am Australian born.

I returned to the hut at noon, and, to my surprise, found a party of thirty or more blacks camped under some Leichhardt-trees near by. They seemed a fairly healthy lot of savages, and were not alarmed when they saw I was carrying a gun. I rode quietly up to them and shook hands with two or three of the 'bucks,' who spoke a little English. They were, they told me, from the Ravenswood district, which they had left some weeks ago, and were now travelling towards the Burdekin, hunting as they went.

Some of them came to the hut with me, and I saw at once that they had not taken anything of mine, though among other articles I had left on a wooden seat outside were several plugs of tobacco. I gave them a plug to divide, and then asked the most voluble of them how many cattle they had speared.

'Baal blackfellow spear him cattle,'* he answered.

'What about that young fellow bullock you been eat longa creek?' I inquired.

They assured me that they had not speared the animal, which they had found lying at the bottom of a deep gully, with a broken leg. Then, knowing it could not live, they had killed and eaten it. I was pleased to hear this, and had no doubt the poor creatures told the truth. They remained with

* Literally, 'We blacks did not spear any cattle.'

myself and mate for a month, and proved of great assistance to us in fencing and other work, and I learnt much valuable bush-craft from these wandering savages. One of their methods of fishing I have already described in *Chambers's Journal*. I shall now give the reader an account of some of the happy days my mate and myself spent in this lonely spot.

THE LYCÉE FÉNÉLON FOR GIRLS.

By Miss BETHAM-EDWARDS, Officier de l'Instruction Publique de France.

A GENERATION ago, save in a single respect, the education of French girls was far behind that of England and Germany. Excepting from one point of view, I have no hesitation to-day in affirming its superiority to both Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic systems.

My convent-bred contemporaries in France—nay, younger women whose studies were but beginning when their own had long since ended—would treat education as a subject of gentle irony.

'What did I learn at the convent, you ask me?' said one dear old friend to me some years since. 'Absolutely nothing!'

And another friend, the other's junior by thirty years, now a wife and mother, informed me that she was sedulously applying herself to the study of history. 'Would you believe it?' she asked, smiling. 'In my convent French history stopped short at the Revolution; for us it ended with the *ancien régime!*'

The convent-school was simply a school of manners. With Mr Turveydrop, the teachers' business was solely to polish, polish, polish. A little French literature, a little music, and perhaps a little drawing were thrown into the bargain. If pupils quitted the place ignorant as they had come, they had at least acquired habits of self-possession, a faultless deportment, and scrupulous attention to dress, speech, and behaviour.

What must be regarded as a drawback to the Lycée for Girls will be mentioned in its proper place.

When M. Hanotaux's work on contemporary France attains the colophon we shall be in a position to appraise the Third Republic as an intellectual force. No sooner was peace proclaimed in 1871 than the army was reorganised, the monstrous war indemnity paid into German coffers, and on the 16th of September 1873 the last detachment of Prussian troops saluted the tricolour on the frontier near Verdun. The reorganisation of the army, the raising of the French Colonial Empire to the second in the world, and financial, municipal, and legislative reforms were worthily crowned by the great educational Acts, or Ferry laws, of 1881 and 1882. Popular education, as projected by the Convention eighty years before, now became a fact. Primary schools (lay, gratuitous, and obligatory) were opened in every commune throughout the country, and by the creation of the Lycée for Girls two rival camps were brought together; in the noble words of Gambetta, 'French youths and maidens would henceforth be united by the intellect before being united by the heart.' The reign of smatterings, and polish, polish, polish, was doomed.

The Lycée de Filles has no counterpart in England. It is a foundation of the State, a dependence of the University of France, a body subsidised alike by the Government and by municipalities, and every member of the various staffs is a Civil servant.

With not a few Frenchmen, we are apt to rail at such instances of centralisation.

The results are what we have to consider, and the inspection and study of a Lycée will eradicate many prejudices. If a hard-and-fast rule of uniformity governs this administrative department as much as any other, if voluntaryism is rigidly excluded, it must be borne in mind what a kind of voluntaryism had cost the country before the Ferry laws.

Until 1881 both men and women could teach provided only with the so-called *lettre d'obédience*, or pastoral letter signed by the bishop, which was no certificate whatever of competence, but merely a testimony to good conduct and submission to clerical discipline.

Under the stately ægis of the University of France, the French girl is protected from incapacity, favouritism, or misdirected patronage. The only title of admission to professorial chair or to inferior posts is tried capacity. From the modestly paid *surveillante* or supervisor of studies to *madame la directrice* or the lady principal, and to the certificated lady-teachers, the entire staff is responsible to the Vice-Recteur of the Académie de Paris. Here I may mention that there are sixteen Academies in France, all affiliations of the University, the head of the University being the Minister of Public Instruction.

By the courteous permission of the Vice-Recteur I was lately not only enabled to see over the magnificent Lycée Fénélon in Paris, but to be present during several lessons. In this vast congeries of buildings, annex after annex having been added to the ancient Hôtel de Rohan, over five hundred pupils, aged from six to seventeen, are accommodated with thirty *agrégées*—that is to say, ladies who have passed the examinations obligatory on professors teaching in a Lycée or Faculté—that is, school of art, science, or literature.

Unlike the Lycée for Boys, that for girls is exclusively a day-school. Pupils living at a distance can have a midday meal and afternoon collation on the premises; but the State holds itself responsible

to parents no further. Omnibuses do not collect the children and take them home, as is the case with convent-schools.

A new experience was it to see little girls of twelve, or even younger, deposit their pass-ticket with the porter and run home unattended as in England. I was assured that this habit is on the increase; and as many professional and middle-class families in Paris keep no servant, great must be the relief of the innovation to overworked mothers. Indeed, the excessive supervision of children in France has ever, of course, been a matter of money and circumstances.

An amiable young *surveillante*, or superintendent of studies and playground, acted as my cicerone, explaining everything as we went along. Quitting the porter's lodge and large waiting-rooms, we entered the recreation-ground, a fragment of the fine old garden in which contemporaries of Madame de Sévigné once disported themselves, now noisy with romping children. Class-rooms and refectories opened on to the gravelled spaces and shady walks, and here and there lady professors were taking a stroll between the lessons.

Ascending a wide staircase with elaborate iron handrail, a relic of former magnificence, we zigzagged through the labyrinthine congeries of buildings, now looking into one class-room, now into another. The sight of each made me long to be a schoolgirl again. Instead of receiving stones for bread and thistles for figs, the use of the globes, *Mangnall's Questions*, and the like, a mere simulacrum of instruction, how delightful to be taught by the competent, to be made to realise our great thinker's axiom: Knowledge is seeing!

In one class-room, or rather laboratory, a young lady-professor was preparing her lesson in chemistry. Very business-like she looked in her long brown linen pinafore like a workman's blouse, as she moved to and fro, now fetching a retort, now some apparatus or substance for her demonstration. Great prominence is given to the study of elementary science in the Lycée curriculum. Elsewhere, we just glanced into a class-room where a second science mistress was lecturing to the older girls on physics, with practical illustrations. In yet a third room a vase of freshly gathered wild flowers betokened a forthcoming lesson on botany. 'Our pupils delight in their lessons on natural history,' said my cicerone, as with natural pride she showed me the school museum, a small but comprehensive collection of stuffed animals, birds, and skeletons, scientifically classified and constantly enlarged by friends and scholars.

One feature that more particularly interested me was a small room containing specimens of the pupils' work, delicately adjusted scales and weights, thermometers, and other mechanical appliances, made by little girls unassisted. Here indeed was proof-positive that with young Lycéennes knowledge is seeing.

About twenty-five girls form a class, those attending the French lesson I was permitted to hear being from eleven to thirteen. Very much alive looked most of the little maidens, all wearing the obligatory black stuff pinafore fastened round the waist and having long sleeves, many with their hair dressed *à la* Infanta of Velasquez—that is to say, hanging loose and knotted on one side with a ribbon—and not a few still in socks! French girls, indeed, often go bare-legged and in socks till they are almost as tall as their mothers!

Dictation and grammatical analysis are subjects naturally less attractive than chemical experiments or a lesson on field-flowers.

More than once the lady-professor was obliged to call some laggard to order. One, indeed, she sharply threatened with dismissal on account of inattention. But, on the whole, I should say that the class was a very intelligent one; and two or three girls of eleven or twelve called up for examination showed a really remarkable mastery of syntax.

An admirable English lesson given by a French lady was another interesting experience. Of the twenty-five pupils, their ages being the same as those of the former class, about a third—not more—showed lively interest in the study. Two or three, indeed, made a not unsuccessful attempt to tell the story of Whittington and his Cat in English! One bright little girl of twelve, in socks, seemed far ahead of all the rest.

On the disadvantage of employing French professors of modern languages in Lycées both for girls and boys there would seem to be but one opinion. No amount of erudition and experience can here surely atone for the *sine quâ non* of fitness—namely, idiom and accent, that vitality in language hardly less individual and racial a matter than physical idiosyncrasy. The exclusion of foreign professors from State schools became law after the Franco-Prussian war. In the first instance the measure was solely directed against Germans. At the present time, I am told, the matter is simply protective. Outsiders are kept out because they would be filling places wanted by natives. This short-sightedness constitutes the one defect of a most magnanimous educational programme. Generations of boys and girls are condemned to acquire modern languages at second-hand, with the result that for practical purposes they are direfully handicapped. Their English or German naturally resembles that of London or Berlin as little as the prioress's French does the French of Paris.*

The immense importance attached to the teaching of science more than compensates for linguistic drawbacks. The French mind is naturally acquisitive and logical, and instruction here so directly appeals to national aptitude that great things may be expected from the future. Already we find

* A French friend writes: 'It is my opinion that foreign languages should never be taught in France except by professors understanding French and speaking it without accent; otherwise they exercise no authority whatever over their pupils.' There is much to be said for this view.

Frenchwomen coming to the fore in scientific discovery, law, medicine, and literature. The Lycées especially foster inclination for studies hitherto considered the province of the other sex. In the programme before me I find that students of the second division—that is, girls from twelve to seventeen—are taught the following subjects, two or three being optional, the complete course occupying five years: moral science (*la morale*), general history, German or English (in departments bordering on Spain and Italy, Spanish or Italian wisely replaces these), domestic economy and hygiene, common law, natural history, physics, chemistry, geometry, and the elements of algebra. French language and literature, drawing, solfeggio, with gymnastics and needlework (including cutting-out), are added; also a dancing-class and practical lessons in cookery, these being an extra charge.

In the preparatory class—that is, for girls from six to twelve—the fees amount to two hundred francs, just eight pounds a year, with an extra charge of six pounds for pupils preparing their lessons under the supervision of a *maîtresse répétitrice*. In the second division the charges are from ten to twelve pounds, the same sum as in the first being charged for what is called the *externat surveillé*.

Before quitting the Lycée Fénélon I sent in my card to *madame la directrice*, who received me most cordially, saying that, with the permission of the Vice-Recteur, she should at any time cordially welcome myself or friends. I mention this fact to show how the principle of authority is insisted upon in every administrative department of France.

> **Take but degree away, untune that string,**
> **And, hark! what discord follows! Each thing meets**
> **In mere oppugnancy.**

In these words we have the key of that centralisation so incomprehensible to ourselves, but which works so satisfactorily in France, the vast administrative machine moving apparently by itself, unhinged by outward events, however disturbing.

A boarding-house at St Mandé, within half-an-hour's distance from the Lycée, was opened in 1903. Here bath-rooms, tennis-court, croquet-ground, and other modernities are offered on moderate terms. As I was unable to visit this establishment, I will give some particulars of a boarding-house for girl-students at Toulouse visited by me some years since.

I arrived, unfortunately, during the long vacation, but a young lady teacher in residence kindly showed me over the house, or rather block of buildings standing amid pleasant wooded grounds. Although we were as yet only midway through September, from attic to basement every corner was spick and span. In the vast dormitory of the upper school I was reminded of the Lycée for Boys. Here were no less than thirty compartments or cubicles containing bed and toilet requisites, whilst at the upper end of the room, commanding a view of the entire length, was the bed of the *surveillante* or under-mistress. Sleeping or waking, the Lycéenne, like the Lycéen, was here under perpetual supervision. In other respects the arrangements seemed excellent.

The Lycée of Toulouse, like those of other provincial cities, is a dependence of the State, the department, and the municipality.

Thus, whilst the programme of studies is drawn up by the Recteur of the Toulouse Académie, the boarding-house just described is authorised by the town council, and the prospectus is signed by the Mayor. Every detail, therefore, alike scholastic and economic, must receive the sanction of these respective authorities. How deep is the interest in secondary education the following citation will demonstrate:

'At a sitting of the Council Municipal of December 29, 1887'—I quote from the prospectus of the boarding-house—'it was decided that a graduated reduction should be made for two, three, and four sisters, a fifth being received entirely free of charge.' It would be interesting to learn how often this generous privilege has been enjoyed.

The charges both for school and boarding-house are about a third cheaper in the provinces than in Paris. The curriculum embraces the same subjects, with occasional deviations. Thus, at Toulouse, on account of geographical position, Spanish may supplant German or English. Religious teaching in every Lycée is left entirely to the parents. Every city and large town now possesses its Lycée de Filles.

THE DEAD HAND.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER some eighteen months' experience of what riches can do for happiness, Diana Vavasour was fully prepared to admit their sufficiency. She rejoiced in her wealth and independence as ready weapons for the warfare of life, granting an immeasurable advantage. All the tastes and capacities of her nature quickened and throve; she loved horticulture, and the gardens and glass-houses of Fox Hills allowed scope for indulgence; she had a fairly trained knowledge of music and art, and was able to be at once executant and patron. London may not take the first place in musical interpretation; but its resources are almost inexhaustible, and at their best should satisfy all but the doctrinaire and the cynic.

She loved social gaiety with equal ardour, and her first season in town, under the wing of Lady Marmaduke Spencer, seemed to Diana the enchanted dream of her anticipations realised; for what is there of

the pride of life and the delight of the senses that can be denied to a girl who has access to the inner circles of London exclusiveness, and is herself a beautiful and gifted woman?

Suitors came, as a matter of course; but Diana had little inclination for love-making. Almost unknown to herself, her ideals of manhood were somewhat severe, and her observation of the married state had seldom been a happy one.

As yet she knew nothing of the stringent condition on which her inheritance ultimately depended; for Mrs Lorimer, in the final draft of her will, had introduced certain arrangements which had not occurred to her in her first discussion with her lawyer.

Diana's majority was postponed till she was twenty-five, her fortune being vested in the hands of her trustees, who were empowered to make her a munificent allowance. On her twenty-fifth birthday she was to enter into the unshackled enjoyment of the property, and to learn at the same time the terms of possession; these terms were set forth in a codicil of Mrs Lorimer's will, which was to be safeguarded by her solicitor and friend, Robert Thornton, until the time arrived for its disclosure.

Reflection had suggested to the testator that it was desirable to conceal for a time the condition of her bequest, lest it might damp the girl's first zest and satisfaction, and also operate as a social deterrent, reducing her chances of success.

Diana had been twenty-three at the time of her grandmother's death and her departure from the Grange farm; during the year and a half that had elapsed since then she had paid it only a flying visit, for she was in the first flush of her new experiences, and she shrank a little from its atmosphere of depression.

Mr Clive was still nailed to his mattress-couch, enduring his cross rather than submitting to it, and exacting more and more from those around him as his own resources narrowed and failed. It followed that, though the patient sweetness of the wife held out, her physical strength and vitality were being slowly drained; but it was to the son that Diana's ardent sympathy went out most fully.

Godfrey Clive had practically relinquished his profession, except as it was made subservient to his father's need or to that of his poorer neighbours.

But while it is quite possible to fulfil a repugnant duty without betraying the repugnance, the self-mastery required serves to strengthen the inward recoil; and, moreover, the man had never been convinced that he was obeying the paramount obligation in abandoning a career for which brain and temper fitted him, and which was also so large an instrument of good to others.

It so happened that at the close of Diana's second London season a scheme for a somewhat adventurous European tour with certain of her friends fell through, causing her considerable vexation. She was conscious of feeling somewhat jaded both in body and mind, and she decided that, in default of her plans, she would try the opposite pole of experience in the rest and quiet of the Grange farm. She did not ask herself, not being given to introspection, where was the source of her abiding interest in this tragic and monotonous household?

On the morning of her arrival she found that Godfrey Clive was not at home, his mother explaining that he was absent for the day only on important business. She told Diana what already her quick observation had detected, that things were not going prosperously; the season had again been bad, and every year added fresh weight to agricultural depression. Her husband's strength and endurance seemed to have reached their uttermost limit—'it was Godfrey's skill which kept him alive'—and she dreaded the break-down of her own health.

Diana's sympathy was prompt. She knew well that even in health Mr Clive had always been a man hard to satisfy, denying himself much and requiring from others equal sacrifices, so that the wheels of family life were apt to grate upon their axles. Later in the day she sat by the invalid's couch and lent an attentive ear to the old man's faintly murmured tale of his supposed grievances.

'I am a dull scholar in God's school,' he said, 'if my long affliction be sent to teach me patience; but it is hard to be patient when a man knows things are going from bad to worse, and he can lift neither hand nor foot to mend them. My son means well; but he has not the farming instinct, and he loses where I should gain. Since I was laid low not so much as a hundred pounds have been paid off the mortgage, and the mortgagees have threatened to foreclose. They are hungry for my land.' Then, with a half-groan, he added, 'Besides, both my wife and son are very extravagant.'

Diana's indignation burned, but she looked beyond the closed window to the distant hills showing clear against the heavenly background, and then at the shrunk and haggard figure, incapable of motion, and her anger cooled.

'It is hard—very hard,' she assented; 'but if the mortgagees are impatient, nothing would be easier than to settle their claims.'

He looked at her sharply; he knew that she was rich, and that he and his had befriended her, and his dogged pride took the alarm.

'I have no mind to shift my burden,' he said; 'and I hold it to be poor policy to rob Peter to pay Paul. I know what you would say, Miss Vavasour; but—don't say it! It would do no good. I would rather lie here and eat my heart. Godfrey does not feel these things as I do.' And Diana, seeing his resolution, forbore to offer help.

It must be owned that she found the day interminable, and all the surroundings distasteful, and wondered how she had ever endured life at the farm.

She had learnt that Dr Godfrey was expected to return by the train due at Oxford by seven o'clock; and as the evening was fine, and she was weary of

her own company, she proposed to her hostess, whose duties called her elsewhere, to walk some way on the road to meet him.

CHAPTER IV.

IT was August, and the weather was fine in the sense that there was no rain; but the sky was gray and overcast, and the temperature low for the season. On either side of the quiet high-road Diana saw the late-mown grass lying in green swaths drenched with the persistent rains; and where the fields were arable the prospect was still more disheartening: the meagre barley, short in straw, drooped low to earth, and the wheat showed sparse and colourless. The very cattle had an air of discontent, standing in groups of two or three as though conscious that the soaked herbage was unfit to serve them as a bed.

Diana's mind worked eagerly. During her brief reign at Fox Hills she seemed to have lost sight of these phases of disaster; now she realised what pain, what weariness, probably what revolt, they included. How had Godfrey Clive spent the dark months of such an experience, the golden hours of which had slipped by her unheeded?

She was impatient to think of him as a galley-slave chained to the oar of exaggerated duty, and consenting to stamp out the best faculties and aspirations of his nature.

'It is an outrage on humanity and common-sense,' she said to herself; 'and to persuade him of this—to induce him to let me help him in one way or another, and bring some sunshine into his shaded life—is the purpose which has brought me here.'

She looked up to see that he was very near her—near enough for her to observe the difference between the man as she first saw him and the man he was now. He was evidently deep in thought, for he walked with his eyes on the ground, and as yet had neither seen nor recognised her.

The tall athletic figure was a little bowed, and the expression of the face was veiled and stern; it had lost something of the look of inspiration born of high thinking and endeavour, which seemed to Diana ill-replaced by the stamp which endurance and denial had set upon it.

And yet, was the change so manifest, or her imagination at fault? He had at last looked up and recognised her, and hastened his steps to meet her. Diana almost laughed with pleasure to see how face and figure were suddenly transfigured; fire had come back to the sombre eyes and curves to the set lips.

He stood uncovered and erect, looking down upon the girl, whose outstretched hand he continued to hold, with that air of mingled sweetness and distinction which had always been a potent attraction for her.

'He is a little shabby and a little thin,' she said to herself; 'but in spite of that I have seen no other man who pleases me so well.'

The magnetism of his personality thrilled her; her own eyes sparkled as they met his, and the colour deepened on her cheek.

He took up at once the old intimate relations, and there was scarcely a hint of depression or protest in his manner. He told her that the business on which he had been engaged was the staving off the foreclosure on the Grange estate, and that he had succeeded even beyond his expectations; but she detected a certain reserve in his manner which stimulated her curiosity.

'Will not Mr Clive be greatly relieved and a little surprised?' she asked. 'He seemed when I saw him this morning to expect bad news.'

'Possibly he would consider my news the worst possible, only it is my intention to use towards him a justifiable reticence. I have decided at his death to sell the estate, which is the only way in which our accumulated liabilities can be met. To retain it, and in order to retain it to continue to drag life out here under the same conditions, appears to me the height of unwisdom'——

She interposed, 'But it would break your father's heart!'

'Therefore I propose that he should never know it. Happily for my integrity, he thinks it impossible for a Clive to part with the family property; though, by strict fact, there are not twenty acres of it which are really ours. I have weighed the matter on all sides for many weary months, and I tell you the decision I have come to. My mother is in my confidence, and I have her free consent; otherwise I should hesitate. So long as my father lives I am his bondsman; at his death I take my discharge.'

His face kindled.

'Ah!' she breathed, 'this proves how cruel the slavery has been.'

'God only knows how cruel.' He was going on, but checked himself. 'We will leave that retrospect,' he said, 'although your generous sympathy almost tempts me into egotism. It is not the first time, Miss Vavasour.'

'I do not remember any other occasion,' returned Diana demurely, 'and my wish is that you should yield to the temptation. I wish, too, that I could tempt you to make use of the superfluous thousands lying to my account in the Capital and Counties Bank, and so get rid of the old mortgage. Why not, Dr Godfrey? Is not the security as good for me as others? And I hold Mr Ruskin's views on the subject of interest.'

He looked at her with grave tenderness, but shook his head.

'My father would never consent to such transfer, and my ultimate purpose renders it superfluous; but I am none the less your debtor.'

'But Mr Clive may live long enough to wear out your health and patience. Even should he not, what will you do after?'

'Return to the work I have relinquished but never

abandoned. You are surprised, thinking that I must have lost not only my chances but my aptitudes. It is true I have lost the one, but not beyond recovery; and to retain the other I have left no practicable means neglected. It would very likely seem despicable to some that I should have been as careful of my hands as a fine lady; but they are the tools of my trade.' He extended them as he spoke, and Diana (not for the first time) remarked their perfect formation, in which strength and delicacy were combined, and that the sensitive fingers showed no signs of rough tear and wear.

'Then,' he continued, 'I have had leisure enough, if not by day, by night, to keep myself fairly abreast with the times, and some of my professional friends have been generous correspondents. One must also take into account that my friends and neighbours have kept me in some measure in practice.'

'I do not wonder you look thin,' she remarked; 'but I ask again: suppose Mr Clive should still live for many years?'

'I would not for my own sake shorten his life by an hour, although the pain and burden of it to himself are so great that charity alone might wish it ended; but it cannot last much longer. Whether long or short, I keep my post here.'

'And suppose he should question you about your plans, or try to exact promises from you, would you think it right to deceive him for his own peace of mind?'

'No. In such a case I must tell him the truth, but I pray God that such a desperate situation may be spared us both.'

They had reached the turn of the road which gave upon the farmhouse, when they perceived signs of unusual movement and disorder. The farm-servants just returned from the field stood in groups about the door, and one of them, on descrying the advancing figures, separated himself from the rest and ran breathlessly forward.

Diana instinctively stood still and exchanged looks with her companion; the same instant foreboding seemed to flash along the nerves of each.

'Something has happened!' she said in a hushed voice; but he had no answer for her. At the same moment the man was within speech and earshot.

'The old master be gone,' he cried huskily, 'and the mistress has sent us to find ye. For God's sake, doctor, make haste, though ye be too late to do any good!'

It seemed, indeed, as though Godfrey needed stimulation, for the shock of the intelligence had driven motion from his limbs and blanched his face even to the lips. Diana saw with what a desperate effort he pulled himself together and hurried forward; but during the brief interval his face had changed again, and light and life came back into it; for, after all, human nature sets limits to the power of self-negation, and when the fetters drop off the freedman is bound to rejoice.

Diana stayed at the farm till after the funeral, drawing every bond closer by the fullness of her sympathy and her keen interest in the family business.

Mrs Clive was to return with her to Fox Hills for the rest and ease of which she stood sorely in need, while the doctor remained long enough to put affairs in trim for the sale of the estate before going back to London, where a post had already been offered him on the staff of his old hospital.

'It is not equal to the post you filled before?' asked Diana.

'I am quite satisfied. I have no fear of the future.' He looked exultant and full of energy, as though the burden of the past had slipped from his shoulders.

Diana told him so.

'It feels like the parting of the ways,' she said. 'You are bent on hard work and renown of a sort. I am going back to my holiday-life at Fox Hills or elsewhere; but holidays sometimes pall. Except when I am here—under your influence, I suppose—the obligation of work and duty never occurs to me. I have wished more than once since I came'—— She stopped.

'Yes?' he asked, and there was subtle encouragement in his tone.

'That I had never gone away—that is, never become rich. I was so content here after my poor father died, my bad tempers healed and soothed by your mother's sweet kindness, and—your example.'

The expression and voice were subdued almost to tenderness, and his eyes as they met hers softened in unison, and so also did his purpose.

'Perhaps,' he said, 'if Fate had not thrown the golden apple in your lap you might have been led to fulfil what at that time had become the dominant desire and hope of my life. When I came down here first at my father's summons I considered that I had chosen a single life beyond possibility of change; but long before death had sealed Colonel Vavasour's eyes I had renounced my vows and prayed God with every breath I drew that I might find favour in your sight.'

Diana drew a deep breath, a drawn-out 'Oh!' that seemed to convey unlimited surprise and dismay. She had not dropped her eyes from his face while he was speaking, though her cheek had flushed a little.

'You never told me so,' she said without embarrassment.

He smiled a little bitterly, as one recognising the ironies of life.

'I never told you so for the excellent reason that before I could speak life had become changed for both of us. I had lost the position that might have justified speech, and you were lifted out of our sphere altogether. I do not know why I have spoken now, except that your kindness led me to believe that telling you the truth would not make you angry, and that it was better for me to start my new life without the weight of this secret on

my soul. The fault we have confessed, Miss Vavasour, grows lighter.'

'I see,' was her answer. 'Because I became rich I lost your love, and what you held natural and right a year or so ago is now something to be ashamed of and trampled out.'

'Not so,' he returned quietly; 'my love for you will last as long as my life lasts—a vital flame kept under, but enough to warm my heart for all other men and women who suffer pain and loss.'

Diana smiled. 'You think, then, we might have been happy if—if Fox Hills had not risen up between us?' She held out her hand to him. 'Forget that it exists! Think of me as poor Diana Vavasour, who owes to you and yours a debt of gratitude.'

He took the little hand and kissed it gravely. 'Ah, sweet and kind,' he said; 'but I am not to be dazzled and misled by a woman's generosity. I am happy in your good opinion, dear, and shall be proud to continue to be your friend; but that is all. You do not love me, and I am glad that you do not, for my plan of life is hard work and unswerving devotion to the needs of the many, not of the one. I refuse to relinquish it, and equally it behoves you to keep your place as mistress of Fox Hills and all which that includes.'

'And as mistress of Fox Hills I choose its master,' she returned, 'and am not to be tossed aside on the horns of his pride and stubbornness. I shall be a better wife to you rich, Godfrey, than I should have been poor, not only in helping your career, but as being a nicer woman to live with. Poverty puts me at a disadvantage. I have cared for you from the first—more than I knew. You do not believe me?' she added, seeing that he still kept his attitude of grave reserve.

He looked at her with eyes full of tender admiration.

'No, Diana, I do not believe you. It is sympathy and quick comprehension, all grace and favour, but it is not love. The reality of my own feeling makes me clear-sighted. More, I would not have it otherwise.'

Diana hesitated. Had she not gone farther than any other woman would have done, and met the lover who guarded himself at all points more than half-way? Still, she was so sure that he loved her; and his renunciation only served to stimulate her own feelings.

'What more can I say?' and she turned from him with a quick, impatient movement. 'I have offered myself and been rejected.'

He interrupted her. 'It is the sacrifice of yourself that I reject, not your love. You deceive your own heart, Diana.'

'And if,' turning to him again, flushed and indignant—'if I should ever convince you to the contrary—if I were so incredibly fond and foolish as to find life not worth living without you—would you bend your stubborn neck to the yoke and comfort me—in spite of Fox Hills?'

'If ever that day comes,' he replied, his restrained passion glowing in the eyes that met hers, 'nothing shall keep us asunder—neither poverty nor wealth, neither my own unworthiness nor the misrepresentation of others. I would keep nothing back. The order of my life should be as you dispose it.'

COLOUR-PROBLEMS IN AMERICA.

By JAMES BURNLEY, Author of *Studies in Millionaires*, &c.

II.—THE RED MAN.

IF Professor Frederick Starr, of the University of Chicago, is right in his ethnological conclusions, the oft-predicted extermination of the Red Indian is in no danger of early fulfilment. We may get to the last of the Apaches and the Choctaws and the Navajos and the Shoshones and the Cherokees, as long ago we got to the last of the Mohicans in Fenimore Cooper's stirring story, but that will not dispose of the Red Indian; for, according to Professor Starr, the American white population are themselves fast developing into Indians. We are told that in the fourth and fifth generations of white settlers distinct Indian characteristics manifest themselves: black eyes, dark skins, high cheek-bones, and so on; and the logical inference is that the American is destined in time to revert to the native barbarism of his savage predecessors. No one seems particularly alarmed at the prospect, however; so perhaps we may still be permitted to treat the Red Indians as a distinct species.

The truth is, the Red Indian is too much of a distinct species. Civilisation has been wrestling with him for many centuries, trying valiantly to bring him within its pale—sometimes by coercion, sometimes by gentle persuasion; but even yet he is in the main an unassimilable quantity. Savage instincts take a lot of killing, and form but sterile soil for the cultivation of intellectuality; the consequence is that to-day in the United States we see a vigorous educational scheme in operation among the Indians, while the question of the ultimate civilisation of the race remains still in doubt. It has come to this, however: the Red Indian must either become a unit of civilisation or consent to be blotted out. His day as a wild barbarian is over. The last buffalo has gone, and such other animals of the chase as survive are now hunted by the white man; the great open spaces are also gone, the new-comers having spread

themselves over the land in millions upon millions, tilling the ground and building towns, and making the old irresponsible life impossible. No one knows better to-day than the Red Indian himself that it is useless for him to contend against the superior numbers and the superior skill which have served to supplant him.

At a distance it is easy to put one's self in sympathy with, and feel a certain amount of sympathy for, the Red Indian. His place in the literature of romance and poetry is warrant enough for that. But if we regard him at close range, as I have seen him so frequently in various parts of the United States during recent years, the glamour quickly fades. His native environment was romantic, and from the white man's point of view his life was romantic; but it cannot be truly said that he himself was ever much troubled with the real romantic feeling. Superstitious, cruel, brave, he often accomplished feats that were heroic; but the prompting motive was invariably low, sordid, and commonplace. Of the higher aspirations and ideals which constitute the spirit of romance he knew little.

As a nomad the Red Indian was undoubtedly a picturesque figure; as a dweller on reservations he is simply a 'colour-problem.' He is not a citizen like the negro, and has no legal status; indeed, as far as civilisation is concerned, he is but in the child-stage of development, with feeble reasoning powers. It stands to his credit, however, that in his dealings with his masters, the American Government, he has shown sufficient cunning to make a very advantageous bargain for himself, though that is probably the result of his inborn selfishness rather than of improved mental capacity. The native tribes of the Indian Territory are said to be worth at least one thousand pounds per head—not money that they have earned, but the outcome of special grants from the Government—making them the richest community on the face of the earth. To other tribes monthly rations are given out twice a month, at a cost of ten pounds a year for every man, woman, and child. These rations consist of bread, coffee, sugar, beef, and beans, and are in excess of actual requirement. Thus the struggle for existence, which does so much to make men of other races achieve, is practically absent from the life of the Red Indian. He need never be haunted by the fear of poverty. The Government is pledged to take care of him, and will not go from its word. For the ordinary man this arrangement would be demoralising, but for the Red Indian it may be a wise provision. It has the merit of keeping him quiet.

I had heard so much *pro* and *con* about the modernising of the Red Indian that I lost no opportunity of making his acquaintance. I wanted to learn how the account between him and civilisation really stood. According to some people, it is useless to think of civilising him, the material being too unyielding, the intelligence too low. He will accept all that civilisation will give him, but make no effort in return. Others maintain that he is making solid but slow progress, and in a generation or two will be equal to the duties of citizenship. 'Are you one o' them fellows that believe in taming the Indians?' said a Montana stage-driver. 'Well, I'll tell you how I tame 'em. There's a well in my back-yard; there ain't no water in it, but you'll find seven tame Indians there.' The old sentiment, 'Ingins is pisen,' still lingers in the remoter West, and the odd blanketed mortals one occasionally sees loitering about the railway stations and the public places trying to sell small trinketry receive but scant courtesy from their white brothers.

It is a curious condition of things that one meets with in the Indian Territory, where over eighty thousand of the five so-called civilised tribes are gathered together under the surveillance of and in close personal contact with the whites. Civilisation is represented by sundry officials and a powerful educational force, the United States Government providing two thousand teachers, of whom about seven hundred are Indians, for over twenty thousand children, who are not only taught but fed and clothed into the bargain. The schools are admirably equipped, the curriculum ranges from the ordinary rudiments of learning to practical instruction in farming and the minor industries, and the methods are pliant and unsevere. In visiting some of these institutions one is at first impressed with their likeness to other American primary schools. Red Indian girls and boys are interesting-looking objects, and not wanting in brightness, while the colour distinction is neither so pronounced nor so repulsive as in the negroes; but it is soon perceived that the teachers have no very great receptivity of mind to work upon. The children are docile enough, and are pleased and interested, but of the earnestness which breeds ambition they have but little; and the day is probably far distant when from these little scholars we shall hear of orators, preachers, or writers being developed, whereas there are prominent men in all these classes among the negroes.

Unfortunately the older Indians look upon education as another interference with their liberty. It was bad enough, they think, to be compelled to relinquish the tomahawk and the scalping-knife and the wild, free life that those weapons indicated; but to be forced to send their children to school to be taught what to them is a foreign language, and trained to ways that are still more foreign, earns more of their hostility than their gratitude. The result is that perhaps not more than half of the Indians of school age are now receiving instruction, and truancy is a native virtue. In fact, some of the Indians look upon the schooling of their children as a personal utilisation that the Government ought to compensate them for. No wonder that the majority of those engaged in imparting education to the young Indians are in favour of a compulsory law, and that is what it will probably come to before long.

It is mainly from these schools that we have to look for the civilising of the Red Indian. Still, there are other influences in operation, brought

about by association with the whites; and in one way and another such modifications of Indian life are probable in the United States as will ultimately deprive the race of its ancient distinctiveness. Most people in this country imagine that the Red Indian is simply being civilised off the face of the earth, when, as a matter of fact, he is perhaps as numerous to-day as when the white man first discovered him.

In the Indian Territory there are hundreds of villages but not a single *tepee;* the people live in houses, not tents, and a 'blanket' no longer serves them for visiting-costume nor war-paint for evening-dress. They are beginning, moreover, to have a hesitating appreciation of the nobility of work—that is, the older Indians do not set themselves in violent opposition to their young folks doing a little honest labour; and improved views on the subject of marriage are developing among them, their old practice of polygamy being narrowed to more moderate limits than formerly, while as regards their marriageable girls, they not only permit them to look beyond the boundaries of their own race, but encourage them to form alliances with the pale-faces. And here an odd anomaly presents itself. The American law, which positively prohibits a marriage between a black and a white, has nothing to say against the wedding of white and red.

Not very long ago word went forth that in each of the five civilised tribes of the Indian Territory a thousand maidens were ready to marry as many white husbands. The story greatly exaggerated the real facts, of course; still, there were quite a number of gentle Minnehahas well disposed towards such an alliance; and, what was more, it was said that each girl had settled upon her by Government a dowry of numerous acres of land and two thousand pounds in hard cash. It was not altogether as good as this, but it was good enough for a time to make of the Indian Territory a bachelors' Klondyke, and the rush of suitors was so great that the railway companies thought of running wife-hunting excursions into the Territory. For a while, it is said, marriages between white lovers and red heiresses were celebrated at the rate of over fifty a week, during which period the income of the licensing clerk was equal to that of the President of the United States. Usually, if a white man wants to marry a red maiden, the father of the damsel exacts a fee of two hundred pounds from the suitor; but at this particular time there was a bigger surplus of marriageable maidens than usual, and the fathers decided not only to waive the fee, but to offer special inducements. But it was not open to any good-for-nothing adventurer or needy incompetent to win one of these brides; unless the aspirant could produce a certificate of good moral character a license was not granted. When no objection existed, however, there were no vexatious delays; the wedding was pushed on, the girl was proud of her 'conquest,' her father gave a grand dinner and reception, and the young man was received into the tribe with boisterous tokens of rejoicing. But civilisation by matrimony is no new thing; it dates back to the time of Pocahontas, *la belle sauvage.* The compliment is not returned from the other side. The red man himself would sue in vain for the hand of a white maiden.

To the white man who in this way becomes absorbed into the Indian existence the Indian Territory is rich with opportunities and advantages. It is for him and his children to work out the salvation of the situation. The Indian himself is hardly equal to the task that the Government has set him, and his sudden enrichment by grants of land and money to some extent defeats the object the Government had in view. The red man dislikes work and responsibility; consequently his farms are poorly cultivated, and in most of his feeble attempts to imitate the ways of the white man he is an undoubted failure. It is not the Indians who are developing the lands, but the whites, of whom there are three hundred thousand in the Territory, to the eighty-seven thousand Indians, among whom twenty million acres of land have been apportioned. Included with the Indians are a number of negro freedmen, whose ancestors were, or who are themselves, freed slaves of Indians; presenting quite another aspect of the negro problem to those previously noticed: the race of superior intelligence made subject to the inferior. It was lately reported from Washington that the Indians are indignant with the Government for allowing negro children to attend the schools in which their own children are taught, and they threatened to withdraw the children of their race if the Indian Commissioners persist in compelling them to mix with negroes. They regard the presence of negroes as offensive to their racial dignity. The Cherokees number thirty thousand, and four thousand freedmen; Delawares, having had rights in the Cherokee nation, one thousand; Creeks, ten thousand, and six thousand freedmen; Choctaws, sixteen thousand, and five thousand freedmen; Chickasaws, seven thousand, and five thousand freedmen; and the Seminoles, three thousand.

In New Mexico I spent a few days with the *pueblo* Indians, in company with a French scientist who had lived among them a considerable time. There are several of these communities in the neighbourhood of Santa Fé, and they have been looked upon since the days of the Spanish settlement as a semi-civilised race. These Indians are at all events self-supporting. They live in mud houses (*adobe*), built one over another, and the men hunt and fish and work in the fields, and, after their fashion, seem contented enough. The professor was *persona grata* among them, and went in and out of the houses as if a member of the tribe. But entering or leaving a house was a matter of some difficulty, seeing that we had to ascend to the roof by a ladder, then pull the ladder up, and afterwards let ourselves down into the interior through a hole in the roof by means of another ladder. Furniture was non-existent, but children and dogs swarmed. The

squaws chattered glibly enough to the professor in the native dialect, which he understood; but the men were less communicative, remaining still and silent as statues most of the time. Cleanliness was not one of the local virtues, any more than it is with the Indians of the Indian Territory; and there was more of insect life within the mud walls than was agreeable. The houses are built round three sides of a little square, in twos and threes, and there were always to be seen one or two blanketed figures standing on the flat mud roofs watching our every movement with a stolid, suspicious intentness that was haunting if not disconcerting. There was animation about the naked youngsters and the dogs that flocked around us; but the men on the house-tops were as stone, not even condescending to move from their perches while we were taking photographs of the scene. When the old chief and a couple of henchmen, in tawdry attire and very dirty, were introduced to us, and inveigled us into purchasing a few rough bits of turquoise which the chief carried loose in his pouch, there was considerable excitement shown on the part of the mongrels and the children; but the living statues remained unmoved and apparently immovable. They were the first objects we saw on entering the *pueblo*, and the last that we looked upon on quitting it. Squalor is written over the face of these *pueblos;* for all that, there is a touch of the picturesqueness of the old Spanish life about them that seems to lift them a stage higher than the Indians of the reservations. It was not civilisation exactly that they revealed, but it was a considerable remove from barbarism, and the brick-built schoolhouse that each *pueblo* boasted was at least a sign of promise to face the future with.

While the good work of educating the Red Indian goes steadily on where the Government effect direct personal contact, there are many scattered glimpses of the race to be caught here and there in one's travels—some of it real, much of it sham. The Indians realise that they have become a curiosity, and are frequently to be found improvising Wild West Shows on their own account for the amusement of the white people and their own emolument.

In Louisiana I was one of a party of whites invited to an Indian 'ball in the woods.' The affair took place near the Bayou Nepique, and had long been in preparation. As a midnight 'jollification' amidst unusual surroundings it was decidedly interesting, whatever its value as a revelation of Indian manners and customs. Our party drove to within easy walking distance of the forest ball-room, to which we made our way across crackling and occasionally slushy undergrowth, the route being marked out by a line of bonfires, while the gathering-ground itself was set in a perfect blaze of flame, the great grove of pines and magnolias forming a sort of sylvan inferno for the revellers. There were hundreds of visitors besides ourselves, and as every third or fourth man carried a torch, there was such a dancing in and out of lights among the trees as the people approached as made the scene almost pantomimic in its dazzling effects. To add to the weirdness, many strange 'voices of the night' assailed our ears—the croaking choruses of millions of frogs and the startled cries of affrighted birds mingling oddly with the shouts and laughter of the assembling people. The general fauna of the forest had evidently retired to a respectful distance.

It was indeed a spacious and impressive 'ball-room,' and aroused lively expectations. Surely if there was any place left in which the Red Indian would harmonise with the surroundings, this was one. But we were doomed to disappointment. Instead of such Indians as we had been accustomed to read about, or even such as I had seen out West, there were presented to our saddened gaze a medley of dancers to whom the term Red Indian seemed as gross a misfit as the garments they wore. We had looked for the reality, and had found the sham. They were Indians, it is true—of the Chickasaw and Creek tribes, I was told—but beyond their faces of dirty red, their eyes of beady black, and their hair of stringy jet, they suggested little of the aborigine. They were attired mostly in the garb of the country white folks, the men wearing starched collars and cuffs, short coats, and billycock hats; the women being decked out in gay-coloured frocks and shiny ribbons. Of the old distinctive apparel of the race they showed not a trace.

This first dance was, I was told, the blackbird-dance, the nature of it being demonstrated by a wild succession of hoppings and whoopings that were quite as suggestive of bears as of birds. The exercise lasted about ten minutes, and was followed by an interval for refreshments, which had been provided in considerable variety, and were well patronised and generously paid for. The Indian damsels were by no means averse to being 'treated' by the white visitors; but there were difficulties of conversation when extending these courtesies that precluded anything like an exchange of confidences. Next followed the sheep-dance, the feature of which consisted in grossly exaggerated imitations of the bleating of the woolly animal, an old Indian leading some of the dancers up and down, and beating his drum to suggest the tinkling of a sheep-bell. So they went on from one dance to another—an intermezzo of clinking glasses and health-drinking coming between each; and thus the night wore on, the fires abating their flame as the moon looked placidly down through the dark pine branches and shafts, and every dance was more turbulent than the last. As we went back to Acadia parish through the early dawn, I could not but admit to myself that I had been assisting at a very uncommon sort of gathering, though the 'Indianness' of it was perhaps not over apparent. Neither did it afford much evidence of civilising influences. The Indians are readier to lend themselves to a show than to give themselves to civilisation.

The subduing of the Red Indian is accomplished. He has left the war-path and become an appendage

of civilisation, and may eventually become a part of it. This is his transition period; but he is still within the shadow of his savage past, and must get quite clear of that shadow before he can be invested with the confirming halo of citizenship. He is being petted and spoiled; pictures of himself and his squaws and papooses are among the favoured decorative objects of the drawing-rooms of society; people flock to see him give mimic exhibitions of his old-time savagery; but he is not yet invited to the houses of his conquering patrons. When he has learned to earn his own living there will be hope for him, and that is a lesson that he is not at all apt at.

There was a time when the picturesque side of the old tribal life had a certain fascination about it; but we rarely hear nowadays of any one of note accepting 'honours' from the tribes. In 1860 the Prince of Wales, now His Majesty King Edward VII., was made a chieftain of the Iroquois, under the title of Flying Sun. Long before that Edmund Kean had been similarly honoured by the Hurons, the great actor taking the part in all seriousness, and sometimes debating the wisdom of ending his days in the companionship of his forest friends. The Hurons made a deep impression upon him, and he frequently availed himself of the opportunity of visiting them during his last engagement in America. The story is told that late one night Dr Francis, a well-known New York practitioner of the time, received a hurried summons to wait upon an Indian chief at a certain hotel. On his arrival he was conducted to an upper hall, at the folding-doors of which the servant left him. Entering, the doctor discovered at the far end of the hall a miniature forest of evergreens, illuminated by lamps, and on a kind of throne sat the chief, dressed in skins tagged loosely about his person, a broad collar of bearskins, striped leggings garnished with porcupine quills, and moccasins decorated with beads. His head was decked with eagle plumes, behind which flowed massive black locks of dishevelled horsehair; rings hung pendulous from his ears and nose, and his face was thickly painted over with dabs of yellow and red. Round his waist he wore a huge belt decorated with a tomahawk, his arms shone with heavy bracelets, and in his hands he held a bow and arrow. It was a strange and somewhat terrorising picture, and when the doctor drew near to it the word 'Alantenaido!' was bellowed at him. The spell was broken. It was the voice of the doctor's friend Edmund Kean, raucous and thick perhaps, but still unmistakably that of the tragedian. Alantenaido was the title the Hurons had bestowed upon him. 'Now, sir, what do you think of that? Will it do for London?' cried Kean, who went on to explain that he meant to appear in England in this character of the son of the forest, and had summoned the doctor to obtain his views upon the impressiveness of the impersonation. When Kean returned to London, however, the opportunity of astonishing his countrymen in the guise of the savage never came, and in his last illness he would lie in bed all day amusing himself sadly with his Indian trappings and toys.

A CHEMIST IN THE DAYS OF THE STUARTS.

AT the time of the Great Plague and the Great Fire and the Great Frost there lived 'at the sign of Hermes Trismegistus,' in Watling Street, London, a chemist named George Wilson. He carried on his business for upwards of fifty years, and in the course of it made many of the remedies that were used for the cure and prevention of the plague; and in later days he made, among other things, honey-water for King James II. He was a sufferer by the fire, inasmuch as it forced him to remove into other premises. He practised alchemy also, and made many experiments to transmute silver and baser metals into gold. We have his word that during one of his chemical investigations a mob besieged his laboratory and broke everything in it to pieces, under the impression that he was dealing with occult powers and was about to destroy the City and Whitehall. He varied his chemical and alchemical pursuits by writing a book entitled *A Compleat Course of Chymistry*, which bears the honoured impress and portrait of Elzevir in the tail-pieces with which it is ornamented, and is illustrated with sheets of 'chymical characters,' as well as with diagrams of furnaces, crucibles, retorts, stills, and every other contrivance used in the chemical processes of his day. This work reached a fourth edition in 1704, when, as he tells us complacently, he stood upon the brink of fourscore. As we turn over its rough and deeply ribbed pages we get glimpses of London in the days of the Stuarts, the London of Milton and Mary Powell, of Pepys and Evelyn, as well as of the London that owed so much to Sir Christopher Wren and Inigo Jones.

The topographical allusions in this complete course of chemistry, however, are not numerous. There is mention, in connection with various preparations of vitriol, that most of the old iron that was gathered by poor people was sold by them to the copperas-houses at Rotherhithe and Deptford, where it was boiled up with a dissolution of fire-stone; and there is word of a brimstone-refining house in Petticoat Lane, and of colour-shops; and reference to a garden in Lambeth where aloe-trees grew to a surprising size. It is the frequent mention of the physicians who attended the royal families, Cromwell, and the fashionable folks of the Court that brings the times so distinctly before us.

There were particular preparations that enjoyed similar or superior repute to that of some of our

own patent medicines, and were associated with the names of the leading physicians as being either invented or prescribed by them. Among these were Dr Sydenham's liquid laudanum, Dr Goddard's extract of opium (Dr Goddard was Cromwell's physician), Dr Willis's steel wine, Mathews' pills, Dr Starkey's pills (Dr Starkey was the author of a work on pyrotechny), Dr Browne's panacea of antimony (Dr Browne was physician to Charles II.), Mr Lockyer's pills, whereby 'he made a large estate,' and Russel's powders. There were others associated with still more august personages, such as the princes' powder, the Queen of Hungary's water, and the cordial of Poterius, which last was good against the plague. A preparation of gold is given by the chemist 'as I prepared it for the chief physician of a great prince, 1692;' and after detailing the intricate process very minutely, he adds: 'I gave a part to the gentleman that employ'd me, who seemed to receive them with great satisfaction, and gratify'd me generously.' After giving the details of the manufacture of sweet honey-water, which was composed of brandy, honey, many spices, lemons, rose and orange-flower water, musk, ambergris, and other good things, he adds: 'This water I often made for King James II. It is an anti-paralytick, smooths the skin, and gives one of the most agreeable scents that can be smelt. Forty or fifty drops put into a pint of clean water are enough to wash the hands or face with; and the same proportion to punch or any cordial-water gives a most pleasant flavour.'

Many remedies mentioned as held in esteem at that time are still in use at the present day; the reputation of some more, however, that we have discarded in a general way, still lingers in remote parts of the country, as in the case of decoctions of vipers, than which Cheviot shepherds aver there is yet no better cure for snake-bites. Others, such as elixirs of human skulls, then esteemed 'a noble medicine against madness, convulsions, and hysterick fits,' have disappeared altogether from the modern pharmacopœia. Amulets have gone out of fashion with us, too; but in the days of the plague they were much used. Our chemist mentions a preparation of crystalline arsenic, yellow sulphur, and crude antimony, called an arsenical magnet, that he sold for this purpose. 'In the time of the plague, 1665, I made this magnet, and it was much used both in plasters and amulets.' A compound tincture of vipers was another remedy that he prepared for sufferers from the plague; and he gives a recipe for an anti-pestilential elixir, made of myrrh, aloes, saffron and camphor, snake-root and cochineal, that, he tells us, was said to be the most powerful medicine yet known against the plague. Some insects were used as remedies when dissolved in the course of various processes, such as hog-lice or millepedes, ants, and Spanish flies, of which we retain the last only. The first, made into tinctures and essences, were accounted good for jaundice, colic, and stone; the spirit, oil, and volatile salts of ants were prescribed as tonics and to restore hearing; and Spanish flies, though seldom used inwardly 'without good correction,' were nevertheless occasionally partaken of as a tincture diluted with canary-wine. A distillation of hartshorn was used in fevers. 'Take that which we call the velvet-head, in the spring time, while it is soft, cut it into little pieces, and put them into a cucurbit; lute on its head and receiver; place it in Bal. Mar., and distil a water from it.' When we think of the beauties of King Charles's Court, with their bewitching personalities that Lely has handed down to us so clearly, and realise that they were probably dosed with these remedies on occasion, we feel that they were sufficiently punished for any indiscretions of which they may have been guilty. Opium was used in various forms. Mathews' pill and Dr Starkey's pill were both based upon it, with differences as to the other ingredients. Concerning the latter our chemist avers: 'This I had from the ingenious Dr Starkey's own mouth, in the year 1665, a little before his death; who then told me he gave Mathews the former for a little money; but this is that which he successfully made use of himself. It is both more diaphoretick and a greater anodyne than the former; and I have heard it affirmed by several gentlemen who have made use of it in their practice to be the best laudanum they ever met with.' There were other preparations of opium, one of which was called the 'drops of life,' and another the 'universal anodyne.' Dr Goddard's compound extract was prepared with saffron and nutmegs, tincture of tartar, and rectified spirits of wine. This was allowed to alleviate all pains 'in what part of the body soever.' Pepys mentions that he met Dr Goddard at a club supper given at the Crown Tavern, behind the 'Change, in February 1664; and on 22nd January 1665 he records the first meeting in Gresham College since the plague: 'Dr Goddard did fill us with talk.' The preparations of these eminent authorities were all taken seriously and scientifically; but the term quack was not unknown to King Charles's lieges, although it was applied to a different class of persons from that with which we associate it. There is mention of one in the description of the process to make red precipitate of mercury. The prince's powder contained this precipitate among other ingredients. George Wilson observes that the red precipitate must be ground very fine, and adds: 'Mr Barton, an eminent surgeon of London, kept this as a secret.'

Another individual out of the forgotten population of those days is mentioned in the preface, where our author asserts he has studied brevity and avoided Mr Lemery's pompous way of philosophising upon the processes, though he feels he is to blame for such directions as 'fill half full,' and apologises for the expression. A Dr Friend is also mentioned as well skilled in speculative and practical 'chymistry.' In his accounts of his alchemical experiments reference is made to a few other persons who likewise inhabited London when it was visited by the terrible plague and fire and great frost. On the 10th of October

1677, for instance, he says he bought of Mr Willmore the refiner five pounds of mercury (which he had distilled from various metals); and it was a Mr T. T. who came to him and urged him to try once more when he had abandoned his endeavours to obtain gold by chemical processes. 'The eleventh of June A.D. 1694, I met with my old friend (Mr T. T.), who assured me that at the last, after forty years' search, he had met with an ample recompense for all his troubles and expenses. This he confirmed with some oaths and imprecations; but, considering his great weakness and age, he looked upon himself incapable to undergo the fatigue of the process. "I have here," says he, "a piece of sol that I made from silver about four years past; and I cannot trust any man but you with so rare a secret. We will share equally the charges and profit, which will render us wealthy enough to command the world."'

Each alchemical experiment extended over a long period of time. For instance, on the 10th of March 1687 he commenced a fresh endeavour by dissolving four ounces of gold in *aqua regia*. Next day he distilled in a retort the *aqua regia* from it; and he repeated these dissolutions, distillations, and cohobations seven times, by which time his gold looked like red gum. He then added two pounds of spirit of salt and twelve ounces of mercury that he had kept for ten years, and again began processes which he continued till the gold and mercury had become a clear red syrup. On the 5th of April of the following year he divided this syrup into two portions, which he put into two retorts with half a pound of spirit of nitre in each, and then went on with various processes too technical to describe, till the 11th of December, when, in his own words, 'I was treated as the Spanish Ambassador was: for the mad mob taking me for a conjurer, or something worse, broke my glasses and athanor, saying I was preparing the devil's fireworks purposely to burn the City and White-Hall. And thus ended this operation.' One experiment obtained a gain of two scruples and thirteen grains of gold, but suffered a loss of rather a larger amount of silver. In the end he came to the conclusion, after experiences extending over forty-three years, that any accretion of gold could only result from the fact that all metals are likely to contain within themselves minute particles of the noblest, and when analysed these particles are set at liberty and join one another by attraction.

Rheumatism appears to have troubled King Charles's lieges as much as it afflicts the present generation. Our chemist made a particular remedy for it from which he derived considerable profit, called 'tinctura anti-rheumatica.' He remarks that it may appear odd that he does not give the ingredients of this tincture in his work, and adds this practical reason: 'This medicine having obtained an uncommon reputation, it may be a comfortable support for me and my family should I fall once more under the frowns of fortune. But, after all, in due time, it shall be published.' The genius of advertising, we may see, was not altogether unknown in Stuart times. The lieges of the Merry Monarch also suffered from many other of our ailments, as well as from those we have almost vanquished, like the plague and rickets.

As we close this Elzevir, the Stuarts and their Court beauties, the courtiers, train-bands, 'prentices, watermen, fanatics, the streams of people that passed and repassed, seem to fade out of sight again into the faint and distant past.

There are two copies of George Wilson's *Compleat Course of Chymistry* in the British Museum. In the same treasure-house is preserved one of his shop handbills, a broadsheet printed on one side only. It is headed: 'Gaza: A Magazine or Storehouse of Choice Chymical Medicines Faithfully Prepared in my Laboratory, at the sign of Hermes Trismegistus in Watling Street in London, by me, George Wilson, Philo-chym, 1686.' It is thus addressed: 'To all Doctors of Physick, Apothecaries, Chirurgeons, and others studious of physick, or curious in chymical operations. Though I here present you with a catalogue of such Medicines as I have always ready prepared for your Occasions, and faithfully elaborated, according to the best Processes I could ever meet with, yet further to satisfy you I here offer to your service the conveniency and use of my Laboratory, if any of you shall at any time desire it, there to have any particular Process of your own experimented, paying for the coals and glasses and a Reasonable Recompence for the Use of my Furnaces. And at all times Free and Welcome access to see any of those Medicines you shall have of me prepared from the beginning to the compleating of the same; by which means you may the better be satisfied of their true and faithful Preparation and consequently of the goodness and purity of the Medicines I sell.'

This was more than two hundred years ago. Two hundred years hence will our representatives find the handbills of to-day equally quaint?

IN LOVE'S TREASURY.

My Love did come. At the first whispering
Of his dear voice I opened wide the door
Of my heart's treasury, and him did bring
Into its secret place to view my store.
Abashed, I now did see how small a thing
Each jewel was, that seemed so rich before.
But when I drew him back, not venturing
To show the place, so bare it was and poor,
My Love put forth his hand (amid my fears),
And drew a chaplet thence of crystal tears.

My Love did call me to her treasury.
With bold and careless step I entered there,
Not deeming, from her sweet humility,
That any place could be so wondrous fair.
But when the richness and the quality
Of glowing gem I saw, and jewel rare,
I felt the meagreness and poverty
Of my poor life, so empty, cold, and bare,
Till, with a chaplet of her purest tears
I decked me, rich against the coming years.

MARGARET BLAIKIE.

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TALKS WITH GIRLS.

AN UNDERSTUDY FOR AN ANGEL.

By KATHARINE BURRILL.

WHEN Simon Ingot tells David Garrick, rather pathetically, that his wife, Ada's mother, was a good woman, Garrick replies, 'Sir, a good woman is an understudy for an angel.' The dear old Alderman bows and murmurs politely, 'Quite so, quite so,' without having the least idea what the actor means. We know what an understudy is, though Ingot did not. He was about as much of a playgoer as he was a Shakespearian scholar. 'One touch of nature makes the world begin' was in *his* Editions, we know; quite a nice quotation, if not exactly what Shakespeare meant. What is an understudy? Is it not one who, playing a small and insignificant part, is yet 'fully armed and well prepared' to take the principal part at a moment's notice? Sometimes the understudy is merely a feeble copy; sometimes he does his work creditably, and occasionally plays so brilliantly that the Rosencrantzes and Horatios become things of the past, the future full of Hamlets and Romeos. The chief thing about the understudy is that he must always be ready, always word-perfect, always waiting for his chance when it comes. For the understudy fully illustrates what is meant by being ready for your chance. The chance *comes*, remember that; it may linger long on the road, it may not even be in this world, but your chance will come. Only, be ready for it. Time and Tide wait for no man. Is your boat ready? Launch it and away! The tide is at the full; it will carry you far, to Fame and Fortune, or perhaps to the best of all—the smiling, pleasant valley of Happiness. What is this? Your oars are broken, ropes tangled, sails torn; you can go to-morrow, not to-day! No time to wait for you; next man, please. There you are, left stranded on the beach beside your unseaworthy boat, and no one to thank but yourself. It is no excuse to say you were tired waiting for the tide, tired of making ready for the day that would never come. It is just the very day that you give up that your great chance comes along. Your boat may be wanted at a moment's notice; have everything shipshape; be ready. Suppose the chance never comes; or suppose, which is quite on the cards, that you are too stupid to see it. Is it not better to be alert, active, and hopeful than sunk in sloth, laziness, and despair? Never lose a chance of making a friend; never lose an opportunity of doing a kind action. Looked at from the very lowest point of view, bread cast upon the waters may turn up again *cake* for you! From a higher point of view, it is the proper, kindly, right way to live. Even if the poor old lame dog is in such a hurry, once you have helped him over the stile, that he never stops to wag his tail in thanks, never mind; help the next dog all the same. If we help ten people, and nine are 'wrong uns,' the one who is all right is quite worth the other nine. The good woman who is understudying for an angel must be helpful. Helpfulness does not mean lecturing and scolding, nor 'I told you so.' Why are women so fond of saying that? A man never says, 'I told you so;' but a woman, even the best of them, cannot resist it! The really helpful people know just when to help and when to let us stagger along by ourselves. It does not do to always lean on crutches; sometimes it is much kinder to take away the supports. We must find our own feet if they are ever to be any good to us. Another thing: do not, even with a little child, choose the one moment when the heart is very sore to rub it in. It is so easy to go too far and turn penitence into stubborn impenitence. People say, 'I can forgive, but I cannot forget.' Is not that a poor kind of forgiveness? Worst of all, they say, 'I cannot and will not forgive.' What are we that we should dare to say we will not forgive?

> We do pray for mercy;
> And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
> The deeds of mercy.

To be forgiving; to be gentle, tactful, and merciful: are not these the qualities of the good woman?

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'Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath' may be old-fashioned teaching; but can we improve upon it? Never to let the sun set while our hearts are full of anger and resentment. Never to sleep while we feel cross and unforgiving. From a health point of view (we are great on Hygiene nowadays), could anything be more unhealthy than to go to bed in a rage? If you do sleep, your dreams will be haunted by the unpleasant spirits of Envy, Malice, and all uncharitableness. And the chances are you will not sleep at all, but toss from side to side, every moment becoming more miserable. Conscience may wake up and give you some unpleasant little stabs. 'It may have been my fault.' 'I was very cross.' 'Perhaps I began it.' What a nice night you will have! If to be wroth with those we love really works like madness in the brain, you will be in a very wretched state in the morning. Alas! it is nearly always 'our own' that we quarrel with, just those we love best; and long, long before the cold, gray morning light steals into the room, if you have a heart at all, you will be in a perfect panic in case something has happened to the unforgiven one during the night. Do you remember in Owen Meredith's poem the lines:

> If only the dead could find out when
> To come back and be forgiven!

You think of these lines. You think of all the gloomy tales of unforgiving people who never had the chance to forgive. All the anger is gone, and you feel if only, only you have the happiness to say, 'It was my fault, *forgive* me,' that you will never, never be angry again as long as you live. You will probably be just as cross next week; but if you are not an idiot you will remember what a ghastly night you had; you will make it up before you

> Tire the sun with talking,
> And send him down the sky.

Some people talk a great deal about what they call Just Anger and Righteous Wrath; they quote St Paul, 'As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men,' as a sort of excuse for not getting on with certain members of the family. But Paul never meant people to quarrel and backbite; you are to 'live peaceably with all men;' if there are some people who are great trials, just keep out of their road as much as possible, but you must still 'live peaceably.' There are some people who find it much more difficult to be amiable than others; they are born so. Only, remember, Miss Very-Easy-to-be-agreeable, that when they are pleasant and nice it counts a great deal more than when you are affable. It was no credit to Mark Tapley to be jolly; it was merely constitutional. The Mark Tapleys are delightful, lovable creatures, and this Earth would be a desert without them; only, do not praise them for what is no effort. Give a helping hand to the naturally grumpy who are bravely trying to overcome their grumpiness. It is very hard *not* to show a preference for Mark Tapley's society, especially on a wet, foggy day; but Tapley will be just as jolly if you take no notice of him, and poor old Crosspatch is sitting by the fire spinning all by her lonesome. Crosspatch dear, it is all understood and taken into consideration, your headaches and your backaches, and the fact that you find it very difficult to be gracious and sweet. Tapley, my man, don't be too proud of your jolly ways; they are also estimated at their true value. It is the same with goodness; it comes easy to some and very hard to others. For there are such things as Heredity and Disease, Environment and Education, to be taken into account. If I do not steal, is it because I have learnt the Eighth Commandment or because I am neither starving (at least not yet!) nor, still worse, seeing those I love crying for food? We need not be so mightily proud of virtue when the sins do not tempt us. Besides, there are other things we can steal as well as loaves of bread and garments that hang temptingly in the street:

> Who steals my purse steals trash; . . .
> But he that filches from me my good name
> Robs me of that which not enriches him,
> And makes me poor indeed.

Idle gossip oft repeated, with additions and embellishments, steals more than the pickpocket's nimble fingers. We think it terrible, and it is terrible, when a man in a fit of drunken rage hatchets his wretched wife to death. But do we do no murder when we are unsympathetic, unkind, hard, and unforgiving? It is a worse thing to kill a soul than to kill a body—to see the helpless, struggling soul straining towards the light, and crush it back into hopeless darkness. It may be true that 'there lives more faith in Honest Doubt' than in a gabbled-over creed. But I do wish when with young people the Honest Doubters would keep their doubts, views, and opinions to themselves. If you take away, what do you propose to give in exchange? Nothing? Well, Nothing never helped a man to live. Before we talk of 'worn-out superstitions,' let us be quite sure we have something else to lean on when the Rock of Ages is no longer our Strength and Stay. Sometimes people have only a vague aspiration after higher things, only the feeling 'that surely there must be a sort of a something somewhere'—*that* is better than nothing.

> What peaceful hours I once enjoyed,
> How sweet their memory still!
> But they have left an aching void
> The world can never fill.

Get rid of your Religion; you think the world will fill the void. It never, never will. We have been so anxious to make Sunday pleasant, to do away with the old stern teaching of the Puritanical Sabbath, that we have gone to the other extreme. Cricket, golf, all other healthful outdoor games, may be right and good for Sunday afternoons, especially for those who are cooped up in warehouses and offices all through the week; but surely a little time might be spared to go to church once. When huge brake-loads of noisy, not too sober people descend on country

villages, and make the day hideous to sight and sound, then I think it is high time we returned to the Sabbath of the Puritans. It is not very uplifting to the mind on a beautiful Sunday evening to meet scores of linked-together men and maidens shrieking and yelling, perhaps not many yards from the little village church whose bell rings out with a clang of despair. Was the old Sunday such a very bad day? I can remember the old-fashioned Scotch Sunday, when the newspapers were cleared away on Saturday evening. Was that a bad thing? Truly, we have newspapers too much with us. If the toys and play-books were removed, religious bricks were a great joy, and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* most interesting reading. Does any one, child or grown-up, read Foxe now or know anything of those who

> Climb'd the steep ascent of Heav'n
> Through peril, toil, and pain?

We learned Psalms and Paraphrases—and we quite enjoyed learning them. We certainly went to church twice, but I cannot remember it ever being considered a hardship. Every one went to church. I think little children like church, especially grown-up church. I know a Children's Service used to be looked on as rather a come-down. We spent the evening singing hymns or playing some sort of Biblical game which gave us a knowledge of Jewish History that remains with us to this day. I do not think our Presbyterian Sunday was either a stern and gloomy one or an unhappy one. Sunday is meant to be a Day of Rest and Gladness, but also a Day of Praise and Thankfulness; and I cannot see what is gained by turning Sunday into another Saturday, only more so. 'The Merciful Man is merciful to his beast;' and, unless you have a Sunday shift of servants, surely the merciful woman ought not to choose Sunday for her largest parties. Of course, goodness does not consist in merely churchgoing. The Pharisee was a regular churchgoer, and he did not gain much by it. Still, it was not his religion that was at fault, but his application of it and his own overweening conceit. There are many very good, great-hearted people who never go to church; but still there are a great many who do go who are neither narrow-minded nor canting hypocrites. Children should be brought up to have a regard and respect for 'the Day that the Lord hath made,' and taught to 'rejoice and be glad in it.' Recently I read an article which, if true, would go to show that upper-class children are sunk in a Heathen Darkness terrible to think of. Sunday seems to be the same as any other day; if the children *are* sent to church, they naturally cannot see why they should go while Father and Mother and all their friends are having a good time at home. I hope the writer of the article took an exaggerated view. For surely even the busiest, most fashionable mother has a few moments to spare in which to tell the little eager listeners 'the Old, Old Story.' If My Lady has no time to waste (waste!) over her little ones' souls, no time to hear the baby voices say their little prayers and hymns, then I am very sorry for My Lady, for she is losing the best in Life.

> No rubies of red for My Lady,
> No jewel that glitters and charms;
> But the light of the skies in a little one's eyes,
> And a necklace of two little arms—
> Of two little arms that are clinging
> (Oh! ne'er was a necklace like this!),
> And the wealth o' the world and love's sweetness impearled
> In the joy of a little one's kiss!

Fashionable engagements and what is really a round of hard work have nothing to do with the ordinary middle-class mother, and *she* can look to it that her children are brought up in the Faith of their Fathers. She is not a great lady with continual calls on her time, so she can see her boys and girls go to church and live up to what they learn there when they come home. There is a lot of trashy nonsense talked about a child's pure soul finding religion for itself; and that we should not confuse them with such words as Eternity, Redemption, and Temptation. They *are* long words, possibly beyond a child's comprehension, constantly beyond our own. But 'God is Love' consists of three very easy, little, short words, and can be learnt by the tiniest. The 'little Lamb' can ask 'the Tender Shepherd' to hear the little prayer at a very early age. As for children finding religion for themselves, you might as well say flowers will grow if you plant no seed. Even when the seed is planted, has it not to be tended and watered and cared for? We may fight and struggle and strive, out of much tribulation find our own souls; but there is nothing gained in bringing a child up in religious ignorance. When you talk very tall about leaving the pure soul to its own devices, be quite sure it is not sheer laziness if not want of religion in yourself that prevents you from teaching your little child. In the old days the men rode forth to the fight, and the women stayed at home to pray for them. Do we not still have the feeling that the women should do the most of the praying?

> My lady comes at last,
> Timid and stepping fast,
> And hastening hither.
> With modest eyes downcast,
> She comes—she's here—she's past.
> May Heaven go with her!
>
> Kneel undisturbed, fair saint,
> Pour out your praise or plaint
> Meekly and duly.
> I will not enter there,
> To sully your pure prayer
> With thoughts unruly.

Is not the above a better influence for lover or husband than the knowledge that instead of being a 'fair saint' the lady of your love will tell a blasphemous story and mock and sneer at the most sacred things? You remember the delightful sentence, 'with about as much religion as my William likes it.' I am inclined to think that the

Williams like a good deal of religion in their wives. They may be

> Outcast spirits who wait
> And see through Heaven's gates
> Angels within it,

and not troubled with much religion, but they do not like to think their womenkind are no better than they are themselves. Alderman Ingot did not say to Garrick, 'I am a good man; I have brought my Ada up well.' No, he knew all was said, more than said, in the 'her Mother was a good woman.' We know why David responded as he did; he was thinking of his own Mother. How often boys and girls have kept to the straight path of rectitude because—'I thought of my Mother'! Would it not be a wonderful reward to a mother to hear that: 'I could not do such a thing, Mother, because I thought of you'? How many women throw away with wilful stupidity what is best in their lives for idle amusement, for unsatisfying pleasure, and aimless folly! Some very clever people tell you there is no such thing as influence; that we can each of us 'gang oor ain gait' without either doing harm or good. Do not believe them. We influence either for good or evil, sometimes unconsciously; but the influence is there. Harsh, unattractive goodness drives people, especially young people, into bad ways quite as much as an evil example. Goodness must be made attractive. If you will think of the really good and great ones of the Earth, you will remember that they were *not* narrow-minded, nor unforgiving, nor hard on people. Never be too down on the wrongdoers; we can never know how they were tempted. In the first of these articles I quoted the last words of Sir Walter Scott as a very striking and wonderful message for all time. We may write and talk for ever, but we will never improve on that message. To be good, that is the only thing that really matters. The world may go forward as it has done, and is doing, in Science, in Healing, in Learning, in Glory. We may argue and preach, run after new Faiths and false Prophets, put forward first one view and then another, and in the end we must come back to the old-time things: Goodness, Kindness, and Love.

Women, light your Lamps, and keep them burning; show the way upward. Lead the tired feet along that road that is a hard one to climb, and that winds uphill 'right to the very end.' An understudy for an Angel! Nay, Mr Garrick; rather say simply, A good Woman.

> O woman! born first to believe us;
> Yea, also born first to forget;
> Born first to betray and deceive us,
> Yet first to repent and regret.
>
> Oh, first, then, in all that is human,
> Lo, first where the Nazarene trod!
> O woman! O beautiful woman!
> Be, then, first in the Kingdom of God.

THE DEAD HAND.

CHAPTER V.

DIANA'S feeling for Godfrey Clive was made up of complex elements. Gratitude lay at the foundation, warmed by perhaps an exaggerated estimate of his character as exhibiting those qualities most foreign to her former experience.

She had lived in closest intercourse with a man almost destitute of moral sense, of consuming selfishness, and of a temper exasperated by the failures of life. The self-restraint of the Clive household reached its culmination in the son who had consented to sacrifice what he held most precious to a father's unwarrantable exigence.

It is true that Diana would have been much less appreciative of such excellence had it not been combined with a personal distinction and charm of manner that satisfied her æsthetic requirements. Add to this the subtle fascination that exists in overcoming the resistance of a proud and reserved nature, and in bestowing on such the good gifts of fortune instead of receiving them.

She took Mrs Clive back with her to Fox Hills, and found pleasure in the task of making things pleasant and soft for the sweet, patient woman who had known so little softness or pleasure in her life. Naturally, the fond mother talked sometimes of her son, telling incidentally anecdotes which brought into relief the fine temper with which the exactions of the last two years had been met.

It fed the flame of Diana's hero-worship. It had been arranged that the doctor should come to Fox Hills to fetch his mother, and remain on a few days' visit before taking her to the modest home he had provided for her in London; and Diana had secretly resolved that he should not leave her until she had so strengthened her hold upon him as to overcome all scruples and bend his will to hers.

The means she used were characteristic: she gave one or two dinner-parties, choosing her most influential acquaintances (though the season limited selection), in order that he might see that while men of distinction admired and deferred to her, it was her pleasure to solicit him; also, it pleased her to show him with what ease and success she could play the part of hostess.

But she trusted most to her influence when they were alone; her consideration for his mother, the eager interest lent to all his plans for the future, were presented under alluring conditions.

If he had found her lovely, she argued, in her days of straitened means and dependence, he must

surely find her more seductive in her luxurious environment and clothed like the king's daughter. It is doubtful if the recluse and ascetic did, but he was subjected to a far more potent charm.

As we know, Diana was a musician; her touch on piano and organ (and the music-room at Fox Hills contained both) was that of a master; and when she joined her glorious voice in the solos of the *Messiah* or of *Elijah*, or in some of the recondite and all but divine chants learnt from the Italian priest, the man's heart glowed and softened as his mistress had desired.

On the evening before his departure they were alone in the music-room; and instead of the sacred melodies which gentle Mrs Clive preferred and obtained, Diana sang some of the high-wrought and impassioned appeals from French and Italian opera, with the result that she brought him, as she had intended, to her side, or rather to her feet, resolution and renouncement dissolved in passionate tenderness.

He took her hands, which still rested on the keys, in a close grasp, his eyes alight with love kindled beyond repression.

'You love me,' he asked, 'such as I am—you? It is hard to believe, Diana. Once and for all, is it true?'

And Diana answered, 'It is true, Godfrey, now and for all time.'

Then followed a brief period of enchantment, for the lover postponed his departure. She, conscious of having yielded to her best impulses, and chosen the man for himself alone, gathered charm and dignity therefrom; he, having conquered his reluctance to being enriched by the woman who loved him, held back from her nothing of the ardour of his devotion.

It was Diana's pleasure to keep their engagement secret for a time, with one exception. She allowed, or perhaps the idea was suggested by Godfrey himself, that it was a point of duty to acquaint Mr Thornton with the fact.

The reception given by the lawyer to this announcement almost amounted to stupefaction.

'This is a thunderbolt,' he said—'a thunderbolt, Miss Vavasour! When we last talked business together you assured me that you had not the slightest inclination for marriage; and now, within barely a month of the final settlement of your affairs'——

She interrupted him.

'What has that to do with it?' she demanded. 'I understand that then I shall be still more free than I am now to choose for myself. As for the rest, like Benedick, "when I said I should die single, I did not think I should live to be married."' Then she softened. 'Do not be angry, dear Mr Thornton; when you know Dr Clive you will think me every way justified, and he is certain to make such a name for himself as will outdo, far and away, the distinction of my little property of Fox Hills.'

The lawyer almost groaned.

'I know the man, Miss Vavasour; there is nothing in him to explain your infatuation, and he has not a shilling! It is the caprice of a romantic girl blinded by an exaggerated notion of favours conferred; it can't stand the test of serious consideration—not for one moment—not for one moment!'

But Diana only laughed at the old man's indignation.

'I am sorry you are vexed,' she said, 'and glad that you are not able to do anything more serious than protest. I rejoice more than ever that I am my own mistress.'

Mr Thornton said no more, but he had already taken his resolution.

That same evening he took train for London, and after a good dinner at his favourite hotel, a private hostel in a quiet street abutting on the Strand, he went out to seek an interview with the man whom he regarded as the enemy of Diana Vavasour. He knew from herself the hospital on whose staff Godfrey had found a place, and went there to inquire for him.

It was already late, and in answer to his inquiries he was told that the doctor, who was not resident, had left the hospital at the usual time, and would probably be found at home in his own rooms.

Thornton ascertained the address; it was but a stone's-throw from the man's work, and he drew a breath of thanksgiving on finding he was at home and at liberty.

He had the strongest prejudice against him, regarding him as a fortune-hunter trading on the gratitude of a generous girl, and was prepared to view every circumstance in the most unfavourable light.

He found that Godfrey was occupying the ground-floor flat of a large but gloomy house in an equally gloomy street; there was a brass plate, brilliantly polished, on the side of the door, setting forth his name and degree.

How would such indications of social inferiority have stung the pride of Diana's grandmother! Were it only in loyalty to the dead, he must put his heel on this man's greed and presumption.

The door was opened by the house-porter, who contented himself with pointing out the rooms of the tenant asked for, and the lawyer stepped briskly forward and rang the bell indicated.

To his embarrassment, the door was opened by the doctor himself; he held his hat in his hand, and was evidently on the point of going out.

As Thornton glanced up at him he could not deny that his presence was not devoid of distinction, and that his face was not ignoble. He was so afraid of being baffled in his purpose that he rushed at once on his point.

'You do not know me, Dr Clive,' he said in answer to the other's courteous inquiry; 'but I think you may have heard of me. My name is Thornton, and I am the professional adviser of Miss Vavasour of Fox Hills. You appear to have

been going out; but I trust your business may be postponed to mine; it can scarcely be of equal importance.'

'She is well?' asked Godfrey eagerly. 'You are not the bearer of bad news?'

'Miss Vavasour is perfectly well,' returned the lawyer dryly. 'Whether I am the bearer of bad news, Dr Clive, is a question for your future consideration. I trust you can give me half-an-hour's private conversation.'

In answer, Godfrey Clive led the way back into the small room, half study, half surgery, which he had quitted. A low fire burned in the grate; the gas-jets had been turned low, but he raised them, and invited his guest to a large easy-chair which seemed the only comfortable seat the somewhat meagre room afforded.

The doctor took his stand with his back to the dying fire, his eyes fixed in quiet observation on his visitor. Within, a tumult of sudden fears and misgivings swelled; but, from the cool reserve of his manner, Thornton came to an opposite conclusion.

'Confound his cool insolence!' he said to himself. 'The man makes so cocksure of his position as not to be susceptible to any anxiety.'

'I owe you apologies, Dr Clive,' he began, 'for this unexpected intrusion, and perhaps you may think that they are still more due when I explain myself further; but you must be good enough to take two facts into account: that I am trustee under the late Mrs Lorimer's will, and was the confidential adviser of that lady.'

Clive bowed assent; it was not his duty to help the explanation.

'I have only just been informed,' Thornton resumed, irritated by the silence that made his task harder, 'of the sudden engagement which Miss Vavasour considers exists between herself and you, and the announcement not only took me completely by surprise, but was the most painful shock I could have received.'

He paused so emphatically that Clive broke silence. 'On what grounds?' he asked.

The lawyer made an impatient gesture.

'On the most obvious grounds; such an arrangement is absolutely unsuitable on the ground of your respective positions.' His eyes traversed the room significantly as if appraising its indications. 'You can hardly maintain, Dr Clive, that a lady of Miss Vavasour's social distinction would be held to be well matched by an alliance with an undistinguished medical practitioner without other means than his profession, and it might almost seem that an undue advantage had been taken of a girl's generosity and inexperience to bring about such a result.'

'I do not think,' was the answer, still cool and deliberate, though the eyes showed fire, 'that any good can come by discussing the ethics of my engagement to Miss Vavasour. I have no intention of justifying myself either to you or to others. I stand or fall by my own judgment; so that if you are come here to-night to dissuade, or protest, or—insult, you will find your labour lost. But a man of your sagacity will scarcely have come to this encounter with no better weapons. What are your other grounds of objection, Mr Thornton?'

'My purpose is to state them. You will find that they are valid, irresistible, insuperable, even to a man like yourself.'

The lawyer's temper was ruffled, but he considered that he commanded himself perfectly.

His companion, who was possibly of a different opinion, smiled a little.

'It is hard to believe in any such obstacle that would not be known to Miss Vavasour herself. I shall be glad if you will explain without further circumlocution.

'So be it, doctor. You are aware, no doubt, that within a month from this time our trusteeship expires, and Miss Vavasour comes into the unfettered possession of her ample fortune; she will then be twenty-five years old. But—there is a condition of inheritance.'

'Yes?' Godfrey had changed colour a little and shifted his position so as to escape the lawyer's scrutiny; the suspense was becoming intolerable.

'There is a condition of inheritance,' repeated the other, 'and it is this: that Diana Vavasour should never marry. Should she elect to marry she forfeits *all*. You look staggered, Dr Clive.'

'I am staggered—at the tyranny of the testator.'

'There was justification, or what appeared to her to be such; it is due to a noble and honourable lady to explain a little further;' and the lawyer proceeded in a few sharp, concise sentences to indicate the circumstances of the unhappy wedlock of both Diana's mother and grandmother.

'Miss Vavasour,' he concluded, 'has no knowledge of this. It was my duty to watch her closely so far as our partial intercourse allowed, and I thanked God devoutly day after day in the fond belief that she was fancy free. I was at liberty to warn her if occasion arose. Of her infatuation in your behalf, Dr Clive, I had no means of knowledge, and it came upon me as a severe blow. I presume you, in your turn, have received the same; her time of trial will come later. My object is to put you in possession of these facts, and to learn from you in what way you propose to act so as to reduce the pain of the situation.'

He leaned back in his chair with a sense of relief. He was not lacking in sensibility, and in spite of his active vexation he felt some sympathy with the disappointment of the lover, reduced by the opinion that a man in his position was more or less of a scoundrel to have assumed the character.

Godfrey Clive had sat down during the lawyer's trenchant story, and being a man disciplined in self-control, had scarcely shown any outward sign of the shock and conflict produced. What he desired was time for self-recollection, during which the cruel alternative presented might be faced and pondered

alone; but Mr Thornton had no intention of permitting any escape from decision.

He was a little piqued and baffled by the doctor's careful reserve, and he repeated his inquiry in another form.

'What do you propose to do? In the position in which I stand both to the dead and to the living, I have a right to be informed.'

Then Godfrey roused himself; it was as if a sudden illumination had been vouchsafed in which the for and against of the question stood out in lines of light.

'You take me at a disadvantage,' he said, 'in insisting upon a decision before I have had time for recovery or thought; but at present my intention is to place myself unreservedly in Miss Vavasour's hands, and accept her decision without protest or appeal.'

Mr Thornton almost jumped from his chair. 'What!' he cried—'what! You have the hardihood to entertain the idea that this lady, who is one of a thousand, and whose birthright is wealth and distinction, is so befooled as to cast everything away in order to share a domicile such as this! And if Diana Vavasour were mad enough for the sacrifice, would you be base enough to take advantage of her madness?'

'It all depends, Mr Thornton, on the view which we take of the essentials of life. I may say that in the future I believe I shall be able to secure to any woman who becomes my wife all the material comforts necessary to well-being. I believe, too, that the distinction of Miss Vavasour's position would be a poor equivalent for a love betrayed and forgone; but this is what I propose to put to the test.'

The lawyer rose and faced him, stiff with indignation.

'You propose, in brief, to beggar the woman you profess to love in order to gratify a selfish passion! Words fail to characterise such conduct.'

'At least,' was the answer, 'you must now acquit me of being a fortune-hunter.'

'A heartless egotist is scarcely an improvement on the same; but you may rest assured that all that authority, friendship, and reason can do will be used to guard this lady against her own weakness and yourself.'

He caught up his hat as if to go, then turned again:

'Will you yield one point, Dr Clive? It wants but a bare month to the date fixed for the reading of Mrs Lorimer's codicil. Will you refrain from visiting or writing to Diana during that time?'

'While you are working against me and shaking her trust?'

'If,' was the answer, 'it is not strong enough to hold out under a month's absence, can you expect it to stand the test of the experiences you propose to apply? I consider that it would be an infamy, knowing what you know, but she does not, to try to strengthen the bonds you have fastened about her. Give her the chance of testing her feelings.'

Godfrey took a turn or two in the room; it was evident that he was greatly moved.

Thornton saw his advantage, and added, 'It is quite possible that a woman in a moment of exaltation may be equal to a sacrifice such as you in your cruel selfishness would accept, and thus commit herself to a course of action that she would spend the rest of her life in regretting.'

'That is possible, and I will meet you half-way. I will not see Miss Vavasour during this month of probation; but I shall write and tell her that my abstinence is in consequence of a promise that you have exacted from me; the explanation I shall leave to you.'

'I shall have no difficulty; she knows already in what light I view this engagement.' He reflected a moment. 'Perhaps it is right to tell you that the codicil will be read at Fox Hills on the 7th of next month, before her trustee, Sir Marmaduke Spencer, and other influential friends. She will know nothing beforehand.'

'I shall not fail to be there.'

'But—you have pledged your honour to accept her first word; to put no pressure upon her, and make no protest.'

'I stand by what I have said. Good-night, Mr Thornton.'

MAN-TRACKING.

By Stanhope Sprigg.

THE men who breed bloodhounds are always puzzled by one problem. Whenever any mysterious crime occurs that baffles the most keen detective intelligence there is at once a demand from the public that bloodhounds should be sent for and put on the track of the missing fugitive. On all other occasions the interest in bloodhounds is practically confined to some fifty persons in England and Scotland, who have formed themselves into an Association of Bloodhound Breeders and a Bloodhound Club, and who are everywhere faced by the most extraordinary apathy as to the practical everyday virtues and qualities of their pets! How is this?

This hound with the dreadful name has played a prominent part in history from the very earliest times. Years ago, for instance, he was put upon the track of Dick Turpin, and that hero of half-penny fiction only escaped by a plunge into Epping Forest and a discreet retreat high amongst some trees. Sir Edwin Landseer, too, did his best for

this breed. As everybody knows, one of these hounds forms the principal character in his celebrated picture, 'Dignity and Impudence.'

More than that: who does not recollect the doughty deeds attributed to bloodhounds in slave-hunting tales of the last generation—in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and similar works?

It is said by experts, it is true, that the hounds used during those troublous times for slave-hunting in the Southern States of America, although called bloodhounds, were not bloodhounds at all, but merely the foxhound of the country oftentimes crossed by the Cuban mastiff, or (as it was occasionally called) the Cuban bloodhound, and was more like an inferior Great Dane than anything else.

But what of that? The glamour and the excitement of those records remain in our minds; and to-day it seems extraordinary that the active-minded, dog-loving Englishman has not turned his early knowledge of the sport obtainable from these hounds to better effect.

A clever schoolmaster wrote to me only the other week and begged me quite earnestly to advocate the purchase and training of bloodhounds by young people. Undoubtedly, as he pointed out, excellent sport and exercise could be enjoyed by schoolboys by this means; and the advantages of bloodhounds in this connection are (1) that a couple would be sufficient, and (2) that humanitarian faddists would not be alarmed, as in the case of the beagles at Eton.

Indeed, it is wholly a mistake to suppose that bloodhounds are averse to their work of man-tracking, or are in any sense ferocious. As a matter of fact, indeed, they have remarkable natural qualifications for the work of man-hunting; for not only have they great speed, great scenting powers, and (unlike the foxhound) strong perseverance on an original line, but they have a natural enjoyment of the pursuit of man. Lord Cardigan suggests that this last leaning of theirs has been transmitted to them through a long line of criminal-hunting ancestors; and most people who have seen bloodhounds frequently at work find it hard to give a more reasonable explanation of the zest they throw into the chase.

Luckily, this zest does not degenerate into license; and although popular manuals may tell us 'that the only chance for man or beast hunted by them is to take to the water—to start to jump three or four feet off the water's edge, and to leap far and fairly in,' it does not follow that they will tear their prey limb from limb when he is caught. No. The tracking once at an end, they take little interest in the object of it, save to sniff him to assure themselves that they have got the right man.

Admittedly there is one drawback to the general use of bloodhounds as a means of sport. That is their present-day scarcity and consequent expense. Only quite moderate puppies can be procured at five guineas; and these run a great risk of dying from distemper, although, with that exception, they are hardy enough. Occasionally, too, adults may be picked up at seven guineas each; but they are as a rule indifferent specimens, and there are not many to be had at that price.

Apart from this, the acquisition and training of bloodhounds present few difficulties to men who, with a love for sport, can remember that kindness, firmness, and patience are the three most necessary attributes for teaching bloodhounds. Mr Edwin Brough, the famous breeder, holds that it is quite practicable to give hounds short preliminary lessons in man-tracking at three or four months old, but adds:

'The more easy things are made for them at first the better; and they should not be allowed to tire themselves. For the first few times it is always better to let them hunt some one they know; but when they once "get their heads down" properly, it does not matter how often the runner is changed. This man, however, should caress and make much of the pups, and let them see him start, but should get out of their sight as quickly as possible, and run, say, two hundred yards up-wind on grass-land in a straight line, and then hide himself. The one who hunts the pups, too, should know the exact line taken, and take the pups over it, encouraging them to hunt until they get to the runner, who should always reward them with a bit of meat.'

Mr Brough and the men who have done the best work in England with bloodhounds (Mr Croxton Smith of *The Gentlewoman*, for instance) do not believe that much use can be made of bloodhounds by the police at present in towns, but contend that in rural districts they are most valuable but neglected agents. They say that in cases where a well-trained, reliable hound can be procured within a reasonable time, and where he can be laid on a line which has not been foiled for a few yards, capture ought to be 'pretty certain.' Thus, in establishments like the penal settlement at Portland, at reformatories, and at asylums where the inmates make spasmodic bids for freedom, bloodhounds would bring more escapes to a quick and effective termination than telephone or telegraph.

Mr East of Chislehurst, who keeps the only pack of bloodhounds in England, and regularly hunts them one day a week in Hampshire, also urges that gamekeepers particularly ought to train and to value bloodhounds; and, in support of this, he tells a curious adventure of his own. One day a friend came to him whilst the pack were out, and complained bitterly of some recently discovered depredations of poachers. More in jest than earnest, Mr East took his pack on the scene of wholesale robberies, and, to the general surprise, the hounds gave voice almost immediately, and ran the line at once to the next estate, to the front-door of the head-gardener's cottage.

It is also contended that most country-house dinner jewel-burglaries and hen-roost robberies could be traced with peculiar facility by the agency

of bloodhounds. At all events, there is that well-known instance where Mr Mudie's bloodhounds were requisitioned in the case of a poultry robbery, and promptly carried the line to an encampment of gipsies, where two men were arrested and confessed to the theft.

Bloodhounds, however, have not always been well served by the people who were thought to be their best friends. That is why two separate bloodhound organisations exist: the Association and the Club; and they differ vitally as to the standard of the ideal bloodhound, and whether the hound ought to be used as a pack-hound at all. The consequence has been that, in their last report, the Association of Bloodhound Breeders urged, with quite uncommittee-like warmth, that 'a bloodhound *must* be judged as a workman-like hound, showing the points which indicate those properties which are the special attributes of the breed.'

Thus, 'while fully recognising that bloodhounds hunted in packs are capable of affording good sport, the committee consider that if such a practice became common it would tend to do away with the special style of man-hunting, which is one of the chief characteristics of the bloodhound.'

Hence 'the most desirable qualities in a bloodhound are abnormal scenting powers, freedom from change, individual perseverance, and reliability; therefore, the more he is trained as a pack-hound the more certainly will those special qualities of his, characteristics which have been jealously guarded for centuries, be lost.'

As far as the general public are concerned, this protest, if correct, will find a very hearty echo. Although, as I have already pointed out, their knowledge of bloodhounds is really of the vaguest and flimsiest, sportsmen would assuredly be most loath to see the canine man-hunter become merely a stock accessory of the detective novelist and sensational journalist, or revert to a type of foxhound utterly incapable of individual initiative or effort.

At the same time, they ought to ask themselves quite seriously whether the time has not come for them, as patriotic citizens, to take a fair hand in this game of training man-hunters for public use, in addition to the regular breeders. They need not all be like Mr Brough, who wrote to me the other day: 'In my experience of thirty-three years, I find that the more you get to know of bloodhounds the more you find there is to learn, and the less inclined you feel to commit yourself to cold black-and-white.'

Even Mr Brough anathematises the ignorance of the police, who on one occasion, when a shop in an important thoroughfare in the East End had been robbed in the early morning, sent for bloodhounds the following afternoon, although the shop had been crowded with customers for some hours!

After all, with a little knowledge and patience, a lot of excellent sport can be got out of bloodhounds. As Lord Cardigan has pointed out on several important occasions, they give pre-eminently 'a sport unconnected with bloodshed or any inconvenience to the quarry, which affords plenty of exercise, can be undertaken with no more expense than the purchase and maintenance of one or two hounds, inflicts no damage on crops or fences, and yet supplies unlimited opportunities of watching fine hound-work.' More than that, in a case of crisis, even the perpetrators of serious crimes might be run down by an amateur who simply went in for man-hunting as a private hobby of his own.

FIVE-HEAD CREEK.

PART II.

A FEW days later my mate arrived with the dray, which we at once unloaded, and then turned the horses out to feed and have a spell before working them again. Every night since I had arrived a thunderstorm had occurred, much to my delight, and already the once cracked and baking flats were beginning to put on a carpet of grass; and, indeed, in a fortnight it was eighteen inches high, and made a glorious sight, the few remaining cattle eating it so hungrily that when night fell the creatures were scarcely able to move, so distended were their bodies.

Having started our aboriginal friends to cut down iron-bark saplings to repair the fencing, we first of all paid a visit to our nearest neighbour, a settler named Dick Bullen, who lived ten miles away. He received us most hospitably, like all good bushmen, and offered to assist us in looking for lost cattle. He was a splendid type of the native-born Australian bushman, over six feet two in height, and simple and unaffected in his manner. I shall remember this man for one thing. He had two of the finest teams of working bullocks I have ever seen, and handled them in a way that commanded our admiration. Never once did he use his whip for any other purpose than to crack it occasionally, and it did one good to hear his cheery call to the fourteen labouring beasts as they toiled up the steep side of a creek or gully with a heavy load of timber, straining every nerve in their great bodies, while the sweat poured off their coats in streams. He was, like one of his own bullocks, patient, cheerful, and strong; and an exclamation of anger seldom passed his lips—an oath never. He took a great pride in the appearance of his teams, and was especially proud of the fact that no one of them showed the marks of a whip.

We spent a pleasant hour with this man, and

returned home by a different route, in hope of getting a plain-turkey. Hansen, my mate, was an excellent shot, especially with a rifle, and indeed when shooting turkeys preferred to use a ·44 Winchester rifle. We managed to get one bird—a cock—but so old and poor that we gave it to the black contingent to eat. Nothing in the shape of food came amiss to these people, and their appetites were astounding. One day Hansen and I were following down a creek which junctioned with the Reid River, when we saw smoke ascending from a dry gully. Riding up, we came across a very old and shrivelled *gin* and a boy and girl of about eight. They were busily engaged in eating emu eggs, and out of thirteen had already devoured eleven, together with four or five hundred fresh-water cockles! Such a meal would have satisfied half-a-dozen hungry white men. Their overloaded stomachs presented a disgusting appearance, and they were scarcely able to articulate.

A week after our arrival the blacks told us that there were indications that the rainy season would come on earlier than usual, and that game, except duck and spur-winged plover, would be very scarce; also, that if the creek came down in flood it would carry away most of the fish. This was bad news for such ardent sportsmen as Hansen and myself, for we were looking forward to plenty of fishing and shooting, not alone for its pleasures, but also because we were charged heavily for anything but the ordinary salt-beef, tea, sugar, and flour. Sardines and tinned salmon were luxuries we could not afford; but fresh fish and game were better, and even when salted were preferable to a continuous diet of beef.

We had among our stores a two hundred and fifty pound bag of coarse salt—we had to kill our own meat and salt it down; and I proposed that we should at once set to work whilst the weather was fine and spend a week shooting and fishing. Such game as plain-turkeys (bustard), scrub-turkeys, cockatoos, ducks, &c. we could put in brine, whilst the fish could be dry-salted and then put in the sun to dry. Hansen quite approved of the idea, and we at once set to work. I was to be fisherman and he the gunner; for, curiously enough, my mate was the most helpless creature with a fishing line or rod that I ever saw. In five minutes he would either have his line hopelessly tangled, his rod broken, or his hook caught in his hand; and yet he never lost his temper.

Taking with me two sturdy black 'boys' as carriers, and also bringing my gun and ammunition in case I should find duck, I set out on foot; Hansen riding off, accompanied by a blackfellow, to a chain of shallow lagoons five miles away.

Within a quarter of a mile from the house was a fine, deep water-hole formed by the creek being here confined between high banks. At one end, however, a bar of small, coarse, round pebbles ran almost across; and here I decided to begin, instead of from the bank, for not only were snakes difficult to see in the undergrowth, but plants of the dreaded stinging-tree were also growing around and between the magnificent gums and the Leichhardts. These latter trees (named after the ill-fated Dr Leichhardt) are, I think, the most strikingly handsome of all large trees in the north of Queensland. They love to grow near, or even in, the water, and their broad, beautiful leaves give a welcome shade.

But before I descended the bank I had to remain for some minutes to gaze on the beauty of the scene. The water at one end of the pool was of the deepest blue; towards the pebbly bar it gradually shallowed, and for eight or ten feet from the margin was as clear as crystal. Close in under the banks the broad leaves of blue flowering water-lilies covered the surface with a carpet of many shades of green and pink; hovering above the lily-leaves were hundreds of small white butterflies, with here and there a black-and-yellow-banded dragon-fly—'horse-stingers' the Australian youth call them. Not a sound broke the silence, except now and then the rippling splash of a fish rising to the surface, or the peculiar *click, click* made by a crayfish burrowing under a stone.

I leant over the bank and looked down, and then gave a start of pleasure, for right beneath me were three fish floating motionless on the surface—fish that until then I never knew lived in fresh-water in Australia. They were in shape, colour, and appearance exactly like the toothed gar so common on the seacoast—a long, slender body, with back of dark blue, sides of silvery white, and fins and tail of blue tipped with yellow. I was so excited that I was about to shoot them, but remembered that at so short a distance I should have only blown them to pieces, especially as they were directly beneath me. I motioned to the black 'boys' to come and look; they did so, and I learnt that these fish, when the creek was low, were sometimes plentiful, and would take almost any floating bait, especially if it were alive.

Eager to begin, I told the 'boys' to collect some crayfish for bait, but they said that it would take too long, and that small fish were better; and running to some small lily-covered pools about two feet in diameter, and very shallow, they jumped in and stirred up the sand and muddy sediment at the bottom. In a few minutes some scores of very pretty red and silvery-hued minnows were thrown out on the sand. I quickly baited my line, and threw it into the centre of the pool. Before it could sink, the bait was taken by a fine bream of two pounds, which I landed safely and tossed to the 'boys.' It was the first fresh-water fish I had caught in Queensland, and I felt elated.

Finding that the pool was clear of snags, I bent on three extra hooks, baiting each one with the whole of a tiny fish. Again the baits were seized before they reached the bottom. I hauled in two more bream, and as they came struggling and splashing into the shallow water I saw that they were being followed by literally hundreds of the same species, and also by fish much like an English grayling. The pool seemed to be alive! The presence of such large numbers in so circumscribed a space could, however,

be easily accounted for by the absence of rain for so many months, the drying up of many minor pools or stretches, and the diminution of the water generally throughout the creek and its tributaries, driving the fish to congregate in the deeper and larger pools.

By noon I had caught as many fish as the 'boys' could carry. None, it is true, were very large, two and a half pounds being the heaviest; but I was pleased to learn that there were places farther down the creek where the blacks caught some very large catfish. When the water was muddy from heavy rain these catfish (or, as some people call them, 'jewfish') were the heaviest and best of all the Queensland river-fish I have ever tasted, except those which, for want of their true name, I called grayling and Hansen asserted were trout.

Sending the black 'boys' off with the fish, I cut a rod from a she-oak and quickly rigged a line; for a float I used a small piece of dead wood, and baited with the largest minnow I could find. Then, clambering up the bank, I found a suitable open place, at the butt of the Leichhardt, where I could stand and have a good view. I could not see any of the garfish, one at least of which I was so anxious to get; but I made a cast into the centre, and almost instantaneously one darted out from under the lily-leaves and hooked himself beautifully. As I was swinging him out, however, my line fouled a thorny bush, and for a minute I was in despair. There was the shining beauty suspended over the water, and almost making a circle of his body in his struggle to escape; but at last I cleared my line, and swung my prize high up on the bank. Determined to get a better rod and return after dinner, I picked up gun and fish and followed the 'boys.'

By sunset I had a catch of fish that fairly astonished Hansen when he returned at dusk with half-a-dozen black duck, two or three teal, and two turkeys. All that evening we were employed in cleaning and salting the fish and birds, except some for immediate use.

We had many such days. Fish were to be had throughout the whole course of the creek; and had we had a net like those the blacks sometimes used we could have taken a hogsheadful in half-an-hour.

Then, as the rainy season began, I ceased fishing and took to the gun, for now three or four kinds of duck made their appearance; and one moonlight night an immense number alighted in the creek just below the hut, and kept up an incessant gabble and quacking till sunrise.

In less than ten days we had enough salted game and dried and smoked fish to last us three months, even had we eaten nothing else. Our black friends —with the exception of one lad who desired to remain—left us one morning at sunrise, and we saw them no more. I am afraid they were deeply hurt by our poisoning half-a-dozen of their mangy dogs, which were, with the rest of the pack, a continual source of annoyance to us by their expert thieving.

One dull, rainy day, as we sat indoors mending our clothes, and yarning and smoking, we heard the scream of parrots, and going to the door, saw some twenty or thirty of them, large, fine, green-and-scarlet-plumaged birds, hanging on to and crawling in and out among the branches of some low trees growing between the stockyard and the creek. These trees were a species of wattle, and were just opening out their yellow, sweet-smelling, downy flowers, which the beautiful birds were devouring eagerly. We did not disturb them, and they did not appear to be alarmed when we walked up to within a few yards of the trees; they merely screamed defiance, and flew up to the higher branches or to other trees near by. These birds the local settlers called 'king-parrots;' they were larger than those of the same species in New South Wales, and later in the season we shot a few of them for soup. This particular flock visited us for many days in succession, forming a pretty picture as they hung on the branches, chattering loudly the while, and flashing their gaily coloured plumage in the bright sunshine. Like the spur-winged plover, they were very inquisitive birds: if one of a number was shot and fell wounded, the rest of the flock would fly round and round the poor creature, watching its movements and listening to its cries, not out of pity but of sheer curiosity, and each could be shot in succession, or sometimes knocked down with a stick. I was told by a stockman on Fanning Downs station that on several occasions, when he had wounded birds of this variety of the parrot tribe, their companions descended upon them with fury, tore out their feathers, and bit and lacerated them savagely.

Now and again a few wandering emus would cross the gray-gum plains around us, and then as they caught sight of our figures shamble quickly off again. In former years they had been plentiful in the district, and provided good food for the blacks when the latter organised their big hunting-parties. But as the country was taken up as cattle-runs, hundreds of the great birds were wantonly shot by white men for the mere pleasure of killing; and all the months we lived in the district we did not see more than twenty.

I have before spoken of the number of snakes that were everywhere to be seen in the vicinity of the water, particularly about pools with a reedy margin. Scarcely a week passed without our killing three or four, and we were always careful in bathing to do so in very shallow water, where there was a clear, sandy bottom. There were three kinds of water-snakes, one of which was of a dull-blue colour, and these the blacks said were 'bad fellow'—that is, venomous. They were seldom over two and half feet in length, and on a bright day one might see several of these reptiles swimming across from one bank to the other. Of the common brown snake—the kind we most dreaded—and the black-necked tiger-snake, we killed numbers with our guns and with sticks; and one day, when crossing some red ironstone ridges on the Ravenswood Road,

we despatched two death-adders which were lying asleep on the bare, hot road. They were of a dull reddish-brown—the same hue as the ground in the ironstone country, just as they are a yellowish-brown in a sandstone region.

One great pest to us when fishing was the number of mud-turtles, greedy little creatures that persistently swallowed our hooks, which could only be recovered by placing one's foot on their backs, drawing out their long snaky necks to the utmost tension, and cutting off their heads. The other pests were the hideous, flabby water-iguanas (I do not know their proper name), the very look of which, although they never interfered with our lines, sickened us. They were always to be seen lying on a log or snag in the water; as you approached they either crawled down like an octopus or dropped in a boneless, inert mass, without a splash. Their slimy, scaleless skins were a muddy yellow, and in general they resembled an eel with legs. Even the blacks looked on them with disgust, though they are particularly fond of the ordinary iguana.

The time passed somewhat wearily when heavy rains and flooded country kept us indoors for days together. Then, one night after the weather had begun to get cooler and clearer, we heard far, far overhead the *honk, honk* of the wild geese flying southwards to distant lagoons, and Hansen reminded me that in another week our term of service came to an end.

'What made you think of it?' I asked.

'The cry of the wild geese going south.'

For we, too, longed for the south again.

CHINESE LABOURERS ON THE RAND MINES.

By a Resident Engineer.

FROM shore to shore, and from the Cape to the Zambesi, South Africa teems with native population, so vast, indeed, that it is difficult to compute anything like accurate numbers. Those dwelling in locations or employed on farms, in any large industry or domestic service, can of course be enumerated at discretion; but in large and little-known country districts, where even the hut-tax is evaded, there are kraals innumerable just seething with native life, the only approximate count of which may be gathered from the census taken this current year. In such districts known headmen were entrusted with coloured beads representing male, female, adult, and child. By affixing one of these on a string for each of his people, the headman rendered his account, and the computation was made from this. Yet with the enormous acknowledged numerical strength of the natives, how comes it that the whole country languishes for want of an adequate supply of unskilled labour? To answer this question with any accuracy we must first remember the natives' characteristics.

His heritage of barbarism, in spite of surrounding civilisation, is still predominant; his love of freedom, subject only to the rule of his native chief, is secondary. His hatred of the white man, engendered by subjugation after native wars, is still strong in his breast, and his innate indolence blinds him to the dignity of labour. As herdsmen and agriculturists natives excel, yet their preference lies in tilling their own soil and rearing their own stock rather than in working in the same capacity for the white man. However, squatting on farms and working on the halves, where they are in a measure independent, is a tolerable form of labour for some.

Of the kraal population but a small percentage leave to work in the towns, and these rarely stay longer than a few months, going away just when their services become of use, and returning home with a nest-egg sufficient to buy cattle, a wife, or follow any particular fancy for an extended period of idleness. Amongst such may be classed domestic servants working as kitchen-boys, nurse-boys, stable-boys, coachmen, gardeners, shop-boys, office-cleaners, rough labourers for builders, contractors, tradesmen, dairymen, and so forth. Large numbers also are required for railway and municipal work; in the latter the sanitary department employs some thousands constantly. The wages earned vary from two pounds ten shillings to eight pounds per month; thus it will be seen how short a term of service suffices to render the native a capitalist in his own country. Others work independently as wash-boys, newspaper-venders, &c., and earn thereby large sums. As native police and detectives Kafirs are in their element. They love power over their brethren, and still more do they love to be clad in smart uniform.

The status white people must maintain in this country is the cause of much inconsistency. White workmen, artisans even of the lowest order, cease to do what is here considered menial work of any description; hence it is a common sight to see tradesmen who are paid twenty-five shillings per diem idly looking on whilst the Kafir does such work under his supervision. Further, it is considered degrading for middle or even lower class white women in this country to fulfil certain homely duties, such as floor-washing, light sweeping, &c., albeit many mistresses have themselves been but humble 'generals' in the old country. Hence the necessity in every household for one, or it may be half-a-dozen, kitchen-boys, according to the size of the establishment. It may here be remarked *en passant* that this practice constitutes the greatest possible evil. Naturally, work of such a light nature,

requiring little zeal, is popular enough with a strong man; moreover the flesh-pots in such a berth still further enhance its value, so the native communes with himself, and says, 'If work must be done, what easier could be selected?' Thus it happens that stalwart Zulus spend their time in ease and luxury, employed in domestic work; and owing to the ignorance of many masters and mistresses, who injudiciously treat them with familiarity and equality, these adolescent, full-blooded natives are a daily menace from a moral point of view. Their leisure is spent strolling about the towns attired in cast-off raiment lavishly given by an indulgent master, and yet fresh enough to bear distinctly the hall-mark of a Bond Street tailor. A Panamá hat, spats, speckless boots, cuffs, cane, and occasionally gloves complete the promenade toilet of the Kafir dude when he leaves his kitchen. Others scorch around on free-wheel bicycles bought for a few pounds—or not infrequently annexed.

The Kimberley diamond-mines employ many thousand natives, kept, as is well known, rigidly under the compound system. The docks at all coast ports likewise require large numbers, and the huge railway system is dependent on many thousands more both for maintenance and construction. At the present time, roughly speaking, some sixty thousand are working on the gold-mines of the Witwatersrand. Since the war these have been recruited from various districts by the Native Labour Association, which has proved more satisfactory and systematic than the old custom of touting.

From the above remarks it will readily be seen that natives are less partial to underground mine-work and the regular routine of shifts than to such occupations as trolley-drivers, house-boys, &c. In the capacity of mine-police, however, they shine, dearly loving any authority, whilst the uniform causes them absolutely to swell with pride. With all these peculiarities and the present facilities for amassing a competence by a minimum of toil, with the hoards and lavish wages earned during the late war, and with the enormous expansion of South Africa generally ever increasing the demand for unskilled labour, it is easily seen why the supply falls so far short.

Nor is the problem by any means a new one. In the days of the old East India Company, officers on furlough at the Cape brought their own servants, who settled in South Africa and formed the nucleus of the large Malay population. At a more recent date, so great was the dearth of labour in Cape Colony that legislation to admit Asiatics was actually introduced; whilst Natal, as far back as 1859, when the colony only numbered some eight thousand whites to one hundred thousand blacks, could not obtain sufficient labour for her sugar plantations for the simple reason that the natives were independent and unreliable, deserting at a critical time and leaving the crops to go to ruin. In 1860 a wise and progressive Government legislated for the introduction of Indian coolies, indentured for five years. This, every old colonist admits, was the salvation of Natal; the revenue increased fourfold, white men's wages rose, and prosperity set in. Rhodesia, still undeveloped, languishes under the same trouble; whilst the Transvaal, had not the Chinese Labour Ordinance received His Majesty's assent, would have been in a state of bankruptcy, with its vast treasures of gold, diamonds, precious stones, coal, iron, petroleum, &c. lying buried in the earth.

The experiment is now being tested; the first batch of over a thousand Chinese labourers arrived at Durban on 18th June. A regrettable drawback was the outbreak of beri-beri on board ship. But this disease is extremely prevalent amongst Orientals living in low-lying coast districts; and the change of food and climate, especially the high and dry temperature enjoyed on the Rand, is the best possible antidote. The initial proceedings on the vessel's arrival comprised the taking of finger-prints, each digit separately, and impressions of the palms; the fixing of a numerical badge on each miner; then the art of photography to aid future recognition was applied individually. Special trains conveyed the labourers to the Rand, and as the journey takes twenty-seven hours, a special commissariat was provided. The first contingent was destined for the New Comet mine, on the East Rand, and the scene on arriving there was picturesque in the extreme.

After weary months of serious debate as to the solution of the great labour problem, and the final though reluctant decision to import Chinese, there followed a period of strenuous work to convince the British public of the dire necessity for such a step. To those who had thus laboured, then, it was good to see John Chinaman at last in our midst, pig-tail, baggage, and all complete. The Celestial's travelling costume consisted of blue Garibaldi blouse, wide linen trousers, toe-tilted shoes, and straw hats of mushroom shape, beneath which the pig-tail coiled snugly or hung pendent according to individual fancy; each traveller had his own wicker-basket containing his treasures, and affixed thereto was a banana pillow and sleeping-mat. Thus they emerged from the long train and streamed into the fine compound prepared for their reception.

These, far from being the prison-like cells described by the Anti-Chinese League, are large, airy quarters. Quadrangular in shape, the compound measures four hundred and nine feet by three hundred and seventy-four feet. Ranged round the sides of the square are sleeping apartments large enough to accommodate twenty Chinese, with an allowance of five hundred cubic feet of air-space. Light and ventilation have received minute consideration. Large sash-windows at the side and sloping ones in the roof admit sufficient sunlight, whilst fine gauze wire-netting between the top of the walls and roof admits constant currents of pure fresh air. Two tiers of sleeping bunks are arranged, and a good heating-stove with chimney is placed in each apartment. The floors are of asphalt, and slightly on the incline for the more effectual cleansing thereof.

Plunge and shower baths, with a plentiful supply of hot and cold water, obviate any excuse for lack of cleanliness; and the large dining-halls, where five hundred diners can manipulate as many chop-sticks with ease, are also clean and airy. Electric light is being fitted throughout the new quarters, and there seems little reason for complaint on any score.

As regards food, though not exactly an epicure, the Chinaman has distinctly original views on culinary art. Large steamers had been erected for the perfect cooking of enormous quantities of rice; but on his arrival John objected to the modern process, and boiling is the only method he favours in this respect. Again, he prefers his fish, pork, or puppy fried —not roasted; so frying-pans were commandeered by the hundred to gratify this whim. Chinese teapots were brought over with the contingent in order that 'the cup that cheers' might bear the distinct flavour of the Flowery Land. Whilst rationed with certain necessaries, the miners can purchase any special luxuries they may desire, such as ground-nut oil, salted vegetables, dried beans, olives, turnips, shellfish, oysters, mushrooms, seaweed, vermicelli, pearl barley, white nuts, salted eggs, tobacco (not opium), soap, &c., of which large consignments are brought with every shipload.

As is usual in mine-work, the Chinamen take alternate day and night shifts. Many are already employed as hammer-boys, hand-drilling in the stopes. Some have even now acquired great dexterity, and being paid by piece-work, will easily earn three pounds monthly for the thirty shifts. Those occupied in trimming and shovelling will be paid according to their merits; but in no case will the monthly wage be less than thirty shillings. The cost of importation, including transport and all expenses, works out at about twenty-five pounds per head. But this is for three years' indenture, whereas Kafirs mostly work but three or six months at a time.

Though the experiment is yet in its infancy, the enormous initial outlay and the great developments hinging on its success or otherwise make it a question of supreme and anxious moment to the community at large. So far the Chamber of Mines is satisfied with the promise given by the first thousand, even with the slight troubles experienced in the management.

The second shipment of two thousand arrived with a clean bill of health, and will be employed on the extreme West Rand. By the end of the year, barring any unforeseen hindrance, almost thirty thousand Chinamen should be hard at work here, in which case the percentage of white skilled workmen necessary on the mines should and will show an enormous increase.

It is not anticipated that there will be any trouble in disciplining such numbers. At first a few well-to-do storekeepers, long resident on the Rand, visited their newly arrived countrymen, after which a few desertions were reported; but the regulations are so stringent as to the employment of Chinese by others than the legitimate importers that the truants quickly realised their helplessness and returned to duty.

Their numerous festivals will be faithfully observed. The first of these is the celebration of the New Year, occurring towards the end of January; this lasts three days. Next comes the Dragon Boat Festival on the fifth day of the fifth moon—namely, June; then the Moon Festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth moon; and, lastly, that of the Winter Solstice.

The 'heathen Chinee' knows little of the cult of Confucius, which is confined to the educated classes. Buddhism, therefore, is largely the religion of the masses. One duty they are careful to fulfil is the propitiation of the Lord of the land wherein they dwell, and this they perform by homage and recognition night and morning.

Far from being slaves, except that they may not roam the country at will and embark in business of their own, the imported Chinese miners may earn in comfort four times the amount which constant toil in their own land brings, and at the expiration of their contract may return to their native soil, having amassed a competence. Needless to add, every endeavour is at the same time being made to keep up the supply of Kafir miners.

THE SALTO WATER-STONE: AN EXPLANATION.

THE description of this mineralogical curiosity (*Chambers's Journal*, Jan. 1904, page 44) has no doubt excited the curiosity of many readers to a degree that demands a more complete knowledge of this stone. This the present writer feels in a position to impart, having been engaged for the past three years in a special study of chalcedonic and silicious nodules of all kinds. In the first place, it is no fraud—the enhydros certainly hold water. I have examined several from Uruguay. They vary in size from a man's closed fist down to a marble. In shape they are irregularly ovoid, but some are nearly spherical. The surface is blistered and uneven in appearance, and translucent like opalescent glass. A section through one shows that the stone is made up of concentric bands or layers of chalcedony, which follow very closely the contour of the cavity in the lava-rock in which it is found embedded, and enclose a hollow which is more or less full of an aqueous fluid. Chalcedony is an impure hydrous form of silica or rock-crystal, in which the crystalline form is minute or hidden. To make this clear we might quote another example of this dual formation: in 'barley-

sugar' we have exactly the same substance as crystallised sugar, but the crystalline form is hidden by some physical rearrangement of the molecules. Moreover, chalcedony contains a variable amount of water, showing that the substance has probably an aqueous origin. It is more or less translucent, according to its degree of purity, and consequently, when a fine specimen of the Salto water-stone is held towards a good light its liquid contents are clearly revealed. This liquid is water containing much mineral matter in solution, and cases are on record from which we learn that in California (where large specimens of this curiosity were at one time found) miners have been poisoned by slaking their thirst with the cool and tempting water from the heart of the enhydros. The stones are found embedded in a compact black lava, the geological age of which we have been unable to ascertain. The puzzle as to how the water came to be imprisoned in the cavity or hollow *within* the stone involves the secret of the genesis of the stone itself. In the first instance the enhydros are clearly chalcedonic agates, but badly and imperfectly formed. Agates, or 'Scotch pebbles,' as they are called in this country, are very commonly found in the Devonian lavas of the shires of Perth, Forfar, Fife, and Midlothian. They are often made of the identical materials which go to build up a water-stone, but they are much finer and more regular in their banding, and usually of pretty colours.

White or colourless chalcedonic nodules or agates, hollow in the centre, are frequently found in Scotland and elsewhere almost identical with the enhydros, but never containing any fluid. Geologists look upon such as poor specimens, because they exhibit but little beauty in a polished section. Thus it is seen that the Salto water-stones are simply chalcedonic agates the growth of which has been somewhat suddenly arrested, leaving a hollow centre filled with a watery fluid. Now, the origin of an agate leads us back to the origin of the lava-rock in which agates are found embedded 'like plums in a plum-cake.' A volcanic eruption has taken place and a fair country is overwhelmed by a sea of simmering lava, steaming and seething. The motive-power of the volcano is steam and hot gas. The lava boils angrily as bubbles of gas and steam rise incessantly to the surface, spurting the lava into the air, where, maybe, it is caught by the wind and blown into long fantastic shapes. A vast cloud of aqueous vapour overhangs all, and from this torrential rain descends with many a lightning-flash and roll of thunder. The lava cools; it ceases to boil; and at last we have solid rock containing many cavities of various shapes and sizes, which are just the casts, as it were, of the steam-bubbles arrested in their ascent and imprisoned by the thickening lava. Hence their shape of an irregular ovoid, originally spherical, but drawn out as they rose in the flow of the viscous fluid. Here now, geologists agree, we have the history of the lava and the cavities in which enhydros and all other agates are found.

But the stone itself, and the water? Here geologists differ a little in their theories. In the main, however, they agree that such chalcedonic agates are deposited *from aqueous solution*, in layers, upon the walls of such cavities, by secretion, segregation, or infiltration of such solutions. There are, however, beyond this two distinct classes of theorists. We may call them the hot-water and the cold-water theorists. Hot-water containing a little alkali and under great pressure (such as exists in molten lava) dissolves silica from rocks very freely. Cold water containing alkali is but a poor solvent of silica.

The hot-water theorists hold that the formation of such stones was contemporaneous, or nearly so (a few years do not count for much to the geologist), with the formation of the lava. The lava contained much highly heated water, which was probably, and almost certainly, saturated with silicious material. As the lava cooled, the water collected in the vacuous cavities, depositing layer after layer of silica in the form of chalcedony, and actually in the case of the enhydros, or Salto water-stone, enclosing some of the mother-liquor. The cold-water theorists, however, are not in a hurry. They say that the lava was cold and the steam-cavities empty to start with. Percolating rain-water infused with *humus* acids from decaying vegetable matter slowly sank from the surface into the rock, dissolving on the way down a very small quantity of mineral alkali and silica. From the solution the stones were slowly deposited in the cavities. It has been calculated that it would require one thousand gallons of water and over one and a quarter millions of years to deposit a pound-weight of silica in this fashion! Both theories have their points, but they have also their difficulties, and the subject is too technical for discussion here. It is enough to say that they are both strongly supported. The two theories originated in Germany (once a great agate country); but each had a noble exponent in this country. The late John Ruskin the philosopher, in his writings on agates in the *Geological Magazine*, clearly supports the hot-water theory. He was a keen observer and a great thinker, but he only used a pocket-lens and reason with knowledge.

The cold-water theory for the origin of agates was very ably explained before the Geological Society of Glasgow by the late Professor Heddle of St Andrews, whose memory is deeply respected by many of his former students. He was not only a clever reasoner but a practical mineralogist and an expert analyst. In the laboratory he used balance and microscope to reveal many a secret with as great facility as he used hammer and explosive on many a Highland hill.

Perhaps both theories are correct, one to begin and another to perfect Nature's work. Enhydros of *pellucid* rock-crystal were well known to the

ancients, who cut them into spheres and polished them. They then mounted them in a gold setting as a gem-stone. Pliny mentions and describes them in his *Natural History*. The ancients held that rock-crystal was simply ice congealed by intense cold, and here actually, in the enhydros, was a standing proof of their theory! What was more likely than this, that the heart of the stone was not properly congealed and thereafter melted?

Such gem-stones were dangerous, however, for a sudden, even though moderate, heat often caused them to explode violently. For example, the heat radiated from a soldering-iron used in mounting one, and even the heat of the human mouth, caused one to burst, in the latter case lacerating the gums. The poet Claudian has several epigrams on the ancient enhydros (*vide* King on *Gems*):

> Streams which a stream in kindred prison chain,
> Which water were and water still remain,
> What art hath bound ye, by what wondrous force
> Hath ice to stone congeal'd the limpid source?
> What heat the captive saves from winter hoar,
> Or what warm zephyr warms the frozen core?
> Say in what hid recess of inmost earth,
> Prison of floating tides, thou hadst thy birth?
> What power thy substance fixed by icy spell,
> Then loosed the prisoner in his lucid cell?

Again:

> Erstwhile the boy, pleased with its polish clear,
> With gentle finger twirled the icy sphere,
> He mark'd the drops pent in its icy hold,
> Spared by the rigour of the wintry cold,
> With thirsty lips the unmoistened ball he tries,
> And the loved draught with fruitless kisses plies.

Enhydros in other substances than silica are well known. The beautiful purple-and-yellow fluor-spars of Alston Moor, England, have from time to time yielded fine specimens of these crystals, enclosing fluid cavities of considerable dimensions.

'MUSSELBURGH, *Dec.* 20, 1903.

'*To the Editor*, "*Chambers's Journal*" [with box of specimens].

'Salto Water-Stone.

'*Re* your article on the above on page 44 of the current issue, may I be permitted to send you specimens of what I take to be stones in some way similar in origin to those described?

'All of the specimens have been picked up at the seabeach at Fisherrow, and the opinion which I hold is that they have come down the river Esk with the other river-drift from the rocks in the line of its course. If examination were made up-country I make no doubt but the volcanic rock in which the stones are formed would be there found *in situ*. I have some hundreds of like pebbles, none of which now contain liquid, although it is patent that at one time each of them did. My own opinion is that these stones are of a much more recent date than the rocks which contain them, and the manner of production thus: First, the rock—a mass of molten lava—blistered up with imprisoned steam, something like the modern rubber-sponge which one sees in chemists' windows. On cooling, they of course retained their honeycomb-like structure and the cells became filled with water at a high temperature, which percolated slowly through the porous mass, carrying with it the dissolved silica. The characteristic and varying tints of the layers in these pebbles arose through impurities being absorbed by the liquid silica in its passage through the rocks, which are metallic to a degree. Hence we find the stones composed of a series of concentric and frequently beautifully coloured rings. Let us, to put the matter simply, take an empty egg-shell, the contents of which have been blown out schoolboy fashion at the ends, and let us prepare half-a-dozen flasks of gum—quick-drying for choice—which we have artificially tinted in different colours for our experiment. If we flood the inside of the shell with first one colour and then another, allowing each to thoroughly dry in turn, we shall at last, and layer by layer, fur up the shell from within, and at the same time produce something not unlike the stone in question. We shall find, most likely, by the time we have poured in the last flask of liquid that both the lower and upper hole in the egg-shell will have become clogged, and that in the centre of the egg, where the widest diameter is, a quantity of uncongealed liquid matter remains hermetically sealed up, and may thus remain indefinitely, thus approaching still nearer the character of the enhydros in question. In this simple fashion I believe these curious and pretty stones have originated in the old lavas.'

TO AN OLD FRIEND.

> THERE are men that time but mellows as it ever onward goes,
> There are hearts that carry fragrance as the fragrance of the rose;
> There are greetings that are warmer for the snowy, frosted head,
> There are mem'ries we shall treasure e'en till memory have fled.
>
> There are faces time has furrowed where are joy and sorrow blent,
> There are feet that ne'er grow weary when on deeds of kindness bent;
> There are souls that bid defiance to each worldly selfish creed,
> There are men we love to honour for each thought and word and deed.
>
> There are those who are as sunbeams as they go their daily round,
> They are worthy of remembrance, for but seldom are they found.
> So I write this humble tribute—though it needs a worthier pen—
> To a prince of Nature's moulding, one who loves his fellow-men.

SAMUEL WYATT.

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SOME PHASES OF BREAKFAST.

WHILE quite a literature has gathered round the subject of dinners and diners, the first meal of the day has found few chroniclers. And indeed, though other nations dine, the dinner in its various aspects—social, political, literary—is pre-eminently a British institution, of more importance, according to Emerson, than even trial by jury! It is to us what the *déjeuner* is to the French. At that hour, the day's work done, amid genial surroundings, tongues are naturally loosened; we are seen at our best, and a seasoning of wit gives an additional zest to the repast. But to be brilliant at breakfast is considered an insult to the digestion by some and a nuisance by more. In certain circles in the country the meal would appear to be eaten in an almost savage silence previous to the day's sport or pleasure. In town or suburb it is something to be finished with as quickly as possible—hardly ever to be lingered over as in less hurrying times. Yet in the first half of last century the 'breakfast-party' was much appreciated by the men of those more leisurely days. On these occasions conversation appears to have ranged over the most varied topics; nor was the day too young for music and song. The poet Rogers, indeed, preferred music in the morning.

In early times we hear little of breakfast, for the principal meal of the day was taken before noon. An early mention of the word is found in a household account-book for the year 1463, where the sum of elevenpence is entered under the heading, 'Expenses for Breakfast.' The meal was generally light, often consisting of a draught of ale only. When Cosmo, Grand Duke of Tuscany, was visiting England during the reign of Charles II., he mentions a breakfast at which his hosts in Oxfordshire 'passed some time at table drinking repeatedly in several sorts of Italian wines [presumably broached in his honour], according to the custom of the country, to the health and happiness of the ladies.' Venner in his book on the means of attaining a long life gives us a recipe for a light, nourishing, and comfortable breakfast—to wit, 'a couple of poached eggs seasoned with a little salt and a few cornes of pepper, also with a drop or two of vinegar if the stomach be weak, and supped off warme, eating therewith a little bread-and-butter, and drinking after a good draught of pure claret wine.' In another place he advises persons of a 'phlegmatic temperature' to take no breakfast. Another doctor of the reign of Elizabeth tells us that where the air is pure, clear, and wholesome it is best to fast till dinner.

At the close of the reign of James I. the breakfast, which was taken at ten, seems to have consisted only of drinking. Harrison, the editor of Holinshed's *Chronicle*, informs us that the odd repasts—breakfasts in the forenoon, beverages or nuntions after dinner, and theretorear suppers generally when it was time to go to bed—'thanked be God are very well left, and each one in manner (except here and there some young hungry stomach that cannot fast till dinner-time) contented himself with dinner or supper.'

However, a truly baronial breakfast—which would not disgrace a modern American board—was partaken of by the Earl of Northumberland and his family in the early part of the sixteenth century. This meal, served at the early hour of 7 A.M., consisted of a loaf of bread in a trencher, two manchets, one quart of beer, a quart of wine, half a chine of mutton, or else a chine of beef boiled; while for the nursery, instead of milk, we hear of a quart of beer and three mutton bones boiled. In the season of Lent or on fast-days, salt fish—namely, baconn'd herring, a dish of sprats, and so forth—took the place of meat. Pepys, however, though not averse to the pleasures of the table, took his draught of half a pint of Rhenish wine or a dram of strong waters in place of a morning meal.

In one of Vanbrugh's comedies, called *A Journey to London*, the provincial squire says, 'I come here to breakfast with my lady there before I went down to the house, expecting to find my family set round a civil table with her, upon some plum-cake, hot rolls, and a cup of strong beer.'

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'They are up already and call for eggs and butter,' says the chamberlain of the inn at Rochester in the First Part of *Henry IV.* Cotton in the *Compleat Angler* tells us that his diet is always 'one glass [of ale] as soon as I am dressed, and no more till dinner;' and Viator in the same work remarks, 'I will light a pipe, for that is commonly my breakfast too.'

On the other hand, Sir John Linger, in Swift's *Polite Conversation*, protests his inability to eat much at the three o'clock dinner of Lady Smart, as he had taken his share of a beefsteak and two mugs of ale with his chapman, besides a tankard of March beer as soon as he got out of bed. Tea and bread-and-butter formed the delicacies of Lady Smart's breakfast-table.

Gradually the meal became of more importance, tea and coffee took the place of ale and wine, and Swift complains of the luxurious habits of his day: 'The world must be encompassed before a washerwoman can sit down to breakfast.' The breakfast-party became fashionable in the early decades of last century, Samuel Rogers being one of the principal hosts. Round his table gathered all the wits and celebrities of the day. At his house in St James's Place Byron and Moore first came together 'over a mess of potatoes and vinegar.' It was in his dining-room that Erskine told the story of his first brief and Grattan that of his last duel, while the Iron Duke described Waterloo as a 'battle of giants.' Rogers asked people, it was currently reported, by way of probation for dinner; but his breakfast-parties were more social than his dinners, which, comparatively speaking, were affairs of necessity or form. His invitation-notes were models of penmanship and conciseness. 'Will you breakfast with me to-morrow?—S. R.,' was the pithy invitation to a celebrated wit. 'Won't I?' was the congenial response. He was fond of quoting Rousseau's profession of *un goût fin pour les déjeuners*—the time of the day when we are quietest and talk most at our ease. Greville in his *Memoirs* notes one of these breakfasts in 1831: 'Sydney Smith, Luttrell, John Russell, and Moore excessively agreeable. I never heard anything more entertaining than Sydney Smith—such bursts of merriment and so dramatic. Breakfasts are the meals for poets. I met Wordsworth and Southey at breakfast. Rogers' are always agreeable.' On another occasion he breakfasted with Taylor, the author of *Philip van Artevelde*, and met Southey as well as 'young Mill, a political economist, who seemed always working in his mind propositions or a syllogism.' Southey and Taylor, however, kept the table alive with their anecdotes. On a subsequent date, breakfasting with the same host, he found Wordsworth very merry and cheerful, courteous and talkative, and the guests had the privilege of hearing the poet hold forth on 'poetry, painting, politics, and metaphysics.' Macaulay, too, writing in 1831, tells us of a breakfast at Rogers's: 'There was nobody there but Moore. We were all on the most friendly and familiar terms possible. What a delightful picture it is! It looks out on the Green Park just at the most pleasant part.' And writing to his sister in the same year, he describes the early meal at Holland House: 'The day was fine, and I arrived at twenty minutes after ten. Our party consisted of my Lord and Lady, myself, Lord Russell, and Luttrell, a famous wit, the most popular, I think, of all the professed wits. We breakfasted on very good coffee, very good tea, and very good eggs, butter left in the midst of ice, and hot rolls.'

Moore would appear to have been somewhat jealous of his reputation as a singer, for on one occasion when a guest sang one of Moore's songs in Moore's presence, to the evident discomposure of the poet, Rogers remarked that he had seen the bravest men of his time—Nelson, Wellington, and Ney; 'but our friend is the bravest of them all.' And Sydney Smith, fearful of seeming lukewarm, in a letter to the Irish poet swears, 'by the breakfasts of Rogers and Luttrell's love of side-dishes,' that he would rather hear Moore sing than any person he had ever heard in his life, male or female. Though a confirmed Londoner, it was in Edinburgh, curiously enough, that Rogers passed what he deemed perhaps the most memorable day of his life: a certain Sunday, when, 'after breakfasting with Robertson, I heard him preach in the forenoon and Blair in the afternoon; then took coffee with the Piozzis and supped with Adam Smith.' The first time Rogers met the great economist 'he was at breakfast, eating strawberries, and he descanted on the superior flavour of those grown in Scotland.' From the same poet's *Table Talk* we gather—what indeed is pretty well known—that Coleridge was a famous talker. 'One morning,' he tells us, 'when Hookham Frere also breakfasted with me, Coleridge talked for three hours without intermission about poetry, and so admirably that I wish every word he uttered had been written down.

In illustration of this appetite for conversation, one may quote Lord Campbell, who tells us of a certain breakfast with Macaulay in his chambers in the Albany, at which Sheil and other wits were present. 'Luckily,' he continues, 'Hallam was not there, so that Macaulay had the talk almost exclusively to himself, and we had no rivalry for a display of reading and erudition.' And in sooth the historian during the two hours' talk proved himself, as usual, a Niagara of information on all subjects, 'ranging from the Greek and Latin Fathers to the last number of *Punch* and the *Times*.' Truly there were giants in the land in those days!

Sir Walter Scott, staying in Pall Mall in 1826, notes one day: 'Sam Rogers and Moore breakfasted here, and we were very merry fellows;' and on another occasion Scott mentions a breakfast at Rogers's, when his daughters as well as Lockhart were present, and the author of *The Pleasures of Memory* 'was exceedingly entertaining in his dry, quiet, sarcastic

manner.' As a rule these parties seem to have been composed of male guests only. Greville gives an amusing account of a breakfast at which he met Ranke and Macaulay, both of whom attempted to converse through the medium of very indifferent French. 'This babel of a breakfast,' he continues, 'at which it was impossible for seven people to converse in any common language, soon came to an end, and Ranke was evidently glad to go off to the State Paper Office. After he was gone Macaulay led forth, and was, as usual, very well worth listening to.'

Bishop Samuel Wilberforce was fond of this meal, and furnishes some account of a literary breakfast given for his brother Robert, at which prominent historians seem to have formed a majority of the company, which included Hallam and Mahon, Milman and Macaulay, besides 'Bancroft the American Minister.' Another of the Bishop's breakfasts, at which many of the most famous men of the day were present, was described by a noble guest as 'extremely agreeable, and would have been still more so but there was a tendency to talk very loud and all at once.'

Some foil was no doubt necessary to all this brilliance, and certain guests were chosen to play the part of appreciative audience. Thus Dean Stanley, describing a breakfast at Rogers's in 1841, when the great feature of the meal was the lively and protracted dialogue of the two poets Wordsworth and Rogers, winds up the list of celebrities present with the words, 'and three mutes.'

On the other hand, Sydney Smith, dining in company with three or four illustrious poets and Washington Irving, unkindly declared that he and Irving, if the only prose writers, were not the only prosers in the company!

Breakfast-parties were sometimes given at clubs. At Grillons, for instance, in Albemarle Street, the members breakfasted together on certain fixed days as well as dined. Bishop Wilberforce enters in his diary for May 3, 1856: 'Up before six and at new sermon—got on well. To breakfast at Grillons, a large party full of spirits;' and as late as 1873 he tells us of a breakfast at the same place, when there was a great attendance.

By this date, however, the palmy days of breakfasting were over, and luncheon, enlivened by the presence of ladies, usurped its place as a social meal. In the home-life breakfast was a cheerful meal, and is well described by Leigh Hunt: the 'delightful mixture of the lively and the snug in coming down into one's breakfast-room of a cold morning, and seeing everything prepared for us, a blazing grate, a clean tablecloth and tea-things, the newly washed faces and combed heads of a set of good-humoured urchins, and the sole empty chair at its accustomed corner ready for occupation.' This domestic phase of the meal is little altered by the hand of time, though the sentiment of its description may seem a little faded. But the breakfast-party at the present day survives only in university circles; and even at weddings has not the reception usurped its place, with its accompaniment of light refreshments instead of the elaborate toasts and often inconvenient speeches of some years ago?

THE DEAD HAND.

CHAPTER VI.

IT was an autumnal day of singular softness and beauty when the friends and trustees of Diana Vavasour assembled after luncheon in the library at Fox Hills to hear the deferred codicil of her grandmother's will. There was the pleasant combination of a fire burning on the hearth with windows standing open to the lawns and flower-beds, affording vistas of distant shrubberies and park trees glorified with the gold and crimson of a favourable season. The luncheon had been prolonged and of lavish hospitality, and the guests were in the highest spirits, awaiting the final formalities attendant on Diana's full entrance into her kingdom.

There were only three amongst the party who were conscious of deep though concealed anxiety: the young hostess herself, who had taken alarm at her lawyer's mysterious hints and the still more mysterious action of her lover, and the lover and the lawyer themselves.

Godfrey Clive had arrived early, and did not hesitate to tell her that the last month's arbitrary probation had tried his endurance to the uttermost, and that the bond he had given to her lawyer had been strained almost to breaking-point. It was evident to Diana that the interval had not cooled his ardour. It is true that at the moment of meeting he had seemed chary of protest and demonstration; but the light in his eyes as they fell upon her, and the nervous grasp of his hand, thrilled her with a glad conviction of the strength held in reserve and comforted her misgivings; her fear having been that some scruple had divided them.

So satisfied was she that she did not even press him for a fuller explanation, knowing that a few hours would leave no secrets to discover.

Diana had suggested that after the ceremonial of the day, which she felt assured would enlarge and confirm her independence, their engagement should be announced to Sir Marmaduke Spencer and one or two others of her most intimate friends; and Godfrey had answered, with a deeper significance than

she had understood, that such a moment would be the supreme triumph of his life.

He had no scruple later in making evident to Diana that his love for her was the dominant factor of his life, including and eclipsing all other interests in order that at least no doubt of his devotion should influence her decision. But it is not to be supposed that he had no misgivings nor compunction, despite the position he had taken with Mr Thornton; and the doubt pressed hard whether it would be either honourable, just, or manly to accept the surrender should it be offered.

It was one thing to nurse an exalted ideal in the dreary monotony of his daily life, and quite another to put it to the test of Diana's contrary experience. Never had her inheritance looked more desirable or her delight in it more justifiable than on this golden October morning, and she had unconsciously wrung his soul by leading him over her demesne and exulting in what she possessed—in order to bestow.

But now the crucial hour was arrived, and Mr Thornton, in the midst of a smiling, mildly expectant audience, broke the seals of the envelope he had drawn forth from a locked leather receptacle, and read aloud in a clear, hard voice the codicil of the late Mrs Lorimer's will:

'From that date forward—October 7, 1888, being the twenty-fifth birthday of Diana Vavasour—all the emoluments and profits of the estates known as Fox Hills, with the inclusive treasures of the dwelling-house, were bequeathed and devised to the said Diana Vavasour, her beloved granddaughter, to be enjoyed according to her good pleasure in life, and to be disposed of at her death at her own discretion, under the one condition that she should remain unmarried. But in the event of her marrying, the said property was to be wholly and entirely transferred to the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, to be applied to the reduction of the National Debt.'

The testatrix added that she made this stipulation under a solemn sense of responsibility and duty.

The effect of this revelation was profound, producing in the audience a sense of bewilderment, almost of stupefaction. When this had passed a suppressed murmur of dissenting and protesting voices arose. In view of the beautiful and vigorous girl before them, the unanimous feeling was that here was a cruel illustration of the tyranny of the dead hand.

Naturally all eyes were turned in her direction; but Diana sat without any outward show of emotion except that her face had grown white and set.

Godfrey, who had taken up a position during the reading of the codicil where he could see Diana without being himself seen, was baffled by her expression. All that it told to him or others was that the shock had been severe.

Sir Marmaduke Spencer, the old friend of the deceased lady and the co-trustee under her will, was the first to retrieve the situation. He went up to Diana and took friendly hold of her reluctant hands.

'The one consolation, my dear young lady,' he said, trying to be jocular, 'is that there is not a man amongst us worthy of the châtelaine of Fox Hills.'

Diana rallied enough to respond with a smile, but appropriate words failed her; she felt as though her heart were grown cold and her tongue tied.

Others, too, came forward and said their say according to their respective lights; but as it was obvious to all that their hostess needed to be alone, and as also free discussion amongst themselves was of pressing necessity, the guests one by one took their leave.

There were two exceptions. The old lawyer and Dr Godfrey Clive remained.

Of these three, each was acutely sensible of the presence of the others; but Godfrey made the first movement. He came forward and stood by the side of Diana's chair, ignoring a sign of prohibition on Thornton's part, who was watching events with acute apprehension.

'Dear'—— he began tentatively, and the poignant accent of his voice pierced her through with anguish; she shrank back from the touch he would have laid upon her arm, and cried in a sharp, cutting tone:

'Wait, wait! I am not ready.'

Then the lawyer interposed, and sitting down beside her, began to relate in moving detail the story of Mrs Lorimer's unhappy married life, and of the life, scarcely less unhappy, of Diana's own mother. He explained with great tenderness that the hard conditions of the codicil were nothing but the outcome of her grandmother's loving anxiety, and that the hope which had cheered her deathbed was that Diana was saved from possible disappointment, and would be able to find full satisfaction, without risk, in the duties and privileges of her splendid position.

Diana seemed to revive as Thornton spoke; her colour returned, and she drew her breath in deep sighs of relief.

Godfrey had stepped outside, and walked to and fro beneath the open windows while the lawyer talked.

Diana's manner baffled him; but his own resolution was taken, and he was striving to bring all the insurgent passions of the natural man into subjection to his conscience and will.

Presently he heard his name called by her. Mr Thornton had fulfilled his function, and was preparing to take his leave.

As he went out he looked significantly at the doctor and whispered, 'Remember!'

Diana waited till his footsteps had died away in the distance; then she motioned Godfrey to come nearer. He went forward and knelt on the cushion at her feet; the beautiful pale face above him showed like some fine cameo against the background of her high carved chair, and the eyes that met his were full of an unutterable woe.

He dropped his own, unable to endure the smart;

then suddenly she leaned towards him and suffered him to hold her in his close embrace.

'We were so happy,' she murmured with her lips against his cheek, 'so happy—an hour ago! Will you let me go, Godfrey?'

He had a suffocating sense of being bound and gagged, not by the pledge exacted from him in his interview with Thornton, but by the relentless demands of honour. Never had Diana, still clinging to him with an abandonment born of despair, appeared so womanly and endearing. Every nerve of his body thrilled beneath her touch.

He disengaged himself and put her back tenderly against the cushions of her chair.

'Let us face the situation,' he said, 'and decide what is right to be done.'

Diana quickened with a woman's pique. 'What is right to be done!' she repeated. 'That is the question that appeals to you as it always did; not what my heart cries out for, and yours too, unless you have deceived me, Godfrey.'

'In a sense I have deceived you,' was his answer; 'for I have never dared to let you know the mastery that your dear love had gained over me. I feel honour-bound to tell you that I knew of this before, and had meant to suffer you—supposing that your generosity reached so high—to give up all for me'—— He stopped.

'And now?' she asked, under her breath.

'Wiser and juster thoughts prevail'——

She interrupted him.

'That means you are going to cast me off? I may refuse to be cast off. Only this deters me: I should come to you as a beggar maid.'

'Would to God you could so come, Diana, under any other condition than that you beggared yourself for my poor sake! I am not worth—no man would be worth—the sacrifice; but even this is not the barrier that parts us.'

'You mean that my dead grandmother holds me in bonds?'

'I mean that she has laid a burden upon your shoulders that you cannot shake off because you ought to bear the load. I mean, dear, that you must accept the claims and duties of your great inheritance, and heal your heart by finding out the noblest uses for it. Passion blinded me at first; but now I see clearly.'

He rose as he spoke and turned away from her reproachful gaze.

'And this is your last word? You mean that you will shut yourself out of my life?'

He hesitated, knowing how hard the alternative would be; but there was the note of pain in her voice, and he yielded his will to hers.

'No,' he said, 'I am your friend at command for ever;' and then he added in a lower voice as her sweet eyes met his, 'and I shall be your lover until death.'

'No, no,' she cried, 'not that! I shall never marry; but you—you are free as air.'

He smiled. 'I accept my freedom to be used at my own discretion, Diana. Just now, for a little while, we will not meet.'

They had drawn together for their leave-taking, when Diana said, with some return to her natural vivacity, and with her hands clasping his, 'I am not sure but that I have played the hypocrite. You have renounced me, Godfrey; but had it been otherwise—I doubt myself.'

'Dear,' he answered, 'the situation did not admit of a doubt. Your duty was as plain as mine. I take away with me the memory of the noblest love that ever a woman gave to a man who was lifted by it beyond his own deserving. There was nothing else that we could do.'

'Oh,' she said as he bent over her and kissed her with the concentrated feeling of a lifelong separation, 'you found out the best that was in me. It was a dream, a golden dream; it is hard to be so roughly awoke.'

'Yes,' he repeated, 'it was a dream, a golden dream; and the memory of it shall serve to strengthen us through all the years to come. But, after all, my dear one, men and women do their work better for being awake. With God's help, so will you and I.'

THE END.

A BRETON GENTLEMAN OF FORMER DAYS.

PON the rocky heights which rise above the town of St Malo there is a grave fashioned some years before his death by the desire of Chateaubriand for his last resting-place. He had been born within the sound of those waves, and there he wished to lie when life was over. Certainly, his had been a very varied existence—viewed politically, perhaps a failure, for his dream of reconciling the traditions of the monarchy with the interests and rights of the people was never realised; but as a literary genius the name of Chateaubriand will live for ever.

He was born in 1768, on the 4th of September, and was immediately given over to the care of a nurse who dwelt in the neighbouring village. Seeing how frail the infant was, she—as a devout Catholic—carried him to an altar called the Altar of Our Lady of Nazareth, and there vowed that should she succeed in rearing him he should wear the Virgin's colours of blue and white until he was seven years old. The child lived and thrived, and in due course was removed from the care of his peasant nurse and taken home. It was a sombre, silent household, and the little boy was not happy there. The Chateaubriand family then consisted of the father, whose

one interest and desire was to restore the somewhat decayed glory of his name; the mother, who passed her days in dreamy, inactive melancholy; and an elder son and four daughters.

As he grew, the little Chateaubriand learned that he was to enter the navy, and as soon as he was old enough he was sent off to the College of Dol. From Dol he passed in due course to Rennes, and afterwards to Brest. There he grew weary of his studies and disgusted with his future prospects, so he went home to the old manor of Cambourg, which by that time his father had succeeded in regaining from alien hands.

In the *Mémoires d'outre Tombe* Chateaubriand describes his youth: its isolation, its caprices, its aspirations, and its bitter disappointments. It tells of his rambles alone in the silence of the woods, of his dreams concerning what he might do and might be; then the awakening to reality in the evening at home—a home which seemed gloomy as a sepulchre. The life was unwholesome for any youth. In his case it engendered fits of melancholy, in one of which the lad attempted suicide—fortunately unsuccessfully. His father's mind was now set upon this son entering the priesthood, but all persuasion, all insistence, was useless; so a sub-lieutenancy was obtained after some little delay, and Chateaubriand was despatched to Cambrai. On his way he saw the city of Paris for the first time—and who of us can forget first impressions of that wonderful city? The death of his father caused the young soldier to withdraw from his regiment and return to his native Brittany. Between the year 1787 and 1788 he unfortunately became entangled in some of the unhappy quarrels of that period between the nobles and the bourgeois, and this led to his departure for Paris, where he witnessed the taking of the Bastille and the terrible events of the 5th October. Malesherbes —with whom he was on terms of intimacy—persuaded him that he would do well to keep out of France for a while; so Chateaubriand started for America, very poorly provided with money, yet that little was all he could get together. He visited Baltimore and Philadelphia, and dined with Washington; then started for New York and Boston.

In crossing the Atlantic, Chateaubriand had formed some rather indefinite project of trying to discover the north-west passage; but this he renounced when he found it would necessitate learning the languages of the different tribes of Red Indians, and also familiarising himself with all the habits and customs of the backwoodsmen. So he changed his plans, and when the news of the arrest of Louis XIV. reached him, while he was at Niagara, he lost no time in setting sail for France. He had experienced all the horror of shipwreck before he joined his mother at St Malo.

The next notable event in the changeful life of Chateaubriand was his marriage with Mademoiselle de Savigny, and the effort of one of her uncles to obtain a dissolution of that union on the ground of the lady's being a minor. The prosecution of the newly-made husband for violation of the law followed; but the tribunal refused to annul the marriage. This influenced Chateaubriand's resolve to leave France again, and to join the army of the royalist princes at Trèves. It was an army composed of gentlemen of all ages and from every province, commanded by the Prince de Condé. We read that Chateaubriand went through the entire campaign with a musket the hammer of which could not be pulled down by the trigger or in any other way. The siege of Thionville was a failure. The royalists succeeded in entering Verdun, but soon had to leave it in hot haste, for a panic took possession of many, and others fell victims to disease.

Chateaubriand's project was to get to Jersey and there join the army of émigrés from Brittany; but to manage this he must cross from Ostend, and how was he to make his way there? Wounded in one of his thighs, weakened by fever, and with only eighteen francs in his pocket, he began walking that journey of full two hundred leagues. Sometimes he got a lift in a peasant's cart, and now and then he slept in a barn by the roadway; but when he got to Famizoul he was so ill that he lay down in a ditch —to die, as he thought. Fortunately the driver of one of the Prince de Ligne's wagons found him in this condition, and took him on as far as Namur. There, at the gate of the city, the soldier on guard gave him a sip of brandy and a morsel of bread; but only by supporting himself against the walls of houses could the luckless Chateaubriand advance a step. Again a wagoner pitied him and carried him on to Brussels; but in that city not an innkeeper would give him a lodging lest he should infect the place with disease.

By a fortunate accident, his brother the Comte de Chateaubriand came across him, and at once obtained a room for him and sent him a physician. But that indomitable spirit of his drove him on again, and so at last he reached the coast and embarked on a boat going from Ostend to some port in Germany. On arriving there he was thought to be dying, and the captain had him deposited on the quay, with his back against the wall and his face turned to the sea. However, next morning he started once more, and this time succeeded in reaching Jersey, where he had an uncle who could take him in.

But a ruined family, living in exile, cannot give long hospitality; so after a short stay Chateaubriand started for London, the possessor of thirty louis which his relatives in Brittany had raised among them. At that time a colony of French emigrants had taken refuge in England, subsisting upon the little they could earn one way or other. Pelletier, himself engaged as an editor, obtained for Chateaubriand some employment in translating. But he and his friend Hingart, who lived together, often suffered from actual hunger, though they practised a rigid economy. Once for five entire days this Breton gentleman existed upon one penny loaf and some *eau sucrée*, and often he felt an almost maddening desire for the food he saw in the shops but could

not purchase. He used in after-years to tell of a winter night when, for two hours, he could not tear himself away from the sight of the hams, dried fruits, and other eatables on sale in a certain warehouse. He felt as though he could have consumed even the baskets and boxes. On the fifth of those terrible and never-to-be-forgotten days, when he returned to his lodging, Chateaubriand found that Hingart—delirious from starvation—had tried to stab himself with a penknife. This decided him to accept, for his friend's sake, the alms which the British Government bestowed on refugees, and which he had hitherto refused. Then the relatives of Hingart, hearing what had happened, managed to spare eight pounds from their small means; and this, being sent from Brittany, seemed almost like a mine of gold to both men after such suffering. To Chateaubriand it gave courage to work at his *Essai Historique*, already commenced in that small, dreary attic with window looking on a graveyard.

At last came the downfall of the Jacobins! One of the first to return to his native land was Chateaubriand. The publication of his *Atala* followed very soon, and resulted in an immediate success. The *Génie du Christianisme*, which appeared one year later, placed him in the foremost rank of authors at that time, and led Bonaparte (then First Consul) to appoint Chateaubriand secretary to the embassy at Rome. Later he was named as French Minister at Valais, and was busily preparing to go to his post when he heard of the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, and instantly sent in his resignation. Returning to private life, he was able to indulge his taste for literature and for travel; so he took that journey to the East of which we read in the *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem*. On his return he became proprietor of a journal called the *Mercure;* but it was suppressed on account of an article containing some political allusions.

Chateaubriand's circumstances now permitted him to purchase a property in the Vallée aux Loups, and there he retired to work at *Les Martyrs*, which was published in 1809, but created no enthusiasm. About that time a vacancy in the French Academy resulted in the election of Chateaubriand; but the discourse he delivered contained some allusions which displeased Napoleon, and it was not allowed to be published.

Being obliged to fly during the Hundred Days, he followed Louis XVIII. to Ghent, and was made Minister of the Interior *ad interim;* but then came the second restoration, and Chateaubriand was appointed ambassador, first to Vienna and then to London. It was not until the Revolution of July that he resigned all his appointments and his seat in the Chamber of Peers, never again appearing in public. After that date his sole labour was the superintendence of a complete edition of all his works, which yielded him the sum of five hundred and fifty thousand francs.

In the year 1847 the friends of Chateaubriand saw that he was fast failing; but he lived to see the government of his country once more in the hands of the Republican party, and did not expire until the 4th of July 1848, in the house he always occupied when he was in Paris, situated in the *Rue du Bac*. So, to the grave on the heights above St Malo. But truly of him and other great men it may be said, 'To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die.'

THE CHANGED TRUNK.

By S. Baring-Gould.

I DO not believe that there exists a scene more distracting, and at the same time more farcical, than the inspection of the passengers' luggage at Charing Cross on the arrival of the 5.15 mail in the evening of every day save Sunday. That train has brought travellers from Brindisi by express through Paris, also those who come from Germany by Cologne and Brussels, and from the Riviera, and the swarm that pours from Paris itself, as well as a contingent from other places on the Continent.

On the arrival of the train a barrier is erected—over which a policeman keeps guard—between a dense mass of passengers impatient to get at their personal belongings and the counters arranged like an ancient Roman dining-table, on which a swarm of porters plant the portmanteaus, trunks, boxes, and baskets that contain the impedimenta of the travellers.

When the policeman thinks fit he removes the barrier, and the passengers boil about the counters, clamouring for their property, rattling their keys, and vowing that they have nothing to declare. The Custom-House officers go through the farce of examining, in a perfunctory manner, half-a-dozen of the trunks, and then these are shouldered or run away on trucks by the porters in expectation of shilling tips.

The confusion is heightened by the fact that some of the passengers have halted on their way at Brussels, or Amiens, or Lisle, or Boulogne, and their luggage has come on before them, and is heaped up in the Custom-House—a sort of cabin in two compartments on the unoccupied side of the three-sided counter.

I was, on a certain occasion, in this situation. I had registered my portmanteau or trunk—it was a cross between them—at Cologne, and had tarried for a couple of days, *en route*, at Brussels. When I arrived at Charing Cross I secured a young and active porter with a retaining-fee of a shilling,

and said to him, 'Look here, my man, I have to catch a train at Waterloo. We are late, as usual, by half-an-hour. Unless I get out my trunk at once and on to a cab I shall miss my train. It is in the Custom-House, as I sent it on from Cologne.'

'All right, sir; you follow me.'

He led the way within the space round which the passengers were dancing and jostling one another, and were clamouring and holding out their keys, and together we entered the cabin designated 'Custom-House.' It was choked up with luggage.

'Which is it, sir?' he asked; and he began to tumble the boxes and portmanteaus about unceremoniously.

'There you are,' I said when I recognised mine, as I believed. 'Out with it, and on to a cab like a streak of lightning.'

'Anything to declare?' asked a Custom-House officer.

'Nothing. I have a beastly two ounces of foreign tobacco in my pocket, to which you are welcome. Hang me if I smoke another pipeful of the filthy stuff!'

He let my luggage pass without trouble, and in three minutes I was spinning away to Waterloo.

I just caught my train.

In the evening I sat down in my snug little box in the country to such a dinner as I had not tasted in foreign hotels: a leg of Welsh mutton, not baked, but roasted before a fire. Mutton! They do not know what mutton is in France or Germany. Mutton! We do not know what it is in England if we persist in having it baked.

And then I had out a bottle of my old port. I never even venture to ask for such a thing over the water. Not even in Oporto do they know what good old port is like.

'I beg pardon, sir,' said my servant, coming to me as I was engaged on my dessert, 'I don't think, sir, that you have got your portmanteau.'

'What? I brought it with me.'

'I am very sorry, sir, but I think not. Have you the key, sir?'

'Yes, here it is. It is all right; only knocked out of shape. That confounded Calais-Dover boat is death or disfigurement to all luggage.'

The man took the key, and I filled my glass again. To return, after nine months' absence, to English port, to Scotch whisky, and Welsh mutton is a joy to the Briton. It is really worth while travelling, so as to be able to revel, later on, in the good things to be found in one's own land.

As a rule I unpack my own portmanteau. A valet is all very well for coats and trousers and vests and linen; but when one returns from the Continent there are a score of things that had best be handled by one's own fingers: little bits of china, antiques, lace—presents for friends.

However, on this occasion I was weary, and willing to let my man take out and arrange the contents of my travelling-trunk, though I knew that on the morrow I would not know where to look for what it had contained.

'I beg pardon, sir,' said my valet, entering again; 'but the portmanteau is not yours.'

'Not mine!' I exclaimed, and started up. 'Not mine!' I repeated. 'Why, good heavens! then some one else must have laid hold of my trunk.'

'I have opened it, sir—the key fits; but I am quite sure that the contents cannot belong to you.'

I ran upstairs to my bedroom and viewed my portmanteau. It certainly resembled mine very strongly—it was its twin-sister; but it was not mine. Mine had been sealed with leaden balls at Cologne to ensure its passage unopened through the Custom-House on the Belgian frontier. This was deficient in these seals. Moreover, when opened it disclosed contents I should have been ashamed to acknowledge: shabby suits, frayed linen, and a score of French novels.

'Well,' said I, 'this is awkward.' There was, indeed, no address on mine. An address is not needed at foreign stations when you book your luggage through. 'This is, most assuredly, not mine; and, what is worse, mine—that has fallen into other hands—contains things of value. There is no address on this trunk, is there?'

'None whatever, sir.'

'By hook or by crook I must discover who has mine,' said I. 'It contains not only my dress-suit, but also my diary and twenty pounds in German bank-notes, besides things that I bought.'

I searched the contents of the trunk, but the only clue to the owner that I could find was a letter, without envelope, in one of the yellow paper-covered novels. It was headed 'Rushy Park, Swampham, Essex.' It began, 'My own dearest Freddy,' and ended with 'Ever, darling, yours, Mabel Hope-Rush.'

It had been written ten days before I came upon it. I did not read the letter. It was doubtless from a wife to her husband who was from home, and such communications are sacred. After turning over in my head what to do, I resolved on enclosing the letter in a note to Mrs Hope-Rush, stating how I had come by it, and requesting to be furnished with the address of the gentleman who probably had got my trunk in exchange for his own.

Rushy Park sounded well—too well to be congruous with the shabby clothes; but I supposed that it was an old park that had been broken up into building lots and studded with semi-genteel villas.

Two days later I received a reply that astonished me:

'Rushy Park, Swampham.

'Sir,—I am obliged to you for sending me a letter written—not by me—to a most objectionable personage; a personage whom we do not desire to know, and with whom we absolutely refuse to hold communication.—I remain, yours truly,

'Mary Hope-Rush.'

Here was a pretty predicament into which I had stumbled. I had addressed the letter to Mrs M. Hope-Rush, and it had fallen into the hands of a Mary instead of a Mabel.

Then it was vastly aggravating, for it left me as ignorant as before concerning the name and whereabouts of the individual who had my portmanteau.

I now regretted that I had not written to Mr Hope-Rush, instead of to his wife. Men act on reason, and not on impulse.

I now wrote to Mr Hope-Rush:

'SIR,—I regret that I am compelled to trouble you with a letter; but I am still without my portmanteau and without any information as to who "Freddy" is, who, I believe, has by mistake taken mine, whilst I have his. As mine contains articles of clothing and objects of value, I am naturally anxious to recover it. May I ask you, most kindly, to favour me with the address of "Freddy," and so greatly to oblige yours faithfully,

'ERNEST MALTRAVERS?'

To this I received a curt reply:

'Mr Hope-Rush is quite unable to comply with Mr Maltravers's request to furnish him with the address of Mr Frederick Jones, and it is his desire to hear nothing on such a very unpleasant subject.'

So much was gained—I had learned the surname of the man who presumably had my trunk. But the gain was not much. Jones is a common enough name. Wales teems with Joneses.

The situation was puzzling; but I fancied I saw daylight. It appeared to me probable that there was a daughter of the Hope-Rush family called Mabel, who had become attached to and engaged herself to this Fred Jones; and the parents strongly disapproved of her conduct. That they were justified in their disapproval I was convinced; for in my trunk was my diary with my address in it, also a letter of credit which had accompanied a number of cheques that I had cashed abroad, and my address was on the envelope that contained the *lettre d'indication*. Now, if Mr Fred Jones had been a gentleman he would have at once communicated with me, and told me that he was in possession of my luggage. He had done no such thing, and I set him down as a 'howling cad.'

All the more necessary was it for me to get my property out of his hands. But how was I to do so?

Very possibly Mr and Mrs Hope-Rush did not know the man's address, and they were too proud and angry to ask their daughter for it, so as to oblige me.

The only way in which I could procure it would be by application to Miss Mabel herself; but I shrank from doing this by letter. I was driven to a course which was repugnant to my feelings; but the obstinacy or the pride of the parents obliged me to it, and really I could not sacrifice my trunk with all its contents to humour them. After mature consideration, I resolved on paying a visit to the village of Rushford, by Swampham. It was probable that I might there gain what I desired without having recourse to Miss Hope-Rush. If I failed I must trust to the chapter of accidents, and endeavour to meet her and extort from her the address of 'Freddy.'

Accordingly I took the train to town, and thence to the nearest station to Rushy. There I hired a trap and drove to the village, and was deposited at the little inn, the 'Rush Arms.'

I engaged a bed, ordered dinner at half-past seven, and asked the landlord to do me the honour of sharing my dinner with me.

I found him a genial, consequential fellow. His port was of an undrinkable quality, so I ordered Scotch whisky, and with that he was more at home.

'That was a fine park I passed,' I said, 'and a good house in it, as far as I could judge from the road.'

'You may say that,' he remarked. 'It belongs to the Hope-Rush family. They were Hopes—that is to say, a Mr Hope married Miss Rush, who was the heiress'—he pronounced Hope as 'Ope—'and now they call themselves Hope-Rush. He is a quiet, harmless sort of man, who can't call his soul his own. She is the manager, and wears the breeches.'

'A large family?'

'No; only a daughter, Miss Mabel.'

'Ah, to be sure,' said I. 'You are not filling up your glass. This is excellent whisky; where do you get it? You must give me the address of the man who supplies you.' It was abominable stuff. 'To be sure, Miss Mabel; I have heard of some entanglement there; it is the talk of the town.'

'Well, sir,' said the landlord, with a knowing look, 'I'm not surprised at that. Miss Mabel is an heiress. But she's young and foolish, and there was a reg'lar bu'st-up over it.'

'A Mr Frederick Jones was mixed up in the matter,' said I, with a wink.

'Yes, Mr Freddy, the brother of the village schoolmistress as was. But, owing to the row, she has had to leave.'

'Why, what had she to do with it?'

'Well, she thought her brother equal to mate with any lady—she did. But the 'Ope-Rushes they are proud, and kicked up a bobbery, and she had to go.'

'Do you chance to know where she is now?' I asked. It would be more becoming if I obtained the address from the sister than from Miss Mabel.

'No, I can't say that I do,' answered the landlord. 'She's gone a-visiting her relations and looking out for a new situation, and she said she'd write and give us her address when she was settled. She is a tidy sort of a person, and her only drawback was the brother. She well-nigh worshipped him, and he was no good for anything.'

'But,' said I, 'how came this about—I mean

this entanglement? The stations in life were so different and so disproportioned.'

'Well, sir, Cupid is a queer customer, and you can't say where his arrows will fall. The young lady was always very interested in the school, and accustomed to go there to see how the needlework was executed, and to take a Bible-class now and again. So I suppose she met Mr Freddy there. He is a good-looking fellow, with a nice moustache and pleasant ways. But he has no work in him, and sponges on his sister. I suppose that they met at the school, and a liking came about that way. It went on for some months before it was suspected, and then there was a fine kick-up, I can assure you, and Mr Freddy had to walk his chalks. He gave out that he was going to Paris to be tutor in a nobleman's family, and the sister, Miss Jones, had to give up the school. We were sorry to lose her; but she ought to have known better than to encourage these goings-on.'

I had learned sufficient.

It was clear that my only chance of obtaining the address of Mr Fred Jones was through Miss Mabel, and I should encounter some difficulty in doing that. I made inquiries as to her habits, and learned that she was wont to go about a good deal on her bicycle.

I accordingly went to Swampham and hired one of these contrivances, and I spent some time in careering up and down the road before the Park gates, but without result for three days. On the fourth, however, I was more successful. I saw her twirl out of the main entrance, where was the lodge, and spin along the highway in the direction of Swampham.

I put on pace sufficient to keep her in sight, till a slight hill was reached, where she slackened, and I then ran on and caught her up.

We proceeded almost side by side for a little way, and then I came up quite level with her, and turning my head, said, 'I have a message for you, Miss Hope-Rush.'

'From mamma?' she asked, thinking at the moment that I had been sent after her from the Hall.

'No. It is a message for you to transmit to Mr Frederick Jones.'

The colour mounted to her temples, and further relaxing her speed, she got off her cycle.

'What do you mean?' she inquired.

'It is as I say—a message to be conveyed to him, unless you will favour me with his address, in which case I will carry the communication to him personally.'

'What is it?' she asked suspiciously.

'It is a message from his portmanteau that has got into my hands and is clamouring to be restored to its rightful owner.'

'Oh!' she exclaimed, and waxed angry, 'you are the gentleman who thought it a proper thing to do to send my letter under cover to mamma.'

'I did not read your letter. Seeing that it began and ended affectionately, I somewhat carelessly concluded that it was a letter from a wife to her absent husband.'

Miss Hope-Rush turned her head from me to conceal the crimson that suffused it.

'It got into mamma's hands, and'—— she began, and stammered.

I interrupted her. 'I know. It led to very unpleasant scenes. But with them I have nothing to do. It is about Mr Frederick's portmanteau, or trunk—call it which you will—that I have come to speak. In fact, I act as the spokesman for this piece of luggage. It contains his garments, his razors, his tooth-brush and comb, and a little box of tooth-powder, so that Mr Jones must be in great distress for want of these necessary articles. In addition, there are his slippers in the trunk, so that the poor fellow has to wear his boots indoors as well as out. Conceive the discomfort to him!'

'Oh dear! I am so sorry,' said Miss Hope-Rush. 'What can I do?'

'I want the address of Mr Jones,' said I, 'so that I may restore to him his garments, slippers, tooth-brush, and sundry other articles forming the contents of the trunk.'

'Did you write to mamma for the address?'

'I did, and she did not send it to me.'

'She does not know it. Freddy—I mean Mr Jones—has been in Paris, but he is now in London. I—I think I have been very foolish, and now I wish that I had never met Freddy; but we became engaged, and I am tied—I cannot help myself; he can hold me to my promise. So I am in a cleft stick.'

'Then you really regret this engagement?'

'I—well, I think I was very indiscreet. If it were to come all over again I would act very differently.'

'Give me his address, Miss Hope-Rush,' said I, 'and let me see what I can do with him.'

She took out a pocket-book and wrote on a blank page the address that I required and handed it to me.

'Thank you,' said I. 'Now for the portmanteau, to send it flying to its true owner.'

I had nothing further to detain me at Rushford, and that same evening I paid my bill at the village inn and departed for town.

The address with which I was furnished was a street in Shepherd's Bush.

Next forenoon I betook myself to it. I found the house in a shabby back street, and I rang and rapped at the door. In response appeared a slatternly landlady.

'Is Mr Frederick Jones at home?' I asked.

'He is in his lodging,' replied she; 'upstairs, first floor, door on the right.'

She did not ask for my card or volunteer to lead the way. I ascended and tapped with my knuckles at the door indicated, and heard a shout, '*Entrez!*'

Mr Jones was so fresh from France that appa-

rently he had forgotten that he was on English soil. I entered, and found myself in a small parlour, with Japanese fans stuck about the walls, and cheap, showy glass and porcelain vases and mugs on Swiss brackets in the corners.

Mr Jones was seated with his feet in stocking-soles, one on each jamb of the fireplace, in which no fire burned. His boots were thrown, one here, one there, on the floor. On the table stood a pewter with stout in it.

'Hallo!' was his salutation. 'Who may you be?'

'My name,' said I, 'is Maltravers.'

'Oh, blow it!' was his interjection.

'I have come,' I continued, 'to reclaim my trunk, which, by an unfortunate accident, has got into your possession and yours has come into mine. If you will kindly allow me to remove mine, I will send you yours directly I get back to my house in Hampshire. Here is my card.'

Then I noticed, to my disgust, that Mr Jones was habited in my garments.

'Oh, the trunk! Hang it!—yes, the trunk is at your disposal.'

'With its contents? I think you have on my coat and waistcoat and continuations.'

'Yes. You see, I was left badly provided, as most of my garments were in the trunk you seem to have got hold of. No offence; none meant. Necessity knows no law.'

'There were other articles with my luggage. Would you favour me by letting me have my portmanteau and its contents, only minus what you are now wearing?'

'Oh, certainly! Awfully sorry; but I fear you will not find all you want in it just at this moment.'

'What is missing?'

'Some things,' replied Mr Jones airily. 'Have a drink? Only stout. I dare say you are dry.'

'Thank you kindly for the offer, but really I am not thirsty. What articles are short, and how come they to be not in my trunk?'

'Well, several articles—guess. Confound it all! Why did you not apply earlier?'

'I could not; I had not your address. But allow me to observe that my name and address were in my trunk.'

'Ah, I dare say; but—Jemini! I did not look very close. Where did you lose it?'

'At Charing Cross. I came over in the boat from Calais.'

'Ditto,' said he. 'What sort of a passage did you have?'

'Never mind about that now,' I remarked. 'I want to have my goods returned.'

'I give thee all—I can no more,' said he, rising, entering the adjoining bedroom, and dragging into the parlour my own portmanteau. 'There you are,' said he; 'take it away. The old hag downstairs will summon a cab for you.'

'Excuse me,' said I; 'I must just look at the contents. You have yourself laid the obligation on me by hinting that all my belongings are not in it.'

'No more they are. Deucedly sorry; but facts are stubborn things.'

'There was,' said I, kneeling on the shabby carpet beside the open trunk—'there was a complete set of Apostle spoons. Complete sets are rare; they were silver-gilt and of Nuremberg make, sixteenth century, wrapped up in pink tissue-paper. I don't see them. Where may they be?'

'Up the spout.'

'There was, as well, a diamond brooch I had bought at Frankfort for my sister. That seems to be no longer here.'

'Up the spout as well.'

'And a peculiarly rare piece of Meissen china that cost me a pretty penny.'

'Spouted,' said Mr Jones.

'Really,' said I, getting angry, 'this is going too far. You were absolutely unjustified in doing this. My letter-case'——

'Oh, that's all right! The case is at your disposal, free, gratis, and for nothing.'

'Yes,' said I, opening it, 'I see that the case is here, but not its contents. There were German bank-notes to the tune of five hundred marks.'

'Pray don't mention it.'

'But mention it I must. Where are they?'

'Well, I changed them for English sovereigns. I am deucedly sorry. You will have to trust me till my ship comes in, when I will repay. I will surrender to you the pawnbroker's tickets for the spoons, the china, and the brooch. Cohen & Co. gave me precious little for the lot. I was hard up; my dividends had not come in. Be a good fellow: you look it. You carry amiability in your countenance. Say no more about it; forgive and forget. What can't be cured must be endured.'

'This will not do,' said I. 'I greatly regret to have to speak strongly.'

'Oh, speak strong as mustard; I don't mind.'

'I must not only speak, but act.'

'I tender you my most abject apologies. What more would you have?'

'Mr Jones,' said I, 'you treat this matter very lightly; but I cannot meet you in the same mood. Here is the letter of change in my letter-case, with my name and address on it, and in common honesty you ought to have written to me and informed me that you had my property in your hands. And, mind you, whilst you had it, knowing it was mine, you were bound to respect it. You knew whose things, whose money, you had become possessed of, and you took no steps to return them. On the contrary, you appropriated them to your own use.'

'I confess it. Awfully penitent—cover my head with dust and ashes. 'Pon my soul,' said Mr Jones, 'I'll give you what I can. But you can't squeeze water out of a stone. I haven't much cash about me—something like five pounds. Bleed me of that

if you will; and as to the pawn-tickets, I cheerfully surrender them. You can get your goods out of Cohen & Co. for a trifle.'

'This will not do. I shall have to place the matter with the police.'

'Hang it! Be a brick; don't do that.'

'Under the circumstances I must.'

'I would satisfy you if I could; but I'm impecunious—it is an infirmity from which I have long suffered.'

'You refuse to refund?'

'I can't do it. I have the best intentions.'

'Intentions will not satisfy me.'

'Here, take a drink,' said he, as he turned out his pockets on the table. 'There you are—five pounds three and fourpence. That is all I am worth at the present moment. Take it, and go, with my blessing. If you had come here three days ago you would have found more; if three days later, I bet you my bottom dollar, none at all.'

'Mr Jones,' said I, 'you do not face the situation seriously. But I do. It is my determination to have you arrested.'

'That is rough on a poor devil,' said he. '"The quality of mercy is not strained; it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven." Don't act the Shylock on this petty stage.'

'Mr Jones,' I said, 'I am open to a compromise.'

'That's another figure.'

'I am prepared to leave you to enjoy the suit of clothes you have appropriated, and I am willing to make you a present of the twenty pounds you have so fraudulently obtained; but on one condition.'

'Name it, sir.'

'That you sit down at this table and write a letter to Miss Mabel Hope-Rush, renouncing all claims on her hand.'

'I say, that is rather tall.'

'Either the police-court or that. There is no other alternative. You must also hand over to me all her letters to you.'

He screwed up his mouth and debated. He was a good-looking fellow; a thorough scatterbrain, as I could see, living from hand to mouth, and acting on momentary impulse.

'Well, blow it! what must be, must. The gods bow to necessity, so why not Mr Frederick Jones? What shall I write?'

I placed before him paper and a pen, and brought a penny ink-pot from the chimney-piece.

'Now,' said I, 'write from my dictation, and legibly:

'DEAR MISS MABEL HOPE-RUSH,—I regret that I was so foolish and so criminal as to trifle with your young affections. Now I write to relinquish all claims upon you, and to release you from any engagement you may have contracted to me. You have your freedom. I am engaged to another.'

'Engaged to another!' exclaimed Mr Jones. 'How in the name of wonder did you hear about Louise?'

'I found a photograph in your portmanteau with her name on it.'

'Well, go ahead. It is not an engagement exactly, but I will call it what you like. Anything to oblige a friend.'

'Now proceed with the letter: "I am engaged to another. We shall never meet again." Subscribe, date, and give address at this house; and now write below: "To Miss M. Hope-Rush, Rushy Park, Nr. Swampham." Next—her letters.' As I spoke I drew my purse from my pocket. 'How many are there?'

'Upon my life I cannot say.'

'Here is a sovereign for every one you can produce and deliver over to me.'

'By ginger! you overwhelm me. I think there are six. I wish there were a hundred. Five and six make eleven. On eleven pounds I shall pull along a bit.'

He produced the letters. I put them along with that he had written at my dictation.

I had a cab summoned, and drove away with my trunk. I released my goods from the pawnshop, and I sent the letter of Mr Fred, along with those of Miss Mabel to him, under one cover, registered, to that young lady. Then I took the train to my little place in Hampshire, and was pleased to think that I had done a good deed in relieving a nice girl from her embarrassments. I supposed that this chapter of my life was concluded; but I was mistaken.

A few days later I received a letter from Mrs Hope-Rush, couched in very different terms from that I had previously received from her. She informed me that her daughter had shown her the letter from Mr Jones, and had told her of the interview she had with me, and that both were satisfied that they had to thank me for my intervention. The lady apologised for her previous curtness, and trusted that I would testify to her and Mr Hope-Rush that I pardoned it by giving them the pleasure of a visit at Rushy Park.

I could not refuse an invitation so gracious and so kindly meant, and a week later saw me a guest at the Hall. I found Miss Mabel greatly ashamed of herself, very pretty in her humiliation, and feeling very much indebted to me—altogether remarkably agreeable; and I found myself, in time, installed in the place of 'Freddy,' and with a possibility in the future of having to burden myself with a triple surname—Maltravers-Hope-Rush.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE RETURN OF THE 'DISCOVERY.'

CONGRATULATIONS are pouring thick and fast upon Captain Scott and the brave crew of the *Discovery* on their return, after three years' sojourn in Antarctic seas. The main object of this national expedition was increase of knowledge concerning the Southern Polar regions, and all agree that that object has been attained. It has added to the map a continuous stretch of land which is supposed to indicate the coast of an Antarctic continent, while sledge expeditions far into the interior have proved rich in results to geology, meteorology, and terrestrial magnetism. A collection of fossils has been brought home, and is now in the hands of experts at the British Museum, which may throw much light upon the former condition of a land now made barren by the continual presence of ice and snow. During one of the sledge excursions a more southerly point was reached than that gained by any previous explorers; and when we learn that this particular journey involved an absence from headquarters of ninety-four days, we must regard it as a very notable achievement. It may be remembered that our National Antarctic Expedition was not the only one which has lately sought to solve the secrets of that inhospitable region. Germany, Sweden, and France have each equipped ships for the same purpose, while Scotland has also taken separate part in the work. It was so arranged that these different explorers should not clash; and when all their stories are told, the world will be made richer by a fund of valuable information.

A MYSTERIOUS ISLAND.

There is an element of romance in the circumstance that the good ship *Discovery* sailed over the spot which was supposed to be occupied by an island. The existence of this island was first reported by Captain Dougherty in the year 1841, and again in the same part of the Pacific—about midway between New Zealand and the southern extremity of South America—by Captain Keates nearly twenty years later. It was described as a rock about seven miles in length, with a central elevation of about three hundred feet. When the *Discovery* came to the spot no land was to be seen, although the weather was exceptionally clear, while soundings revealed a depth of no less than two thousand five hundred fathoms, or nearly three miles. It is possible that Captain Dougherty was deceived by an iceberg, but difficult to believe that the same thing could occur to another observer twenty years later.

SMOKELESS STEAM-COAL.

Possibly Professor Boyd Dawkins is guilty of exaggeration when he asserts that the time is rapidly approaching when smokeless steam-coal will be found mainly in geological museums, and when our navy will have to seek for other and inferior fuel. But he has done excellent service in warning the authorities that they are dealing in a most wasteful fashion with that which ought to be regarded as a valuable national asset. It is one of the necessities of modern naval warfare that ships should exhibit no tell-tale banner of smoke, and this can only be secured under present conditions by use of one particular description of coal. The South Wales coalfield is the only place where this fuel is procurable; it occurs nowhere else in Europe. But instead of conserving it for use in our own battleships, we are supplying all the navies of the world with it, and giving it to our rivals to use possibly against ourselves. Professor Dawkins suggests that a very heavy tax should be placed on smokeless steam-coal, and that the Government should devote the money so obtained, which foreign nations would pay without hesitation, to the purchase of collieries containing the coal, so that Britain should be secured against want of it in the future. It may be mentioned that both belligerents in the Far East are using South Wales coal, and that contracts for the exportation of enormous quantities have recently been made on their behalf.

THE METRIC SYSTEM.

It is quite certain that sooner or later the metric system will become universal; but few have realised the changes which its introduction into this country would entail. They were foreshadowed by some of the evidence recently given before the select committee of the House of Lords appointed to consider the question. One of the Board of Trade officials stated that last year alone ten million weights and measures, including the pewter pots of the public-house, were stamped in this country. All these, as well as milk-cans, beer-barrels, and beer-bottles, would become practically useless under the metric system. Another witness, however, estimated that with existing facilities the new metric measures could be prepared in about six months; but he foresaw difficulties in making the people appreciate the advantages of the change, especially the measures of length, as the inch and the foot were so generally used. It was stated that when the metric system was introduced in Portugal, a large number of models were made of the new weights and measures, and lecturers went round to certain centres to show working-people how the weights were used and how they differed from the old methods. Another difficulty will be found in the revision of maps. Colonel Johnston, Director-General of the Ordnance Survey, stated that the alteration of maps so as to show metric measurements would entail entire republication at a cost of little less than a quarter of a million sterling. Another official witness

pointed out that if the metric system were authorised by Parliament it would be necessary, in order to enforce the change, to inflict a fine in every case in which it was proved that business had been transacted under the old system of weights and measures.

AN INVASION OF SHARKS.

Subaqueous explosions generally result in the destruction of large quantities of fish, and dynamite has before now been used for poaching purposes. But large creatures such as sharks are able to withstand the shock, provided that they are not too close to the centre of disturbance; but we may feel quite sure that they do not like it. As a result of the submarine mines and torpedo discharges which have formed such an important feature of the naval conflict in the Far East, the sharks have fled from the scene of the Japanese operations; and large numbers, following ships according to their habit, have made their way through the Suez Canal into European waters. The fishermen of the Adriatic are agitating for special steps to be taken against the intruders, who are making havoc among the fish. It is also feared that the sharks may find their way to the Black Sea.

THE MOTOR-CAR INDUSTRY.

At the recent conference of the Institute of British Carriage Manufacturers, the mechanically propelled vehicle naturally came under consideration. The horse-drawn carriage industry, like most other trades, has been suffering severely from foreign competition, and it was stated that the making of wheels in this country has almost been stamped out by American importation. But with regard to the introduction of motor-cars the case is somewhat different; there is evidence of foreign dumping, bodies and fittings being placed on the market here at a price which no home manufacturer can touch. The Institute was in favour of a protective duty being levied on their foreign competitors, who had had several years' start in the making of self-propelled carriages. One of the speakers at the meeting, who discussed the British Association's experiments on traction, stated that upon horse-drawn vehicles the pneumatic tire reduces the draught about 30 per cent. as compared with an iron or even a solid rubber tire. The general feeling of the meeting seemed to be that coachmakers had no reason to be alarmed at the introduction upon our high-roads of motor-cars. It would be a long time before horse-drawn vehicles were superseded, and carriage-builders' work would be required in the construction of the new cars.

WOAD.

Many of us remember learning long ago at school that the aborigines of these islands lived by the produce of the chase, and that they stained their bodies blue with a plant called woad. It is interesting to know that this plant (*Isatis tinctoria*) is still cultivated in Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire, and that under the name of dyer's woad it is manufactured into a colouring material which is much valued for the treatment of cloth. The *Illustrated London News* recently published several pictures showing the manner in which this minor industry is carried on near Wisbeach, as witnessed lately by a section of the British Association. The woad-seed is sown in April and May, the harvest-time being five months later, when the plant is about one foot high. The green woad is crushed, fermented, balled, dried in wind-swept sheds, and finally powdered and casked. Woad was for a long time after the period of the ancient Britons one of the principal dyes used in this country; but it was largely superseded by indigo. It is now employed for 'setting' other dyes, for it gives cloth a finish not obtainable by other means. The cloth supplied to Government for naval, military, and police uniforms is always 'woaded.'

ALPINE ACCIDENTS.

A large proportion of the fatal accidents which occur every season in Alpine districts may be attributed to the foolhardy practice of gathering edelweiss. A writer in the *Times* points out that this is due to the supposition that the plant is very rare, and that it can only be found in almost inaccessible places and near to the snow-line. The natives encourage this belief so that they may obtain fancy prices for specimens of the plant. But as a matter of fact edelweiss will grow almost anywhere, even in a London back-garden, provided that the soil be poor. The writer of the letter referred to asserts that at his home at Henley-on-Thames he has hundreds of the plants growing every year, and that a penny packet of seed constitutes the whole of the necessary outlay. He writes: 'Those who risk their necks for such a possession have no claim to the laurel crown of the hero, but rather to the garland which adorned Bottom's neck when the fairy queen fell in love with him.'

PROTECTION FROM THE 'LIVE' RAIL.

The 'live' rail, forming the necessary connection between rolling-stock and road on electrical railways, has proved to be so deadly that many methods are being devised to render it harmless. A Manchester inventor claims to have solved the problem by dividing the rail into hundred-yard sections separated by an inch of plug, so that only one hundred yards will be electrified at a time. This will be brought about by the passing train itself, which will be furnished with two skates, one in its front and one at the rear, which will slide on the rail and automatically bring the current on and off. Another plan, patented by Mr H. Curwen of Newcastle-on-Tyne, has the merit of great simplicity. He covers the 'live' rail with a guard, having the section of an inverted letter L (thus, ⅂), the vertical portion of which would be attached to, but insulated from, the side of the rail. The shoe or skate of the vehicle would then run in the

groove so formed, and persons could tread on the insulated guard without running the least risk. Other methods of securing safety to the public will doubtless be brought forward, and we shall soon recognise the fittest by its survival.

ATTAR OF ROSES.

An interesting account of the method adopted in Bulgaria of making attar of roses appeared in a recent issue of *La Nature*. The old way of making oil of roses may be found in many recipe-books; indeed, it was mentioned by as early a writer as Discorides. It consisted in simply macerating rose-leaves in pure olive-oil, the distillation process now adopted not having been introduced prior to the eighth century. Most of the Bulgarian distillers use one kind of rose only (*Rosa damascena*), the damask rose. They are plucked at dawn just as the buds are ready to expand and before the sun has had time to dissipate their scent. One acre of plants will yield one pound of the essential oil, or attar of roses. Copper stills are employed, each of which is charged with twenty-two pounds of rose-leaves and nineteen quarts of water. In about an hour and a half twelve quarts of the water have been distilled, constituting 'rose water,' which is redistilled in order to extract its oil. This oil is of a straw colour, and is frequently adulterated with cheaper compounds made from sandal-wood, geranium, &c. Last year Bulgaria produced thirteen thousand seven hundred and seventy pounds of rose-oil, which was so much above the average yield that the price went down to about one-half its usual figure, the reduced amount being twelve pounds sterling per pound.

INCENSE.

Another still more important product which also appeals to the sense of smell is incense, some very interesting particulars concerning which are published in the *Journal* of the Society of Arts. Incense is used in the ritual of so many forms of religion that its preparation represents quite an extensive industry. Frankincense is a particular gum which is often a component of incense, but the term is not used in commerce; incense meaning a pear or tear shaped gum which exudes from a tree that is found in considerable quantities in British Somaliland. Some inferior qualities come from India and a few other countries. The incense-tree is never more than fifteen feet in height; it presents a thorny and unsightly growth, and thrives in desert regions. Commercial incense is graded according to colour—bright yellow, medium, and dark yellow. It is used principally in places of worship; but in some Oriental countries it is employed in houses to correct unpleasant odours, and also by individuals to sweeten the breath. The chief market for incense appears to be Aden, to which place it is brought by Somalis during the winter months. Last year more than thirty thousand hundredweights of incense went to Bombay, and nearly the same quantity to European ports—chiefly to Marseilles and Trieste.

RATS AND THE PLAGUE.

In his presidential address at the annual conference of the Sanitary Inspectors' Association, Sir James Crichton Browne referred to the efforts which are being made to restrict the ravages of the dreaded plague. He remarked that it was a surprise to find that Defoe had evidently a great knowledge of that dread disease; and although most persons supposed that the connection of rats with the spread of the disease was a modern discovery, Defoe knew all about it. That writer accused rats of spreading the infection, and tells us that in his day all possible endeavours were made to kill mice and rats, especially the latter, by means of poison, &c., and that a large number were destroyed. Sir James said that measures should be taken to destroy these vermin without waiting for plague; they were no good, but altogether noisome and abominable. At one time it was thought that they were useful in eating up garbage, but it would be a sorry sanitary system that would leave any work of that kind for them to do. He thought that the sporting instinct might be enlisted in their extermination, and that those who spent so much of their time in shooting harmless pigeons would do better service in directing their energies to the destruction of rats.

THE MOTOR-BOAT.

The convenient internal-combustion engine used for motor cars and bicycles has been applied as a matter of course to boating purposes, and the trials of the craft which have recently been made show that a high speed can be attained by means of mechanism of very light weight, occupying little space. As a rule a motor-boat will be synonymous with a pleasure-boat; but it is believed by some that vessels of this description will play an important part in warfare. Mr F. S. Edge, who offered two of his motor-boats to the Admiralty for trial during the autumn naval manœuvres, anticipates that owing to the small size and high speed of a motor-boat it would be next to impossible to hit it with a big gun, because between the moment of firing and the arrival of the projectile there would be time to alter its course or to stop it. The boat is so light that its momentum is small, and it lies so low in the water that it makes a very small target for any gun, big or little. It will be extremely useful for scouting purposes; and by means of a trailing torpedo much damage might be effected, especially to any submarine vessel which might come into contact with the trailer.

AN ANGLER'S PARADISE.

The author of 'Angling in Newfoundland,' which was printed in *Chambers's Journal* for 1903, writes, under date 14th July, that the angling season was then in full swing in the island. 'There are many

visiting sportsmen from Great Britain and the United States. The month of June was very dry and warm, but the fishing was not bad. We have had some rains lately, and the salmon and sea-trout fishing has improved greatly. The official report of the Grand River states that the number of salmon caught by sportsmen was about one hundred and forty, weighing from seven pounds to twenty-three pounds each. The reports from other rivers are even better. One party of four at Salmonier caught fifty-two salmon in two evenings; another party of four at the same time caught forty-three salmon. Several other parties were equally successful. As for trout, common brook or mud trout and sea-trout, one party of four reported sixty dozen for a couple of days' sport. These were caught in lakes along the railway line. Some of these weighed as much as three and a half pounds. Parties from Salmonier caught all the sea-trout they cared about taking, as the fish were very numerous. Every year the number of visitors increases. There is no rod-tax or any restriction whatever on anglers. Over one-third of the surface of the island is covered with water, and the lakes and ponds all teem with brook-trout, and in the season with sea-trout, salmon, and grilse.'

A GREAT FIND OF FOSSIL DINOSAURS.

Possibly the greatest find of remains of extinct animals ever made was that by Mr Walter Granger, of the American Museum expedition, in Central Wyoming, and these have been dug out, arranged, and described. In the *Century* for September Mr H. F. Osborn describes the 'Noah's Ark deposit' of the bones of giant dinosaurs, mingled with the remains of the smaller but powerful carnivorous dinosaurs who preyed upon them, also those of the slow and heavily armoured dinosaurs. These have been examined since 1898 onwards. Some finely rounded, complete limbs of the carnivorous dinosaur, from eight to ten feet long, were found. Of the dinosaur *Diplodocus* a specimen about seventy feet in length is now in the Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh. The head, only about two feet long, is out of all proportion to the body; the neck is twenty-one feet four inches; the back, ten feet eight inches; vertebræ of hip, two feet three inches; and the tail is about forty feet long. The *Barosaurus* discovered by Dr G. R. Wieland in the Black Hills of South Dakota is still larger; the length of its neck was enormous, and the whole exceeded the *Diplodocus* in size. Altogether some four hundred and eighty-three parts of animals were discovered in Wyoming, including remains of at least one hundred giant dinosaurs.

THE DEEPEST LOCH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

An important series of papers has been appearing in the *Scottish Geographical Magazine* on the 'Bathymetrical Survey of the Fresh-Water Lochs of Scotland,' which is being made under the direction of Sir John Murray and Mr Laurence Pullar. We learn that the larger Scottish lakes have all been surveyed, and several members of the Lake Survey staff are now working at the smaller lochs. After eleven hundred soundings of Loch Morar, in Inverness-shire, a maximum depth has been recorded of ten hundred and seventeen feet. Thus Loch Morar is the deepest loch in the United Kingdom. The surface of the loch is only thirty feet above sea-level, so that almost the entire bed of the loch is below the level of the sea. The deepest lochs, after Morar, are Loch Ness, seven hundred and fifty-one feet; Loch Lomond, six hundred and twenty-three feet; Loch Lochy, five hundred and thirty-one feet; Loch Ericht, five hundred and twelve feet; and Loch Tay, five hundred and eight feet. There are seven lakes on the continent of Europe which exceed Loch Morar in depth, four of which are in Norway and the others in Italy. The temperature of Loch Morar at one thousand feet is fairly constant at about forty-two degrees all the year round.

THE WINDING WAY.

'To where beyond these voices there is peace.'

The road winds upward through the pines
To heights of white eternal snow,
Where Dawn's ethereal breath refines
The lower mists to clouds which glow

With living fire immaculate,
As when, of old, the first glad rays
Sped at the Word from heaven's gate
To light the world's untrodden ways.

And as, far down, with steadfast eyes,
Toward the glittering peaks I hold,
Great thoughts within my heart arise,
Beyond the art of words to mould.

For, with their elemental might,
The mountains of this silent land
Inspire my soul with clearer sight
To recognise and understand

The deeper mysteries that 'bind
Ourselves in chains about God's feet;
The purpose of the Master-mind,
In all its wonder made complete.

And thus borne up from meaner things,
Through highest realms, I seem to move
To that sweet peace which folds and rings
The universe in arms of love.

OLIVER GREY.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE MYSTERY OF THE VIOLET STORK.

By H. A. Bryden.

CHAPTER I.—A DEAD MESSENGER.

IT was the year 1876, a wonderful Bechuanaland evening in April, just at the beginning of the clear, dry, winter season. The whole vast plain, upon which two travellers with their wagons were outspanned by a vlei of water, was hushed in the spell of that wondrous hour. The sun sank rapidly in a blaze of fiery splendour towards the rim of earth. Tiny flakes of cloud, the last remnants of the summer rains, lay ranged above him, tier upon tier in the clear heavens, their colours in various hues of crimson, rose, orange, and gold enduing the sky with a beauty indescribable. Above these clouds the gorgeous colouring cast forth by the sun's decline faded to a pale gold, thence to the clear tone of the faintest apple-green. A strange reflected glow held the great plain, as it were, in its tender yet fleeting embrace, tinting lovingly all objects far and near with hues here roseate, there heliotrope, yet farther in the distance warm pearl. The white tilts of the two wagons glowed with this evanescent splendour; while out upon the grassy plain a troop of grazing springbok, scattered over a league of ground, showed up with strange distinctness from the pale-green veldt amid which they fed.

The two wagons were drawn up side by side. It was clear from their patched and torn tilts, their lack of paint, and their general air of disrepair that they had travelled far. Their interiors, too, crammed as they were with ivory, skins, horns, and other trophies, amply testified to the fact that they had endured much wandering. Their owners, two Englishmen, were, as a matter of fact, now on their way down-country to the diamond-fields, after nearly a year spent in sport, adventure, and trade in the far interior towards the Zambesi.

One of the two friends, Jack Spencer, a tall, dark, athletic-looking man of six-and-twenty, just at this moment jumped down from one of the wagons, a shot-gun in his hand and a bandolier of cartridges across his chest. He strolled across to the fire, where his comrade, Ralph Brookfield—a short, brown-bearded man, some five years his senior, who had shot a hartebeest that day—was superintending the preparations for the evening meal.

'Ralph,' he said, 'I 'm just going across to the far end of the vlei to shoot some duck. I shall be back in half-an-hour.'

'All right, old chap!' returned his friend without looking up from the head he was skinning—a grand pair of horns of the bull hartebeest. 'The grub will be ready in an hour. Shoot geelbek [yellow-billed duck] if you can. They 're far the fattest and the tenderest, and we want a change.'

Taking with him an old, knowing-looking pointer, which had been trained not only to stand to game but to run and tree guinea-fowl, retrieve wild-duck, and other manifold accomplishments of the veldt, Spencer walked rapidly to the vlei, a shallow pool of water normally some five or six acres in extent, but now, thanks to plentiful rains, enlarged temporarily to an area of six times that acreage. Just now its smooth surface gleamed crimson beneath the fires of evening; every tiny wavelet that touched the shore seemed ensanguined with the same hue. It was a wonderful effect, and Jack Spencer, who had an eye for the picturesque, thought that seldom had he set eyes on a more lovely scene. He had been long trekking through a parched and barren country, and the magnificent evening, the still lake, the richness of the surrounding veldt, the glamour of the sunset, all had their due effect.

At the near end of the vlei the trek-oxen, drinking thirstily, had disturbed various bands of water-fowl, which upon whistling pinions were now, after their fashion, flying round the water. In the course of forty minutes, passing up one side of the vlei, and occasionally wading in here and there, the gunner shot as many fowl as he needed. Just as the swift darkness descended upon the veldt he

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returned to the wagons, and, approaching the blaze of the cheerful camp-fire, deposited his spoil upon the ground close to his companion.

'There you are!' he said. 'Three couple of geelbek, a couple of red-billed teal, a pochard, a Hottentot teal, a spur-winged goose, and a violet stork—all good for the pot except the last, which I am going to skin and add to my collection. It's a magnificent bird, in grand plumage, and I consider myself lucky to have shot it in this part of the world. I put it up at the far end of the reeds, and floored it as it came sailing overhead, forty yards away—a good shot, and a lucky one.'

'That's excellent, old man,' answered Brookfield. 'To-morrow we shall revel in roast duck. I've got some tinned peas still left at the bottom of the wagon. You shall sup like an alderman to-morrow evening, and we'll crack the last bottle of pontac [red Cape wine] to celebrate our approaching return to civilisation. Fourteen or sixteen more days and we ought to be in Kimberley. Now, get into some dry things, and we'll have supper at once.'

In an hour's time the two men, having finished their meal, were discussing their second pipes and third cup of coffee. Jack Spencer rose, walked to his wagon, and returned with the violet stork, which he now prepared to skin. It was a magnificent bird, of a very dark brownish-green, shot with green, violet, and coppery hues, which glowed and glistened curiously beneath the shifting lights of the camp-fire. The under-parts were pure white, the bill and legs red. In length the bird measured some three feet eight or nine inches. While Spencer sharpened his small skinning-knife and took out a pair of scissors from a leather case, his companion smoothed down the dark upper plumage, admiring as he did so the rich, iridescent, cupreous hues that shone responsive to the firelight. Then he stretched out one of the long, powerful wings.

'Hullo!' he said, passing his hand down one of the pinion feathers, 'what in the wide world have we got here?'

Jack Spencer, struck by his exclamation, turned to him and saw him trying to disengage something from the middle of one of the pinions.

They looked closely, holding the dead bird well to the firelight, and this was what they saw. The feathering of the pinion had been clipped away for a little space, and tightly up to the quill had been fastened some foreign body. It looked like a piece of leather about three inches long and very slim in its dimensions.

'I see where it's fastened,' said Jack. 'Hold the wing out.'

They stretched out the now stiffening wing, and from the pinion, with a deft snick or two of his penknife, he disengaged the piece of leather. That, again, was fastened carefully round the middle and at either end by what looked like strong thread. These impediments cut through, Spencer opened the little packet and drew forth from its depths a piece of paper carefully folded. Drawing his low wagon-chair closer up to the light of the fire, and unfolding the piece of paper, he scanned it closely and attentively.

'By Jove, what a strange thing!' he said, slowly and deliberately, and with knitted brows, as once more he slowly perused the document. 'Listen, Ralph:

'"To whomsoever this shall come.—We, the Emerton family, five in number, are imprisoned by Hottentots in a valley near the Orange River, seven days' trek down right bank from Great Falls. Valley hidden in mountains opposite island at the ford known to Korannas as the Spider's Drift. For God's sake come to our help! We have been here five years. The old Hottentot's name is Nou-ap (the Porcupine); his grandson's, 'Kabip (the Quail). His people have—or had—fourteen guns amongst them. MARY EMERTON.

'"*May* 9 (*I believe*), 1875."'

Ralph Brookfield took his pipe from his mouth, blew a long cloud, gazed for a moment at his friend's serious face, and burst into a loud laugh.

'My dear chap,' he said when he had recovered somewhat, 'can't you see that the whole thing is a hoax perpetrated by some silly fool with more time and less brains than he ought to have? Why, the whole thing is absurd. Hottentots don't do this sort of thing nowadays, whatever they might have done a hundred years ago; they are far too broken and scattered and reduced to think of any devilry of the kind. Let me look at the paper.'

Spencer handed him the document, and the elder man, also pulling his chair up to the firelight, perused the piece of writing attentively, reading out the message word by word.

'It's written with a quill pen, apparently,' he said at length, 'and in some red pigment, which, I take it, is meant to represent blood. I'm more than ever convinced the whole blessed thing is a barney. Why, if any one wanted to send a message, would he write it in blood or in ink, think you?'

'Supposing they haven't got any ink?' put in his friend.

'My dear Ralph, I know you're a romantic, impulsive kind of chap; but can you seriously believe such a yarn as this? Why should a family be shut up in a valley on the Orange River? Why shouldn't they get out?'

'I know, Ralph,' broke in the younger man, his dark eyes blazing with a serious intensity that rather astonished his friend. 'But the thing, nevertheless, is conceivable. Something—I don't know what—tells me that the truth lies in that old discoloured piece of paper, with its message written perhaps in blood. I believe these people are there. I believe they are in great trouble. It's a woman's handwriting. After we get down to Kimberley, I shall go to Griquatown, trek down the Orange, and see if the story's true.'

Brookfield smiled at his friend's impulsiveness. 'You're on fire just now with the discovery,' he

said. 'It appeals to your imagination, which is a deal more active than mine. Wait till you've slept on it. You'll find it will all look very different by the light of morning and its reflections.'

'No, old chap,' interrupted his friend, 'I shall not be convinced against my will. Do you seriously think that people would take all this trouble for the mere faint *possibility* of hoaxing some one?'

'How about sham messages despatched at sea in soda-water bottles and picked up by confiding folk in various parts of the world?' rejoined Brookfield.

'I know, I know,' answered the younger man. 'But the cases are very different. In the first place, violet storks are rare, even in South Africa. You may travel hundreds—nay, thousands of miles and never see one. Have you ever seen one in captivity, like a Kafir crane or a secretary-bird? I never have. If this were a tame bird once, it must have been a very rare instance. I don't see how you could catch a full-grown wild stork such as this, and a maimed or temporarily wounded bird is a very awkward customer to tackle. They fight fiercely, and their long bills are dangerous weapons. The whole thing is a strange mystery, and I can't bring myself to believe that this note is a hoax—the silly freak of some natural-born idiot. There's another point. The note is, as you see, in a woman's writing. Men are fond of playing practical jokes; but a woman has nothing like the same instinct for that sort of thing.'

Brookfield, pondering over the piece of paper in his hand, had turned it over and was closely scanning the back.

'There's more writing here,' he said quietly; 'it's very faint, and I can scarcely make it out. It seems to be in a different hand, too.'

He held it yet closer to the fire and slowly read: 'If you have pity, if you believe in a God, come to our help.'

A graver look replaced the half-bantering expression that lately lingered on his face.

'Well,' he said, 'it's a queer thing. There may be something in it, though I doubt it. Anyhow, the two handwritings are different, which is something in your favour. The few faint lines on the back are in the Italian hand of an oldish woman, as I should judge; the writing inside, signed Mary Emerton, is that of a much younger woman—the style is far more modern.'

Jack Spencer examined the shorter message minutely and with a grave face. Then he turned to the inner part of the document.

'Yes,' he said, 'they are entirely distinct handwritings. I believe absolutely that the thing is genuine, that these people are in trouble, and that some one ought to help them. Anyhow, I am going to try, if I have to give up six months to the business.'

'Well,' rejoined his friend, 'at present I am a sceptic. If the messages are true, and these people are imprisoned somewhere, you'll come across a romance worthy of Mayne Reid or Gustave Aimard. But I'm open to bet you ten sovereigns to one that the whole thing is a fake, and that you'll make nothing of it if you search the Orange River for a year.'

'I'll take that bet,' rejoined Spencer. 'If I don't discover the secret within twelve months of our reaching Kimberley I engage to hand you over a sovereign.'

'All right, Jack,' responded Brookfield, with a cheerful laugh. 'The ten quid are yours if you succeed within the time you mention. Heavens, what a dreamer you are!' He called to one of the native servants sitting at the other fire, 'Vleermuis! more coffee, and get me some tobacco from the wagon.'

For the remainder of the evening Jack Spencer occupied himself in divesting the dead stork of its skin and dressing it with arsenical soap. This done, the two comrades said good-night, retired to their respective wagons, and by nine o'clock, under a clear sky thickly powdered with stars of amazing brilliancy, the entire camp was asleep. At four o'clock they trekked, and at ten next morning outspanned for several hours' rest and for breakfast.

At half-past ten Vleermuis (literally, Flittermouse, the Bat), who combined the offices of Spencer's body-servant, groom, cook, hunter, and general-utility-man, announced that the meal was ready. Vleermuis was a first-rate cook, a real treasure to men engaged, as the two Englishmen were, on long wagon expeditions into the far hinterland of South Africa. This morning he had ready for his masters a kettle of excellent coffee, tinned milk, hot 'cookies' of Boer meal, double springbok chops—the most delicious venison in all Africa—cut right across the loins and fried with some of the savoury liver of the same antelope, and a tin of Morton's marmalade.

'Hullo!' cried Spencer, eying the last-named delicacy, 'where did you raise the marmalade?'

'Baas,' answered the man, a gleam of pleasure in his eye and a smile on his yellow face, 'I keep four tins marmalade at bottom of stores, else they go fast all dood [dead] long before trek finished. Now we getting near Kimberley, I bring them out, and baases can breakfast like gentlemans at hotels every morning.'

'That's a good chap!' responded Spencer, for he dearly loved his breakfast marmalade, as every well-constituted Briton ought to do. Both men fell to, and after a hearty breakfast, hailed to Vleermuis to clear the things away. When this was done Jack Spencer called the man back.

'Vleermuis,' he said, 'you're a Koranna, aren't you, and you know the Orange River?'

'Yes, baas,' returned the man. 'I lived half my life at the Koranna kraals, this side of Augrabies—the Groot Falls.'

'Have you ever travelled down the river?'

'Yes, once as far as the sea; it took me many weeks. I went with my father.'

'Did you ever hear of a place called the Spider's Drift, or of an island there?'

'Nay, baas.'

'Did you ever hear of a Hottentot named Nou-ap—a bit of a chief, who has some kind of tribe or following?'

'Yes, baas. I pass Nou-ap's kraal on my way to the sea. He live on an island 'bout one week's journey below the falls. Very few people go there. Very hard road, and dry.'

'A score to you, old man!' here ejaculated Brookfield, who had been an attentive listener to the above dialogue. 'Discovery number one.'

But all Spencer's queries failed to produce any other kind of evidence in support of the mystery he had determined to unravel. From Vleermuis's information it seemed that he had passed a small Hottentot kraal some twenty years before, that its chief was an elderly man named Nou-ap, that he lived on an island for the most part in a very lonely and retired part of the river, and that his people, numbering perhaps a hundred and twenty, subsisted mainly by hunting and by an occasional raid on the flocks of distant Namaqua tribes or of pastoral Boers south of the Orange.

The trek continued. The wayfarers reached Kimberley in a fortnight, sold off their ivory at good prices, and received payment for a herd of cattle which they had gathered in trade up-country and had sent down before the rains ceased. Thereafter, for a week or two, they contented themselves with a rest, and with such amusements as Kimberley in those somewhat primitive days could afford them. At the end of a fortnight they had both had enough of an idle life. They sat one evening in the smoking-room of the hotel at which they were staying.

'Jack,' said Brookfield suddenly, 'what are you going to do now? I can see you're getting bored of town life; and, after all, this New Jerusalem, with its manifold types of Hebrew, good, bad—mostly bad—and indifferent, isn't a very inspiring place. What do you mean to do?'

'Mean to do?' echoed his friend. 'I'm going down the Orange River to find out whether the violet stork's message was a true one. What do you intend doing? You won't, of course, come off on my wild-goose chase, as you call it?'

'Yes, I think I shall go. You're a good pal, and I like trekking with you. Some day, no great while hence, I'm afraid, with your romantic temperament, you'll be falling headlong into some love-affair or other and getting married, and that'll be the end of you, so far as I'm concerned. So, as I'm a bit of a fool and have a liking for you, I must just hang on and make the best of you while I can. We've had some good days together, and I hope to have a few more.'

Jack Spencer had turned round while his friend, in his usual slow and somewhat monotonous fashion, was delivering this, for him, rather lengthy speech. His eyes sought the clear, open, honest gray eyes of the man whom Jack knew to be as straight and as simple-minded as he was brave and adventurous. Those gray eyes were now regarding him with the look of friendliness he knew so well.

'Ralph,' he said, 'you don't really mean you'll come?'

'Of course I do,' returned Ralph, with a big smile.

Jack put up his right hand and let it rest affectionately on his comrade's broad shoulder.

'You good old chap!' he exclaimed, 'I am glad. I was more than half-afraid I was in for this business alone. Something whispers that it's going to be a heavy one, and I wanted a pal badly. Why, you old rascal, you know right well that nothing appeals to you so much as a bit of downright adventure, with a spice of danger thrown in. You laugh, or pretend to laugh, at romance, yet your own history, ever since you left your father's farm in the old Colony and came north, has been brimful of it. How about that strange mystery of the fifty elephants and the story of Tant van Niekirk's dream, and a score of other yarns that I've heard from you from time to time? Well, thank goodness! you're coming. That's a load off my mind. One more "soupje" for good luck and to pledge our joint adventure, and then to bed.'

THE CROWN CLOCKS.

THE clocks belonging to the Crown are in Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace, St James's Palace, and Hampton Court. They are sometimes spoken of as the King's clocks, and so they are; but as a private individual the King possesses many others—those at Sandringham and Balmoral, for instance.

As to Windsor Castle, a careful inventory of the Royal or Crown clocks is kept there in the Lord Chamberlain's Department, which is responsible for their proper up-keep and safe custody. This inventory gives a full description of each clock: measurement, situation in the Castle, and photograph. It contains entries of two hundred and thirty clocks, which, with the candelabra, fill two large volumes as big as full-sized ledgers. The majority of these are clocks of a more or less ordinary kind, fulfilling the ordinary useful function of indicating the time. Many, however, are works of art of the highest order, and one in particular possesses a historic interest enjoyed by no other clock in the world.

This is the clock that Henry VIII. gave in a present to Anne Boleyn on her wedding-day. It rests on a modern gilt bracket in the Chapel Retiring-

Room, and is only four inches deep and ten inches high. Formerly it belonged to Horace Walpole, to whom it had been given by Lady Elizabeth Germaine, and came into the possession of Queen Victoria when Horace Walpole's effects were sold at Strawberry Hill. The price it then fetched was one hundred and ten pounds five shillings. It is worth nothing as a timepiece, for it no longer goes; though Harrison Ainsworth wrote of it: 'This love-token of enduring affection remains the same after three centuries; but four years after it was given, the object of Henry's love was sacrificed on the scaffold. The clock still goes—it should have stopped for ever when Anne Boleyn died.' Perhaps, in a sense, it did; for even if it were going when Ainsworth wrote, the moving parts, except the weights, though not modern, are of later date than Anne Boleyn's time. The weights are of lead, partly encased in copper-gilt, and beautifully engraved—H A and true-lovers' knots on one, and H A alone on the other. Round the top of each weight is the motto, '*Dieu et mon droit*,' and round the bottom of each, 'The Most Happye.'

In the Van Dyck Room, which is one of the state apartments, and consequently open to the public from time to time, is a Louis XIV. buhl clock that on its artistic merits alone has been valued at four thousand pounds.* As a time-recorder it has no value, for its movement has stopped. It is in red shell and gilt metal, and stands seven feet two and a quarter inches high. From its ormolu mounts it is inferred to have been designed for Louis XIV. by the Marots, who were well-known architects and engravers in Paris in the seventeenth century. Its decorative features comprise sphinxes which support the clock-case, an Apollo head with lyres and cornucopias, a mask of Father Time with an hour-glass and scythe, and, surmounting the whole, an imperial crown. The shape alone of this beautiful clock—straight, and yet tapering—is an embodiment of gracefulness; and altogether it has been rightly described as a dream of elegance.

In the corridor—and therefore never seen by the public—is another Louis XIV. buhl clock, seven feet seven and three-quarter inches high. The tallest clock in Windsor Castle, by the way, is eight feet five inches; the tallest among the Royal clocks is nine feet ten inches, and is in the grand corridor of Buckingham Palace. Returning to the Louis XIV. buhl clock, we mention it because of the large picture that hangs near it. This picture is by Zoffany, and is entitled 'Interior of Room in Kew Palace, with portraits of Queen Charlotte, Prince of Wales, and Duke of York.' In this room in Kew Palace is the very clock now standing beside the picture, so that both it and Zoffany's representation of it can be seen at the same time.

* Buhl-work consists of an inlay of one or more metals on a ground of tortoise-shell, and is so named from Charles André *Buhl* (1642-1732), its inventor.

An object of great interest on the other side of the corridor is a casket containing General Gordon's Bible. The casket is inscribed: 'This Bible, which belonged to Major-General Charles Gordon, C.B., was presented to Queen Victoria by Mary Augusta Gordon, his eldest sister, and it is placed in this casket for preservation in Windsor Castle by Her Majesty's command.—25th March 1885.' Beneath the casket is an ebony clock-case richly mounted in ormolu, and beneath this again is a mahogany cabinet containing an organ.

Descriptive details of clocks, no matter how beautiful they may be, are apt to weary the general reader unless accompanied by pictorial representations. We therefore pass over scores of magnificent examples of the clockmaker's art, and come to a humble wooden structure placed against the wall in the footmen's room. This is a specimen of an 'Act of Parliament clock'—a kind of clock that grew out of a tax imposed on watches by Pitt. This tax caused watches to be much less worn. People, however, had occasion to be apprised of the time of day as much as before; and this need was met, in a measure, by tavern-keepers adopting a bold mural timepiece for the benefit of their customers. These timepieces were called 'Act of Parliament clocks,' and usually consisted of a large dial of wood painted black, with gilt numerals, and a trunk long enough for a seconds' pendulum. The dial formed the front of the clock-case, and had no glass covering. The 'Act of Parliament clock' in Windsor Castle has no doubt been repainted since it was made, for its dial is now white and its numerals black.

Among the one hundred and sixty-three clocks in Buckingham Palace, one of the most interesting is the sympathetic clock in the King's room. Over the glass-panelled clock-case, which is in mahogany and mounted in ormolu, is a gold watch, a small gold chain, and a brequet watch-key † attached. This watch was made for George IV., who used to wear it. It is set to time by the clock, which at twelve sends up a small steel needle that enters a hole in the rim of the watch-case and operates on the minute-hand, making it correspond by pressure with the time on the clock. Brequet, the maker of this ingenious contrivance, who flourished 1746–1823, also constructed for George IV. a chronometer with two pendulums—one to mark mean time, the other to act as a metronome by beating the time for music. For the Duke of Wellington, too, he made a watch that, when required, would strike the hour and the minute. Among Brequet's other inventions were a winding motion whereby the movements of the wearer's body did the winding, and a touch-watch on which the hours, being indicated by projecting studs, could be told by the blind. Another of Brequet's works in Buckingham Palace is in the Bow Reception-Room. It was described

† Also called a tipsy watch-key, because the winding of a watch the wrong way by such a key was rendered harmless.

by B. L. Vulliamy* in 1846 'as a very complicated machine, more curious than useful for accuracy in fixing the time.' In the Household Corridor is a very fine piece of mechanism also by Brequet. It is a regulator with two separate movements, each having a gridiron pendulum. It is in an upright glazed mahogany case six feet ten inches high, and was purchased by George IV. for one thousand guineas. It is similar to one said to be in the Winter Palace, St Petersburg.

The chief curiosity in the way of clocks in Buckingham Palace is the Negress Head Clock—a French spring-balance production by Lépine, who was watchmaker to Louis XV., and whom Voltaire engaged to establish a watch-factory near Geneva. In this clock the hour numerals are shown in one of the negress's twinkling eyes, and the minutes in the other. It stands two feet five and a half inches high, the head and bust of the negress being in ormolu and enriched with magnificent decorative features. Of another clock in Buckingham Palace, made by Alexander Cumming (who was born in Edinburgh in 1732) for George III., it is said that Cumming received two thousand pounds for it, and two hundred pounds a year for looking after it!

One other Royal clock may fittingly be noted here. It is in William III.'s state bedroom at Hampton Court, and has remained in its present position for two hundred years. It goes for a whole year with only one winding. Its maker was the celebrated Daniel Quare, who in 1676 invented the minute-wheel and put two hands to watches. Up till then timepieces had only the hour-hand. In the *Times* for February 1827 is an advertisement of a valuable and curious clock for sale for twenty pounds, to go for twelve months, which further says that only three of these clocks were ever made—namely, the one at Hampton Court, the other in a nobleman's family, and the third the one advertised.

It appears that the King's clocks are the originals from which many features seen in modern clock-case decoration and style have been copied. These originals have been reproduced and described in a recent book written by W. B. Robertson and F. Walker for the benefit of the artistic side of horological work. To this book, published by John Walker, Limited, New Bond Street, and Messrs Simpkin, Marshall, & Company, at two shillings and sixpence, we must refer readers desiring further information on the interesting subject of the Royal clocks.

* The Vulliamys came originally from Switzerland, and three generations of them were clockmakers to the Sovereign.

'THE SLEEPY HOLLOW GAZETTE.'

THE idea came to me in the middle of the night.

I was living at the time in one of those sunny little towns in France where warmth-loving English congregate during the winter, and spend some four or five months, at a comparatively small outlay, in golfing, biking, tennis, and such-like amusements usually debarred to them in our more rigorous climate. Happy thought! I would start a small local newspaper printed in English for the amusement and information of these good folks.

So elated was I at the thought of some congenial occupation—for brains soon get rusty if allowed to lie fallow—as well as the possibility—a remote one, to be sure—of making a little sorely needed money, that, quite forgetting the time and place, I gave vent to a wild war-whoop of delight, with the immediate result of waking and much alarming my wife, who incontinently began to scream, 'Help! murder! thieves!' Nor did my hasty and shamefaced explanations mend matters. My scheme was treated with contumely and scorn by the wrathful partner of my joys and sorrows, and I was bidden 'not to make an idiot of myself, and to go to sleep at once,' in such energetic fashion that I was fain compelled to obey, with my ardour considerably damped. But with the morning came the conviction stronger than ever that I was on the right tack; so, ignoring the little *contretemps* of the night, I determined to set to work at once and get my scheme into shape.

The town boasted of a small printing establishment with a ridiculous little press, carried on by one solitary man. This gentleman I promptly interviewed, and disclosed my plan. He looked scared and dubious. He did not know a word of English, he said. He had never composed or printed anything in that barbarous tongue except a visiting-card or two and once the programme of a *fête* given by the *colonie étrangere;* and, 'oh, *mon Dieu!* what a work that was!' The lady who had given him the order evidently didn't know how to spell her own tongue correctly, judging from her frequent reference to a dictionary and subsequent alterations in words that he had composed absolutely as she had written them, letter by letter. He had been obliged to correct and alter the type twenty times at least, and madame had made his life a burden to him, always running in and out and interrupting his work, and after all was over, declaring that she would not pay the agreed price. 'Could I spell, and did I know how to correct proofs?'

'Yes.' I assured him that I could do both, and write a large round hand as well if necessary, so as to make his work the easier; and, finally, after much palaver and shrugging of shoulders, I extracted his reluctant assent to try and see how we could manage together.

His press could only print one small page about twelve by nine inches at a time, and the first question was, how many pages should we want? I hoped that the tradespeople would advertise if I made it very cheap; the novelty of the idea, I believed, would attract them. A newspaper of any sort would be the first of its tribe in our quiet little community, and an English one with the advertisements in flowery language, I fancied, would strike their imagination. I was not mistaken.

I got forty-seven advertisements in the three hours or so that it took me to run down the one street of shops, and the task of putting them into English was no easy matter. I imagine that had some of my clients understood my free-and-easy translation of the business cards they gave me they would have been astonished, not to say alarmed, at the variety of articles they were supposed to sell.

'Put what you like,' said the ironmonger; 'only the most important part of all is that I have two top rooms to let; mind you put that in in big letters.' A worthy man who kept a school of arms and gave fencing lessons was utterly indifferent as to what I put in about that; but he was most anxious that the statement that he was an agent for some rubbishy brand of cheap champagne should be given great prominence, though how he could expect to do any trade in the face of three old-established wine merchants, to say nothing of several grocers who also sold wine, passes my comprehension.

There may be hatred of us as a nation in France—there is, as a matter of fact; but I do not think that as individuals we are disliked. In my canvass I met with nothing but politeness. I was unsuccessful in only two cases in shops, and then the refusal was couched in such terms of apology and regret as quite to take away any feeling of rebuff. In one instance I met with scant courtesy; but this was at the hands of an Englishman, and at one hotel out of the four that the town boasts I was coldly shown the door. My compatriot, however, after the first number of the paper had appeared, came to me and begged for a space. I was much inclined to tell him that I had none available. But, remembering that I was now a business man, I smothered my feelings; and when he went on to explain that, being harassed and worried when I had called, he had misunderstood my idea completely—which was quite untrue—I pretended to believe him, and took his advertisement. I am glad to reflect that, by a happy inspiration, I charged him double rates! As to the hotel people, when they saw that I omitted their visitors' list they were very wrathful, and sent a message to me asking the reason why. 'No advertisement, no visitors' list,' was my answer. Back came the advertisement, with a request that it be inserted at once; but in this case I was obdurate, and I really did not care to rearrange a whole page, so I declined. I am not vain enough to imagine that the omission did them any harm; but they thought it did, which was all I wanted, and I am delighted to think they received a lesson.

Of the three other hotels, two took similar spaces; but the third, the newest and smallest, took a double one, paying accordingly. After the first number of the paper appeared, the proprietor of the oldest and largest hotel came down to the office fuming. What did I mean by putting the —— upstart little fraud of a hotel in a bigger space than his, the leading one in the place? 'My dear sir,' I blandly said, 'Mr X. pays double rates, so of course he has double prominence.' 'Very well, sir,' was his answer. 'Then I will pay for four spaces.' After the next issue down came the two-space man, full of fury. We went through the same performance, with the result that he increased his advertisement to one taking six spaces, which made a corresponding pleasant increase in my exchequer. With the third number I was again tackled by the big man, who still further enlarged his advertisement; and this taking up all the available space on the page, the small man had to stay contented with what he had got, the honours of the contest being on the side of the big battalion. I began to see how journalism could be made to pay! But I am going ahead too fast.

The advertisements having been all secured, I was able to settle on the size of the paper, and decided that six pages would be about the thing. This would give me three for advertisements, one for general information such as post-hours, cab-fares, railway time-tables, excursions and drives, doctors' addresses, &c., and two for me to fill up as editor. As the paper would appear but once a week, this did not seem too much; and once the fixed matter was set up, two pages of fresh printing weekly would not, I hoped, be too hard a job for the Frenchman to manage. Then came the question of price.

Those who have lived long abroad will understand why it was that it took three days' hard haggling before the printer and I could come to terms. For the benefit of those who do not know French methods of business, I will just explain that the seller (in this case the printer) always asks a sum immensely bigger than he is prepared to take, the buyer then offering a much smaller one than he will eventually give. The only exceptions to this rule are the cases of postage-stamps and railway tickets; for everything else you bargain. Time having no value in French eyes, fivepence saved at the expense of as many hours' chaffering is looked upon as good business. Thus it took three days, on and off, before the price was agreed upon, during which period of trial a person ignorant of the ways of the country would have imagined the printer and I about to come to blows; for I have long since adopted the manners of the country when doing business. But the bargain once struck, all became calm again, and we both applied ourselves to our experiment with energy.

I believed that the best way of assuring a sale was to get people to subscribe for the paper for the season; so with this end in view I ran about buttonholing my friends, and unblushingly calling on even those people I did not know. It was a great effort, for this was my first experience of touting for

anything, and I was horribly nervous in consequence. But I had my reward in a very ready response, everybody I saw seeming to like the idea immensely. The sum, it is true, was small—only five francs; but even that amount has to be considered by many winterers abroad. As an instance of delicacy, I will relate one anecdote. I called on a man I knew by sight only, and asked him to subscribe. 'Yes,' he said, 'with pleasure. How much?' When I told him, I thought I saw his eyebrows go up a shade; but he said nothing, and pulling out his purse, tendered me twenty-five francs. When I pointed out his mistake he only remarked, 'Oh, I beg your pardon. I thought you said twenty-five.' I heard afterwards that he had told the story to some friends, remarking, 'I thought it pretty tall when he said twenty-five, as I thought; but, you see, the man was a gentleman, and I could see he didn't like his job, so I said nothing.'

This unpleasant work took me several days; but at the end of it I found that, including the advertisements, I had secured more by two pounds than the sum I had agreed to pay the printer for the season's issue of the paper. This was most satisfactory, as I could not now lose any money, and I set to work preparing the first number with the greatest energy. The printer was an intelligent fellow; but it is quite impossible for me to convey any idea of the tremendous difficulty I had in making a start. First of all, we had not got very far in composing when the man discovered that his stock of 'w's' was exhausted. The French use few of that letter, the English many; so we had to telegraph to Paris for a fresh supply, and wait with what patience we might till it came. Then the proof-correcting was endless. I am not going beyond the mark when I say that every line had from half-a-dozen to any number of errors, one word sometimes having several letters wrong. Then, as often as not, in correcting one mistake the man would make one or more new ones. Oh, it was a weary, weary time! Sometimes, when at last the page was corrected and the type seemingly tightly screwed up in the frame, and I would turn my attention to something else, in carrying the frame to the press a few letters would drop out, and the fiendish printer, instead of telling me, would say nothing, and calmly stick them back again wherever he could find room, producing in consequence in the first copy some astounding words. But enough of these details; perseverance overcame all my difficulties, and one fine Saturday afternoon saw the first issue of the *Sleepy Hollow Gazette* completed, and lying in neat piles all ready for issue. I had finished addressing the stamped bands for those copies to be sent by post, with one exception, that of a subscriber the name of whose house I had omitted to note. The Mairie was but three doors off, where all addresses are registered, so I threw down my pen, seized a pencil and note-book, and skipped round with a light heart to obtain what I wanted. Now, mark on what small matters success often hangs.

The clerk to whom I applied was not unknown to me. I had met him when fishing, and I had been able to give him some trifling bit of tackle or other that he wanted. When he gave me the information I required I noticed that he seemed rather ill at ease, struggling, in fact, with the Jack-in-office manner that all French officials, however humble, think it dignified to assume when dealing with the public. As I wrote in my book, I casually mentioned that I wanted the address for my newspaper.

'Ah, yes. You are going to start a paper for the English, I hear,' he said. 'Have you—I ask you as a friend—got the necessary permission?'

'What permission?' I cried. 'I particularly asked the printer if there was any authority to be obtained or formalities to go through before publishing, and he assured me that there were none; the only thing required being three copies of each issue signed by me and duly deposited at the Mairie on the day of publication.'

'It is not my business to inform you, sir,' said my friend, 'and there are many who would not be best pleased at my doing so,' he added, smiling, 'for there are some who do not relish the idea of an English paper; but the law requires that before publishing a newspaper the permission of the procureur of the Republic must be obtained by writing to him on stamped paper and giving all particulars, such as name, price, object, owner, printer, editor, &c. You must do this and send the application here, when we will forward it, and you will have your answer in ten days or so. If you issue a single copy of your newspaper before you have the authority you will be fined five hundred francs.'

This was cheerful intelligence, with the *Gazette* all ready, and my friends and subscribers eagerly expectant of the first copy. To publish it ten days late would make me the laughing-stock of the whole place, and was not to be thought of.

'Where does this procureur live?' I asked hotly.

'At C——,' naming a town an hour's journey by rail.

'Must the application absolutely go through the Mairie?'

'No; but it will receive earlier attention if it does.'

'There is a train in twenty minutes. If I catch it, have I any chance of seeing this official this afternoon?'

'No. He will have left his office, and won't be there till Monday, if then. He is an easy-going procureur.'

'Can I see him at his house?'

'Oh no, sir. It would be most irregular to attempt it, and you would never succeed. Not to be thought of.'

'Thank you. Good-bye;' and off I bolted, raging.

I had no money in my pocket to speak of. I was dirty, untidy, and inky, and I had no time to go to my house, which was at some little distance; but I was determined to publish the paper that day by hook or by crook.

I whirled into the office, and in three minutes

had explained matters to the astonished printer and comfortably 'cussed' him for his ignorance. In two more I had borrowed twenty-five francs from him, and, rushing off, had bought the necessary stamped paper from the nearest Bureau de Tabac. Ten more sufficed to write out the application with the printer's aid, as fully as we could manage, and then I tore up the street as hard as I could go towards the station, the whistle of the approaching train being distinctly audible, and acting as a spur to my efforts, leaving the printer staring aghast at the flying figure of the mad Anglais.

I caught my train, and in due course arrived at C——, where I took a cab, telling the man to drive to the procureur's house. I found that I had exactly three hours before my train left for home—which train, by the way, I discovered was the last that night, so it behoved me to catch it. Presently we stopped before a fine mansion, and a pompous man-servant answered my impatient knock.

'Is the procureur in?'

'What name, sir?'

'I have no card, as I had to leave home in a great hurry; but I am Mr Y. from ——, and I have urgent business, but it will not take two minutes to carry out.'

The man went away, leaving me standing on the door-step, as is the pleasing habit of French servants to strange callers.

After what seemed to me a long delay, he re-appeared with the abrupt question, 'What is your business?'

Although the man's manner was now distinctly insolent, I kept my temper and gave him my application, at the same time slipping a five-franc piece into his ready hand. 'Just get monsieur to sign that,' I said, 'and I shall be much obliged to you.'

A grin spread itself over the fellow's yellow face, and he again disappeared, only to return in a minute or two with the paper still unsigned.

'Monsieur is out,' he growled.

'Nonsense. What's the matter?'

'Monsieur is out, I tell you,' he repeated rudely.

'When will he be in?'

'I don't know.'

'I shall come back.'

'As monsieur pleases; but the procureur does not see gentlemen'—with unpleasant emphasis on the last word—'out of office hours.' And he slammed the door in my face.

I retired beaten. Stay, was I beaten? I was not sure. I would think it over. 'Cabby, the procureur is out, as you hear. Drive me to a barber's; I'll get my hair cut.'

There was an old woman selling fruit on a hand-barrow on the opposite side of the street. She called out to me shrilly, 'The procureur is not out. I saw him go in from the Palais de Justice two hours ago, and he has not come out since, the *canaille*.' I agreed with her.

The barber was an excellent fellow. I told him my trouble as he clipped me, and what he told me about the procureur—whom he knew, and who had, it seems, a reputation for devotion to the fair sex rather than to his work—was just the usual story of French officialism: a story that has furnished the plot of many French farces, and of which the heroes do not seem ashamed. 'But why don't you see the "substitute"?' he said. 'He is really a very capital official, quite different from his superior; and if he has the power to do what you want, I am sure that he will do it, in or out of work-hours. I do not know his private address; but he may still be at his office in the Palais.' So off I went to that gloomy building, and there, after endless wanderings in grimy and odorous passages, I found an old caretaker, who told me where my quarry lived—which was not very far from the procureur's house, by the way.

Refreshed by my barbering, I dismissed my cab and stumped off once more on my hunt for officials, and this time the door was answered by a respectful old lady of the charwoman type. But once again my hopes fell to the ground. The 'substitute' was also out, really out, and would not be back, in all likelihood, before seven, at which hour he dined. 'Would I return at that hour?' 'Yes, I would return before that hour; my train left at 7.10, and I would come back at a quarter to seven;' and so it was settled. Then the thought of my five francs and the abominable procureur smote me, and a childish desire to be revenged possessed me. I determined to employ the time at my disposal in knocking at the humbug's door at short intervals, and demanding to know if he had returned. It would exercise the pompous man-servant if nothing else. I would take my five francs' worth out in that way. I did it, and each time the door was answered—and I hammered until it was—the sight of the man's face, now purple with rage, was as good as a tonic to me.

At 6.45 I was back at the 'substitute's,' where I waited anxiously. The precious moments sped, and I was beginning to despair, when at seven precisely in walked my man. To the credit side of French official life be it said that this good fellow was very polite indeed, and I had hardly explained what I wanted when he grasped the situation, and cheerfully signing my precious document 'for the procureur,' bowed me out with many injunctions to hurry up if I wanted to catch my train.

This I accomplished by the skin of my teeth, and the paper was posted to the subscribers that very night, and triumphantly appeared on their Sunday breakfast-tables next morning.

When I told my story and exhibited my authority duly signed, my French friends were lost in amazement.

'No wonder you English always get your way,' said my friend the clerk. 'You have no respect for the law. No Frenchman would dare to tackle a *fonctionnaire* after office hours on business; nor would he succeed if he did.'

'I only acted on your own motto,' I replied: '"Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."'

'Bah!' said the clerk, as he expectorated violently. 'There is no such thing in France.'

And thus was the *Gazette* launched upon its career, a fairly smooth one so far. Of course I offended some people—that was unavoidable; and I will not describe how Miss Brown was furious, nor what she wrote to me, because I mentioned that she had given a delightful garden-party, or how insulted Miss Jones felt because I omitted to give an account of hers, through fear of offending her also. Nor will I relate how Mr Robinson was most irate because I stated that he had let his house to Mr Smith for next season, or how Captain Atkins wrote me an official letter of abuse because I did not say that he had just taken General M'Smackum's château. My editorial table possesses a big drawer full of similar silly letters, which show up human nature in such a lamentable fashion as to be almost past belief. They are intensely amusing in their vanity and narrow-mindedness, but, being mostly marked 'private,' of course cannot be produced in print.

I suppose that my experiences are not new, and that all editors, however well meaning, and however insignificant their newspapers, undergo the same badgering; though I doubt if many of them have known what it is to establish an English paper in France.

THE TRAGEDY OF HOUGOMONT.

By Ethel F. Heddle.

CHAPTER I.—BEFORE THE BATTLE.

'ANTOINETTE! Hist!'

Something in the hiss of the last word made Antoinette pause and suddenly place the pail of water she was carrying on the ground. There was just light enough left in the stormy sky above the château for her to see that something, or some one, was lurking in the shadow behind the farm-door.

'Who is it?' she demanded without moving, her voice stilled suddenly. Then a long, lean hand touched her from the dusk, and the girl shivered from head to foot.

'François! Is it you?'

'Yes, it is François. Is there any one within? I am starving.'

She closed the door hastily and shot the bolt, acting with a swift haste and precision. Her pretty face had whitened; her hands trembled. She passed through an outer kitchen, and then the two stood in an inner room, across the quaint, low window of which a screen of green leaves was tapping and swaying in the wind. A coming storm was in the air; a curious, dull haze brooded over Hougomont. The château, the orchards, the lane, the farm, the little chapel, seemed to stand in a white oasis of light, round which was gathering a murky pall of violet-black. The leaves, tapping restlessly, seemed to shiver together, and Antoinette heard them as if they were heart-beats, as she stood facing the soldier before her.

'How is it,' she breathed then, 'that you are here? The English are all around—outside, everywhere! On the orchard-wall they are barricading—they are swarming in the orchard. And the seigneur has gone to Brussels. Only Jean and I are left in charge.'

'So I heard,' he said coolly; 'you and Jean! When did you give in, and marry Jean?'

She drew back at that, flushed and trembling. Her voice came in a low, shamed whisper:

'Last spring. We were starving! My father was dying! And you—you never wrote! They told me you were with the Emperor; that you had forgotten me. They told me there was another—that you were married; that you made mock of Belgian girls!'

'And you believed it all? Well, no matter, since it is all over and done.'

He sat down by the white, well-scrubbed table, and stretched out his legs.

'I am too hungry to be sentimental or to talk of love! Fetch me bread, Antoinette, and wine. I have hidden all day in the farm-buildings, and heard these English talk. I have news now for M. le Général. Perhaps I shall see the Emperor! But I wanted a peep of you, and now you must hide me till they sleep, and I can escape by the orchard-wall. Bread! Bread! I have a wolf, here inside.'

He waved his hand impatiently, and Antoinette ran to the dresser and pulled out a long loaf, a piece of Gruyère cheese, and a flagon of red wine. She stood trembling while the French soldier ate and drank, starting at every sound; but when he put out his hand and would have drawn her to him, she shivered again. Once they had loved; he was half-French, half-Belgian, and had fought with the Emperor in many of his battles, and she had looked up to him as a hero. She had never loved honest Jean Baptiste, because of François; but she was too terrified to think of love and dalliance now.

'Make haste, François! At any moment they may come in—Jean may come in!'

'And then?'

'They would see you, and take you prisoner. Spies are shot!'

'I would die hard,' he said coolly, looking round

the room. It was bare, save for the tables, two benches, and a high, carved clock of light oak which stood against the wall. On the mantelpiece was a small image of the Virgin, and under it Antoinette's rosary. 'I would shoot him, this thieving Jean!' he said abruptly then, his gaze wandering over her slim figure and sunny, loosened hair. 'I will be equal with him some day.'

She was desirable, suddenly, in his eyes, this little Belgian girl, to whom he had once been betrothed, but whom he had almost forgotten in the excitement of his life, till he found she could be of use to him as châtelaine of Hougomont. Her frightened eyes, too, were like the forget-me-not he had seen in the orchard ditch that day.

'I hate him because he took you from me! I hate him!' he said.

'Jean is good,' Antoinette whispered under her breath. 'Though I do not love him, he is good. And you, François—— *Ah, mon Dieu!* here they come!'

Tall figures were passing the window. A loud rat-tat sounded on the door. François rose and coolly moved the clock, placing himself behind it in the shadow. He was inured to danger, and the kitchen would be badly lit. He had been in tighter places than this.

'Let them in,' he said carelessly. 'When all is dark I can slip out to the outhouses, and so over the orchard-wall. One kiss! No? You are shy.'

He could even laugh carelessly. Antoinette looked at him as if half-fascinated, half-terrified. She hastily put away the remains of the meal, and went to the door. In another moment the kitchen was full of English soldiers, Jean Baptiste meeting them as they entered from the courtyard.

He was a tall Belgian, with a quiet, resolute face and calm, gray eyes. Antoinette looked up with a strange sense of relief as he stood between her and the soldiers and helped her to lay the table. Jean was good, though she did not love him—he was good!

Yet all this time her heart thudded against her side. She scarcely dared glance at the tall clock. Oh, if they saw him! If they killed him there, before her eyes! François, whose gay, careless courage and laughing eyes had won her heart, the cool touch of whose lean hand had seemed to reach her with the power of an electric current—François, whom she loved!

The soldiers talked and laughed. To-morrow they would teach 'Boney' a lesson; to-morrow the French would fly as chaff before the wind. The storm, they said, was coming fast; the clouds lowered dark and near; low peals of thunder were muttering in the distance. All around, the British were making bivouac, the villagers coming in with billets of wood to keep their fires alive. Soldiers rested everywhere, some under bushes, some in straw stolen from the farmhouses. Old campaigners had rigged up blanket on bayonet; but the bulk of the army lay unsheltered under the lowering, threatening sky. Across the valley the French had hidden their fires; but they were reflected in the gloomy canopy overhead in a dull red glow. At Caillon the Emperor supped late with his staff. Antoinette listened to the talk of the soldiers, sick at heart. Once, when they mentioned the orchard barricades and the high platform over the gate, and declared that there was not a loophole now by which the enemy could enter, she thought she heard a movement behind the clock; but at last they were gone, and she and Jean were left alone. He said he would go on to bed, as he had been up since dawn; and Antoinette worked on, scarcely answering. He lingered for a little, looking at her, then went away. When at last she stood in the room alone, blowing out all the candles, the rain was falling in deluges, and tremendous peals of heaven's artillery rolled overhead. The night was one of terror. Terror was in her heart. How would François escape? How could he? There was not a loophole unguarded in Hougomont. She knew from the English soldiers' words that every crevice was occupied; the wall by which he had hoped to escape was lined with men armed to the teeth. He was in a trap—a trap of steel.

He came out as she stood waiting, and taking her hand, whispered that he would hide in the barn. He knew a place behind the hay-rick. And next day the French would take the farm; they would chase out these rats of English, and burn Hougomont to the ground. He would save her if he could. Nothing and no one ever resisted the French and the Emperor! But now, in case Jean returned, let them start for the barn.

Antoinette, breathless and trembling, stole out to reconnoitre. The soldiers lay everywhere, thick as bees, crouching on every side under their blankets, under the trees in the orchard, in the shelter of the walls, but all weary, all in a dead sleep. François stepped between them with a careless smile. In the dark he would only have been taken for a late patrol. At the door of the barn, which Antoinette unlocked, he paused to put his arm round her waist. For a moment she yielded, and a tall man who had crept on to the rough platform above the gate with a lantern to fetch some forgotten tools saw them stand thus, the girl's white face illumined by a blinding flash of lightning.

'If we win to-morrow, Antoinette'——

François kissed her then. His breath scorched her cheek.

'But you will not win.'

She drew back. She had learned to hate and dread Napoleon.

'We always win where *he* goes—always. You shall see. I shall make you my prisoner of war. Little Antoinette! He, Jean, will be killed. The Little Corporal will not leave a soul alive in Hougomont.'

Some one stirred in the dark. François crept noiselessly into the barn and behind the hay-rick. Antoinette waited till there was silence; then she

too moved away. For a moment she had rested her head on his shoulder, felt his kiss; she had been disloyal! And though she had not loved Jean, she had never meant—— She stood still in the pouring rain and shivered. The dark silhouette of the little chapel was before her, and she crept in. War, and the terror of war, was all around. A cloud, as of blood, obscured her eyes, but she could see a candle burning on the stand before the white image of Christ hanging above the door, and another was before the Virgin on the altar. The tiny chapel was the one place in all the earth, she felt, in which there was peace; and yet, even here, soldiers lay in heavy slumber all around. She crept between their silent figures, and fell on her knees before the little, rude wooden image.

'Holy Mother, forgive me! Mother of all sorrows! Sinless Mary! I am Jean's wife, and François has kissed me, and now I feel far from thee.'

She wept as she whispered; the tears rained down her face. Outside, the thunder roared and muttered, heaven's great artillery mocking the feeble imitation of yesterday. Splitting, blinding swords of light played over the battlefield, and the summer woods, and the ripe corn soon to be trodden down and drenched with blood. At last a quiet hand touched her shoulder.

'Antoinette, there is a time to sleep and a time to pray. Come, *petite!* And to-morrow—we know not what to-morrow brings—perhaps for you hope—deliverance!'

Jean's grave, kindly face. What did he mean?

He stood, tall and serene, waiting. He did not touch her. But he followed the light figure closely when she stepped between the sleeping men, and he watched, later, till her fair head was on the pillow and she slept, worn out. His love for her was an adoration. Then he moved to the bed, and stood looking down at the small face pitifully.

'I saw she had hidden some one behind the clock. I saw the edge of his sleeve, and it was a French coat! The man she told me of was French. He is hidden *here!* Poor child! Poor child!'

In her sleep Antoinette tossed her arms.

'Jean!' she cried. 'He is good, but I do not love him!'

He went back to the window with a stifled groan. He sat there till dawn, the coming battle forgotten, the storm, the morrow's tragedy.

Dawn, a cheerless dawn, found him still there, fighting his own battle.

And over at Caillon, Napoleon had risen, gray of face, with only life in his blazing eyes and steely lips, to see if his enemy lay still in his grasp.

He cried with delight when the red light on either side of Mont Saint Jean showed him the English were still there, 'in the hollow of his hand.' The light was obscured, and it was only half-past three when the dawn broke over sodden fields, and dripping woods, and plashy ground, and deep, secret pools. The air was filled with mist; between the two armies stood watchful sentries and vedettes. No other sign of life broke the gray, dreary expanse. It was a day that broke in tears, that crept shame-faced and trembling from the womb of night.

And then, about six, for the last time, thousands and thousands woke to look upon an earthly dawn. They would see it again nevermore.

The two mighty armies stirred, and men, blue, cold, wet, unshaven, looked up to the pitiless sky. Then, rousing to life, they began to carry wood, to light fires, to feed horses. The sound rolled over Waterloo. It was 'like the sound of a great sea beating on a rocky shore'—the sea of life that was so soon to beat against the rocky shores of death.

CHAPTER II.—THE RED HEART OF THE BATTLE.

IT was twenty minutes past eleven before the first gun broke the deadly stillness of the 18th of June 1815. The storm was past for the present; but a dull, slumberous heat, a sullen massing of clouds over the battlefield, seemed to betoken that it only waited to break forth once more.

Antoinette had been busy all the morning, going about with a dull, leaden weight at her heart.

She had no time, however, to think or to pray. There were many to cook for; the whole place swarmed with English soldiers. Antoinette shuddered when she remembered the hole behind the hay-rick in the barn, where François lay. There, indeed, he must lie, unless he courted death, till the French conquered and took Hougomont, or till night hid foe from friend or friend from foe. It was about twelve, and she was busy cooking in the kitchen, when a soldier touched her arm, and pointed through the window to the strip of orchard which ran behind it. There she could just see an officer on a chestnut horse; he wore a blue Spanish cape, white cravat, white buckskins, and plain cocked hat, and was pointing to the château, giving an order briefly and sternly. Antoinette had a fleeting vision of a high Roman nose, keen eagle eyes, and a firm mouth.

'Who is it?' she whispered.

'The Duke—the one man in England who is a match for Boney, and the man who will lick him to-day.' He laughed grimly. 'Come, don't look so white, madame; you ain't French, though you do use the lingo.'

After that Antoinette was called hither and thither. Already there had been fighting in the orchard. The enemy had attempted to storm it from the narrow lane outside, and had been met by a devastating hail of bullets from the loopholed wall. One or two wounded had been carried in. She shuddered as she looked, and then she set her teeth. It was as well. The small, pinched, girlish face was to look as if cut from marble before the day was done. These were only the first few pattering hailstones of the storm. Her eyes were

to grow used to horror. The wood, the lane, and the thicket were now full of French; they stormed over the wall, and fell in hundreds in the orchard; they forced their way through the thicket, cheering loudly, but were checked at the hedge that belched forth fire. Still they pressed on dauntlessly, and could then see the red brick wall of the farm, for which they made with wild cries of rage and triumph. Already their leader was springing for hand-hold when the wall seemed to grow alive with fire; bullets fell like rain from above, from every side, and with yells and choking moans they fell back, tier upon tier of slain crashing one on the other, till there was a heap of dead and dying, over which their maddened comrades leaped and raced, stumbled and fell.

But that was only the first repulse. They swarmed up in an unending stream, desperate with valour, wild with rage; the wood was captured, then lost; taken again, and retaken. A fierce cannonade had deepened along the whole line of Hougomont; the place was a red-hot hell of shot and shell. On all sides it was besieged: house, kitchen-garden, ravine, flower-garden, were crowded with the enemy. Hay-ricks blazed, white smoke curling up to the gray of the sky. The grass of the orchard was blood-stained—a charnel-house. The ditch in the lane outside was choked with dead, and still the French poured in, a ceaseless stream, unconquerable, undefeated, dauntless, and desperate.

Antoinette had not a moment to think. The wounded lay everywhere; the courtyard was full; the château was burning. She was called hither and thither, working under the direction of the surgeon, and feeling that all life had stopped short just here; that she had never known before what life could be—what death could be.

A blood-red mist swam before her eyes as the terrible hours wore on, and still that wild stream of soldiers fought and died, locked together in a deadly embrace. She had almost lost sight of time at last, when she fell back against the wall, faint and giddy, and felt some one put a cup to her lips.

Jean, blood-stained and dirty, his shirt torn, a bandage round his head, was holding wine to her lips with the old quiet look.

'Drink, *petite*,' he said. 'You will need all your strength, for the day is not done yet. The English bulldog never gives way.'

That was like Jean. She knew he had worked since the battle began, bringing in the wounded, exposing himself to a storm of French bullets on the wall, quietly reckless of danger. She had seen him often, but had never spoken to him. It was he who seized the first shell that fell on the château-roof and flung it over on the grass; but the château blazed now, unchecked, and all they could do was to try to prevent the flames from reaching the chapel and the farm.

Reckless deeds of valour passed unnoticed. Jean had courted death a hundred times that day, and yet not met it; only, the wounded blessed the strong man with the grave, white face who carried them so tenderly across the lane of fire, and seemed to know no fear.

Now he looked at Antoinette steadily for a minute, as if thinking deeply. Then he drew near, and whispered in her ear. It was a whisper that penetrated through the tornado, and seemed to stand out in letters of fire on her brain:

'Antoinette, *I know who is behind the hay-rick!* I saw him. If the château is ours till dark—and I think it will be—*he will be caught.* The French will never take Hougomont, though they may burn us out. Take him the coat of yonder dead English soldier. He could escape dressed in that till he reached the orchard-hedge; he could fling it off when he was free. At least he can die fighting, not sabred like a rat in a hole or hung as a spy.'

She shuddered violently. Then, as Jean moved away, she took the coat of the dead soldier and stepped through the groaning heaps of dying and dead into the barn and behind the hay-rick. François was there, lying with burning, glaring eyes. How was it going? Were the French not in yet? Where was the Emperor? How did the day go?

'I do not know,' Antoinette said vacantly. 'Only they have not taken Hougomont, and they will not; though the château is on fire, and I think it is like a hell all around. In the lane behind the orchard the French lie thick, piles and piles of dead, staring at one with their awful eyes. I saw them from the wall, thicker than the apples lie in October. But listen! Put on this coat. You can escape with it through the hedge. Here is a British rifle. At least you can die in the open.'

He seized the coat with an exclamation, forgetting to thank her. He donned it hastily, making a wry face at the blood with which it was besmeared. Then he took her hand, but it dropped lifelessly from his. Love! This was no time for love—or sin! This was Purgatory—the flames of Purgatory!

He was gone.

. . . . . .

She stole out then, and resumed her work. Had he crept through the gap in the hedge? Was he safe?

All thought grew slow and torpid. She felt now as if the battle had lasted all her life, as if she had known nothing but these awful yells and cries, the hiss of shells, the crackling of flames, the moans of the dying, the still, white faces of the dead. Some one said that the French were giving way at last. Dusk was falling, though here, under the red glare of the flames of the burning château, there seemed no dusk, no twilight—only a red, red light of battle. Then at last, sick, giddy, and trembling, she crept into the shelter of the chapel, feeling that she was about to die, as if life and courage could bear no more.

The chapel stands just beside the château walls, but just under the pierced feet of the dead Christ

the flames had stopped as if arrested. The wounded lay all around. She would have had to pick her way up to the little altar, where a posy of lilies she had placed there yesterday was splashed with blood. She was standing looking up at the pale face of the Christ, the head sunk forward on the breast, the eyes half-closed, as if in woe unspeakable, when a faint call reached her, and she stooped at once to see the ghastly face of one of the farm-servants lying at her feet.

'Madame,' he whispered faintly, 'over there—see see—your husband!'

'Jean?'

'Yes.'

'Where?'

At first she could not see, till the wounded man, leaning on his elbow, caught her dress.

'Over there, near the altar. He was carried in with a bad sabre-wound. The surgeon bandaged him, and left him. And then I, from my place here, saw a devil of an English soldier *cut the bandage!* He has bled to death. I could not move; I cried out, but no one heard.'

'An English soldier?'

'He wore the uniform,' the other murmured; 'but I think he was a spy. He and I were the only conscious men here, and I heard him swear in French as he crept out of the door.'

He had pointed towards a man in the corner, and Antoinette reeled dizzily towards that spot. She had taken in all that was said. *She knew whose hand had cut the bandage!* He had sworn to be equal with Jean. And Jean had bled to death!

She was down on her knees then by the tall figure; the pale face rested back on the rude clay of the floor, strangely peaceful and quiet—Jean's ruddy face, so changed in one day! How hard he had worked—unlike all the others, his, a work of mercy! Jean all his life had been merciful, kind, patient, tender.

And she had not loved him! He was good, but she had not loved him—till now—till she knew the one man, and the other!

A great sob tore up through her breast; tears rained from her eyes. She took his head in her lap and pressed her kisses upon his lips—the first kisses she had ever given him.

'Jean! Jean! Come back to me! Oh, the good God! Let him come back to me!'

One or two wounded stirred and looked at her, moved feebly, and groaned. The agony of her voice pierced through their dreams. She could see the cut bandage beside him. She stooped and looked at the ghastly wound. The blood had congealed above it; as she moved him a little oozed out. She started, and the life leapt to her face. They say dead men do not bleed.

Was he dead?

In an instant she was on her feet and had run towards a passing surgeon. He came impatiently, and after a moment's hasty scrutiny turned away.

'Dead? No, though next thing to it. The blood has congealed, and saved him. Tie him up and give him a restorative.—Coming, sir; coming!'

. . . . . .

She had done what he bade her. She waited in the little, dark chapel, the white figure of the Christ hanging opposite, praying as women pray only once in their lives, and waiting. The château was a mass of smouldering ruins; a red glare in the sky hung above it. Here and there the flames on the thatched roof of the farm-buildings blazed up, then fell. The horrible roar and din of battle was dying down. The Eagle of France was wounded unto death, was broken-winged and dying.

Wellington, standing on the ridge above the Guards, his figure outlined against the sky, had raised his hat with a solemn gesture, the signal for the worn line of heroes to sweep away like a dark cloud over the plain. Napoleon, ghastly white, his chin on his breast, heard the last pealing cry; saw the Old Guard reel and rally, sink back, sway, fall; saw in one awful, blinding moment down into the hell of defeat, tasted the bitter dregs of despair. Waterloo was lost!

But Antoinette waited, heeding nothing of the fate of nations or of kings—waited for Jean to come back, or to drift away.

. . . . . .

'*Petite!*'

The old gentle voice.

She heard the faint whisper, and the colour rushed over her face. With a glad cry she stooped and kissed him.

Life thrilled through his veins; he looked up, and read love in her eyes. And love drove back death.

'You do care, *petite?*' he said in faint, tremulous wonder.

'I love you!' Antoinette said. 'I love you!'

. . . . . .

She waited by his side all night in the chapel, while that awful rout, that *débâcle* after battle, rolled to the very gates of France, battered, beaten. Thousands and thousands of dead were staring up with wide eyes of horror into the starry sky above; all around, on the blood-drenched corn-fields and on the mournful orchards of Hougomont, the dead lay like autumn leaves after a storm.

In the morning Jean was carried into the farm. The sun shone brilliantly, pitilessly; in the well in the farmyard they were hastily throwing down the dead, French and English, 'in one red burial blent.'

One there was, with an English coat and a French face, shot through the heart as he leapt from the wall into the ranks of the besieging force in the orchard.

Antoinette did not know that. She only knew that he never returned to Hougomont.

There, under the orchard-trees, whose sweet, frail blossoms fall still above the whitening bones of heroes, she lived to bear Jean children, and to make him happy. He was good, and she loved him. Her old thought had altered a little, that was all.

A NEW BIOLOGICAL STATION.

THE conditions under which a biological station and aquarium might be established in the Bermudas has been a topic that has for some years occupied the minds of scientific men both of England and the United States; but its development is mainly due to the material aid and enterprise of Professor C. L. Bristol, of the New York University, who on his arrival here in 1899 was at once forcibly impressed with the advantages offered by the position of these islands in the Atlantic. As they are washed on one side by the waters of the Gulf Stream, which flows between Bermuda and the eastern shores of the United States, trending especially to the north-east when reaching the latitude of New York, and on their other side receive the flotsam and jetsam of the Sargasso Sea, the diversity of specimens found around the islands afford a good study of tropical marine life. In the circular concourse of waters in the Sargasso Sea float vast masses of gulf-weed, the *Sargassum bacciferum*, intermingled with driftwood, seeds of trees and plants, and other vegetable matter, bearing on its surface or within its tangled masses myriads of molluscs, crustaceans, and other invertebrate forms which float hither and thither as the winds direct, while thousands of fishes frequent these aquatic preserves, and, wandering away right and left, strike the shores, and are there captured. The island station will, from its location, take rank with the kindred establishments of Naples and Wood's Hole, Massachusetts; and while the latter gets the benefit of the western drift of the Gulf Stream, Bermuda will gain what there is to be learned from its eastern edge. No one thinks nowadays of Naples without recalling the very attractive aquarium of the Stazione Zoölogica, and no visitor to New York fails to include a visit to the aquarium in Battery Park, one half of which may be said to be given over to Bermuda marine life, and many Bermudians have gone there actually to see for the first time their own fishes.

The site fixed upon for the location of the Bermuda station is at the narrow channel forming an outlet and inlet of Harrington Sound, a large body of land-locked water save for this channel, through which the tide ebbs and flows with great impetus. The bridge which spans the channel is a rough relic of the early colonists, around which are said to exist the best shell-collecting grounds in the islands. The northern shores of this sound present a series of high, almost perpendicular cliffs, a breeding resort for the tropic bird, or, as it is locally called, 'the longtail;' and being inaccessible, they afford a safe refuge for nesting. Its shores generally are rocky, and by no means suitable for visits from conchologists, the water being very deep; but where it is shallow enough to afford a view of the bottom, and its surface is usually calm, gorgonias, sponges, corals, and hosts of other submarine wonders are made plainly visible by the use of a water-glass. Almost the whole coast of the islands, with the exception of a very few sandy bays, is useless as a shell-collecting ground, shells being broken and ground up into comminuted fragments through the action of the surf on the outer submerged reefs. In Harrington Sound numbers of scollops, arcs, and other bivalves are fished for at a depth of five or six fathoms by means of a long-handled nipper.

Lady Blake a few years ago, when her husband was Governor of Jamaica, strongly advocated that island as the site for a biological station, and she contributed several articles to British periodicals in favour of her ideas; but with the departure of the Blakes her scheme fell through, and was then taken up by Bermuda with the present results. In addition to marine life, these islands are a veritable paradise to the botanist and ornithologist, the latter of whom during the vernal and autumnal migration flights has opportunities here of noting many a weary and storm-beaten migrant, to which the Bermudas offer a harbour of refuge on its passage north or south. Equidistant from the shores of Nova Scotia, the United States, and the West Indian archipelago, they present a casual resting-place to many birds while traversing the broad expanse of ocean which forms the eastern limit of their great line of flight. This article, however, must not diverge into the various phases of life produced here by nature, but must rather deal with biological station details.

Last summer representatives from various scientific institutions in the whole of the Eastern and some of the Western and Southern States flocked here under Professor Bristol's direction, men and women of extensive training who occupy official positions in various universities and colleges in America, each one an expert investigator in his or her particular department of science. When the station buildings are completed investigation will be carried on in a laboratory thoroughly equipped with glassware, chemicals, and scientific apparatus of great delicacy. The lower story of the main building will be devoted to the aquarium for the display of fishes and other marine animals of these islands, and will be open to the public and for the use of investigators; the upper story will contain the laboratory, a pumping outfit, and reservoir for sea-water large enough to supply the tanks for four hours (for repairs and emergencies), and tidal pools similar to fish-ponds will also be provided. The stone tanks around the aquarium floor will be faced inwardly with plate glass held in iron frames, the experience of the New York Aquarium standing in good stead. The scientific work intended to be carried on will attract biologists from all over the United States and Europe, who

have long desired a place where tropical marine life may be studied, and these visitors on their return home, carrying specimens for their college museums and stocked with knowledge personally acquired, will diffuse an amount of marine-life lore which otherwise would be long in reaching so many different places where universities, colleges, and scientific institutions exist.

Fain would the writer dwell on Bermuda's natural history. Man when he came here found a soil of virgin fertility and a singularly genial climate, where frost and snow are unknown, and this green oasis in the desert of Atlantic waters is the counterpart of the fabled Hesperides. Geologists assert that it is only the remnant of a long-lost island-continent, honeycombed with caverns fretted with the dissolving rains of ages, and having flora peculiarly its own, for Nature had a long reign here, and man and animals introduced by him have had but a comparatively short period for modifying its verdure. The island has no snakes or noxious reptiles with the exception of the centipede; and the æolian or sand-drift rocks, never exceeding three hundred feet in height, diversify the landscape.

FORCING FLOWERS BY THE DIRECT ACTION OF FIRE.

By J. E. Whitby.

THAT flowers can be forced by heat such as is usually supplied to glass-houses is of course an old story; but that the direct action of fire-heat can have any effect in hastening the blooming of plants is a fresh suggestion, but one that in these days when flowers are demanded in season, out of season, at all times, and of every kind and country, is worth consideration. Great events have frequently sprung from the smallest or the most apparently indirect causes; and a serious fire that broke out last September at Chausée-sur-Marne, between Chalons and Vitry-le-François, in France, while it destroyed the greater part of a populous village, ruining many of its inhabitants, may yet have as a result the even greater development of an industry that gives employment to thousands of people.

The fire, which raged on one side of the village, made a clean sweep of everything before it in the way of buildings, and only paused when there was nothing to lick up except the orchards that once formed a hedge between the homesteads and the open country. Even there it was hardly satiated, for it greedily devoured the two first ranks of apple and pear trees, leaving nothing but cinders; the next three rows, though very scorched, were not quite destroyed, the farthest away being naturally the least affected. Some of the boughs escaped all hurt, and it was with these that the very curious phenomenon was observed which merits attention. A second flowering commenced at once, and by the end of October all the trees farthest from the scene of the fire were in full bloom, as though called to renewed life by the fresh voice of May, instead of hushing to slumber with the lullaby of October. At another point the flames had swept close to a large lilac-tree, and this, as well as some plum-trees, bewildered by what must have seemed to it a sudden return of summer, put on once more its bridal robes.

It must be mentioned that the fire only lasted four hours. It will be noticed, therefore, that there was no resemblance between this sudden blast of heat and the ordinary gradual forcing to which plants are submitted. The plants affected by the experience were those whose buds were already formed for the following season, which is a distinct proof that the blossoms appeared out of due time and as the direct action of the fire. This curious result of a regrettable but ordinary accident is vouched for by an eye-witness, and is sufficiently curious to raise the question as to whether the forcing of flowers might not be hastened in some such way as that described, without exactly following, however, the extreme method described by Charles Lamb as that by which the Chinese discovered, and ever after obtained, roast pork—by burning down a whole village. The suggestion the incident offers may be worth following up, for it may enable growers to secure a double harvest of blooms by submitting to fierce and rapid heat plants whose buds are already formed.

A curious fact which seems to have some connection with the above, and which may throw some light on it, is that recently it has been noticed in the south of France that the lilac-trees whose leaves have all dropped from green-fly or other pests bloom earlier and better than any others. There seems, therefore, to be some link between the destruction of the leaves—which naturally shrivelled in the intense heat of the fire—and the unexpected crop of flowers.

SLEEP, DREAM, AND WAKE.

Sleep, dearest, sleep, nor fret for what must be,
The autumn moon sinks slowly on the sea;
The chill, gray dawn creeps o'er the windless lea.

Dream, dearest, dream of all those summer days,
The garden close, the twilit waterways,
The dim, mysterious windings of Love's maze.

Wake, dearest, wake. Be brave and strong to bear.
The morn has come, the cruel noontide glare;
Though Hope has fled, embrace not yet Despair.

Walter Thackwell.

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SHAKESPEARE IN SCOTLAND.

By ALEXANDER CARGILL.

WITH so little that is known of the actual life of Shakespeare to warrant any serious consideration of the possibility of his ever having visited Scotland, or to encourage the hope of any records being found to throw light upon the question, there nevertheless exists a belief that the great actor-dramatist, on one occasion at all events in the course of his histrionic career, travelled across the Scottish Border and reached a point in his itinerary as far north as Aberdeen. Indeed, there are some enthusiasts who incline to think that even Inverness (a good distance beyond Aberdeen, especially three hundred years ago) had also the honour of receiving a visit on that occasion. The late Mr J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, perhaps the most painstaking and indefatigable of all the numerous biographers of Shakespeare—the donor, it may be remembered, of a valuable collection of works relating to the poet to the University of Edinburgh—was one of those who held that belief and encouraged it when and where desirable. Acting on a hint received from Mr Halliwell-Phillipps a few years before he died, I wrote to Mr MacLeish, then the Town Clerk of Perth, which place was supposed to have been included in the itinerary referred to, as to the possibility of there being any records extant in that city which might help towards a solution of this interesting problem, and was informed by him that 'the kirk-session records of Perth show that a company of players (no name given) were authorised to give performances in 1589. That, however, was before Shakespeare came to Scotland. *He* (Shakespeare) *was in Aberdeen along with Fletcher in 1601.*' Coming from so accurate and trustworthy an authority as Mr MacLeish was known to be, this reference to Shakespeare seemed of no little importance. Unfortunately, Mr MacLeish died before I could ask him to verify his statement or to quote his authority, so that whatever evidence he may have had upon which he founded it is not at present to be obtained, though it can be accepted as made by him in good faith and in reliance on the truth of *some* evidence.

There can be no doubt that, whoever were the players authorised to give performances at Perth in 1589, Shakespeare could not have been of their number, for he was then only twenty-five years of age, and, so far as is known, had accomplished but little in the domain of authorship. Certainly he was settled in London at that time; but, beyond the tradition that he was in some way connected with the theatre, there is no authentic record to determine what was the precise nature of his activities from the time when he left Stratford-on-Avon until 1590 or 1591. If we are to believe what he himself declared in his dedication of *Venus and Adonis* to the Earl of Southampton, that it was the 'first heir of his invention,' then, although the publication of that poem did not take place till 1593, and even allowing for the probability that it had been actually composed two or three years before, Shakespeare could not, so early as in 1589, have been doing more than merely learning his apprenticeship, so to speak, in the histrion's art; and that is what we are mainly concerned with at present. In all likelihood, the players who visited Perth in the year mentioned were one or other of the numerous companies of licensed performers which, at that period,

> Went up and down and here and there,
> And made themselves a motley to the view

in various towns and cities, such as they then were, throughout the country. There was, for instance, an important company belonging to the Earl of Leicester, another to the Earl of Worcester, another to the Earl of Warwick, yet another to Lord Shandowe. Besides these, however, there was the Lord Chamberlain's company of players, of which, in 1596—but not prior to that year—Shakespeare is definitely known to have been a member. And as the itinerary of certain of these companies has been ascertained—thanks to the exhaustive researches of Mr Halliwell-Phillipps—to include numerous places throughout the country, it is not

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surprising that Perth should have had a visit from one or other of them in the year 1589. Of course it would be very interesting had the session records been more explicit, and given at least the name of the company of players that gave the performances—not to mention what the actual performances were. But even had the company's full membership been recorded, unquestionably the name of William Shakespeare could not have been on the list. In passing, it is curious to note the caution of those responsible for the entering of those three-hundred-years-old records. For example, while giving prominence to such passing trivialities in the daily life of the burghers as, 'The Visitoris reported guid order kepit within ye burgh on Sabbath preceding,' or, 'Visitoris appointed to visit ye next Sabbath' (here follow their names), nothing is said about the murder of the Earl of Gowrie and the Master of Ruthven, which caused such a stir in the town on 5th August 1600. King Jamie was evidently a man to be feared in those days, and the session no doubt thought it proper to observe a discreet silence on the affair.

When we come, however, to the year 1601, and find it stated that 'Shakespeare was in Aberdeen with Fletcher,' and, presumably, other players, there is more reason for believing that such an event might have been likely. Shakespeare had by that time acquired a reputation not only as a great and fertile dramatist, but as an actor of no mean ability, essaying prominent parts in the more popular plays of the time, many of which were the 'heirs of his invention.' He was, moreover, an important partner in the fortunes of the chief theatre of the day, as there is ample evidence to testify; so that Shakespeare, so far as professional fitness was concerned, might easily have been in Scotland in the second year of the seventeenth century, and hailing from the south *viâ* Carlisle and Berwick, and after a stay in the capital city, have gone on his way north to Perth and 'Aberdeen awa'.' It was in 1601 that his patron Lord Southampton was imprisoned for treason, and it is also interesting to remember that *Twelfth Night* was written in that year.

Unlike those at Perth, the records of Aberdeen are happily more minute and interesting, so far as they relate to this special matter; yet, from a careful examination of them, there is unfortunately nothing to bear out the statement, to which reference has been made, that 'Shakespeare was in Aberdeen in 1601.' The following extracts from these records, kindly furnished by the Town Chamberlain, is by far the most important, since it is apparently the record of the visit of the players alluded to:

'23 *Octr.* 1601.

'The whilk day Sr Francis Hospitall of Haulzie, knycht, frencheman being recommendit be his matje [Majesty] to the provest Baillies and counsall of this burt to be favourablie Intertenit with the gentilmen his maties servantis efterspect quha war direct to this burt by his matie to accompanie the said frenchman being ane noble man of France cuming onlie to this burt to sie the toun and countrie the said frencheman wt the knightis and gentillmen following wer all reesauit and admittit Burgesses of gild of this burt quha gave thair aythis in commoun form. Followis the names off thame that war admittit burgesses—

Sr Francis Hospitall off Halzie knycht
Sr Claud Hamiltoun of Schawfeild, knycht
Sr Johne Grahame off Orkill, knyt.
Sr Johne Ramsay off ester Bairnie, knyt.
James Hay, James Auchterlony, Robert Ker
James Schaw Thomas Foster James Gleghorne
David Drumond servitoris to his Matie
Monsieur de Scheyne, Monsieur le Bar
servitoris to the said Sr Francis
James Law
James Hamilton servitor to the said Sr Claud
Archibald Sym trumpeter
Laurence Fletcher comediane serviture to his matie
Mr David Wod
John Brouderstainis.'

Council Reg. xl. 229.

TREASURER'S ACCOUNT, 1601–02.

'*Discharge.*

Item to the stage playeris Inglische-men.....22 *lib.*
Item for the stage playeris support that nicht thaye plaiid to the toune.....3 *lib.*'

It has been suggested that, in spite of the fact that the name of Shakespeare does not appear in the foregoing list, he might nevertheless have been one of the company of players who appear to have been represented in their *personnel* by Laurence Fletcher. That may have been so; but it is highly improbable, as Shakespeare was certainly a more important member of the company at this time than his 'fellowe' Fletcher, and would assuredly have been mentioned. No doubt it was a big list of burgesses to make at once; and, had it been proposed to Shakespeare—assuming him to have been at the place—perhaps he may have declined the honour! But here we are in the mists of surmise, and how easily may the mirage be encountered, especially by the ardent imagination! It is well, perhaps, to let the record decide—for the present at any rate—that the creator of *Macbeth* was *not* in Aberdeen in 1601, or just four years before that great tragedy was written. Probably arising out of the surmise which this otherwise interesting record has engendered in the minds of many persons, there is a tradition that there still exist, or did so until quite lately, some old beams or timbers which are said to have been the last remaining relics of a hall or room of an inn (the Red Lion Inn has been named in the connection) where the players—Shakespeare of their number—gave their performance on the occasion of their visit to the city, and for which they appear to have received '25 *lib.*' (or pounds Scots?) I have carefully inquired into this tradition, or its genesis,

but can find not a basis of fact on which it can satisfactorily rest. The old Red Lion Inn referred to may possibly at one time have been the *locus* for theatrical performances by strolling players, but there is no evidence extant to prove that it actually was so. There was, however, a hall or room in connection with the New Inn in Castle Street, where it is very well known plays were produced in 1768 by William Fisher, who was accompanied on that occasion, curiously enough, by William Woodfall, the publisher of the celebrated *Letters of Junius;* and there was also a theatre at the back of an inn in Queen Street, where, it is interesting to remember, the *claque*—now confined entirely to the theatres of Paris—was in use about 1780. But here also the date in which we are at present specially interested is out of reckoning by more than a century and a half!

So much, then, for Aberdeen; and while in the locality it might be well to refer in a word to the tradition that Shakespeare even visited Inverness in the course of his supposed wanderings in 1601, and there and then obtained that local colouring which he afterwards used to such admirable purpose in writing his tragedy of *Macbeth*. There is not a particle of evidence to encourage any supposition that Shakespeare was even in the neighbourhood of Inverness in 1601, or at any other time, beyond the internal evidence of *Macbeth*, with its realistic 'touches' and its 'truth to nature' in the reference to the climate of the *locus* of the tragedy, to the witches, and to Dunsinane. But these same masterstrokes, and that fidelity to the truth of things as the great observer and expresser of nature saw them—two of Shakespeare's supreme characteristics—are applicable equally to others of his plays as to *Macbeth;* especially so is this the case in *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*, but it has yet to be proved that Denmark and Italy were alike honoured by this strolling player. At that rate of travel—and all to acquire local colour for his plays—Shakespeare could hardly have had time to live in England at all!

Retracing our steps in this interesting quest, we come to where perhaps we ought, strictly speaking, to have started—namely, to the capital city itself, and inquire what, if anything at all, has Edinburgh and its records to say on the subject of Shakespeare's visit to North Britain? 'Tis all, all a blank, my lord!' is, it may at once be admitted, the sum-total of a careful and prolonged investigation into the question. The city records have so far yielded not a scrap of information that could throw any light upon it, and mere surmise would be unprofitable. But in connection with this subject, and in close literary affinity to aught that concerns the career of Shakespeare, there is the ever-memorable visit of Ben Jonson to Scotland in the year 1618, just two years or thereby after the death of Shakespeare, who was his great contemporary and friend. According to the tradition started by the Rev. John Ward, vicar of Stratford-on-Avon, about fifty years after the event, Shakespeare died 'off a feaver' contracted at or after a convivial forgathering with Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton. Yet, with such an outstanding incident fresh in his memory, it is passing strange that, as Professor Masson has mentioned in his delightful essay on *Drummond of Hawthornden*, whom Jonson came specially from England to visit, not a hint of it should have been recorded by Drummond in his *Conversations*. Was the too convivial Ben ashamed to refer to his part in the untoward event, or, if he did refer to it to his host, did Drummond designedly omit to record Ben's confidences to him on a matter so sadly tragic and painfully personal to himself? Be that as it may, we know for a certainty now that, when in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, the famous author of *Every Man in His Humour* was 'humour'd' to be lionised by the civic authorities to the top of their bent, since he accepted not only the freedom of a burgess—whatever that meant—but also a veritable banquet to crown that honour. This interesting piece of literary history has, of course, long been known and frequently recorded; but it is only recently that the city archives have yielded up the veritable original records themselves, and these are now, for the first time, it is believed, here reproduced—copies having very kindly been supplied to the writer of this article by the courteous Town Clerk of Edinburgh, Thomas Hunter, Esq., W.S., who, in a letter enclosing them, mentioned that 'a search had been made in the Town Council Minutes from 1597 to 1604 for any reference to a supposed visit of Shakespeare, and also in the Treasurer's and Dean of Guild's Accounts, but without result.' Here, then, are the records as to the visit of Ben Jonson some twenty years later:

1. EXCERPTS *from Edinburgh Town Council Records.*

'1618. *September 25th.*—The Council ordains the Deyne of gild to mak Benjamyn Jonsoun, inglisman burges and gild brother in commoun.'

'1618. *October 16th.*—The Council ordains the Thesaurer to pay to James Ainslie, Laite baillie twa hundreth twentie ane pund sex shillings four pennyis debursit be him vpone the denner maid to Benjamin Jonstoun conform to the act maid thairanent and compt given in of the same.'

2. EXCERPT *from the 'Comptis of William Rea, Thesaurer of the Burgh of Edinburgh of the yeiris of God* 1617-1618.

'Item thair aucht to be allowed to the Compter payit be him to James Ainslie baillie for expensis debursit vpone ane banequett maid to Benjamin Johnstoune conforme to ane act of Counsell of the dait the . . . day of September 1618, jj *c.* xxj *lib.* vj *s.* viij *d.*'

3. EXCERPT *from the 'Comptis of David Aikinheid, Deyne of Gild of the Burgh of Edinburgh of the yeiris of God* 1618-19.

'Item the twentie day of Januar j^{m}vj^{e} and nyntene yeirs geuin at directioune of the Counsell

to Alexr. Patersone for wrytting and gilting of Benjamine Johnestounes burges ticket being choyes writtin.....xiij *lib.* vj *s.* viij *d.*'

What a delightful old-time flavour do these quaint and curious records convey to the literary nostril, and what an interesting glimpse do they afford into one of the most 'high and sounding' literary periods ever known, with Ben Jonson's conspicuous personality in the forefront! There is, first of all, the legal authority to 'mak' him the 'burges and gild brother in commoun.' The formal presentation of Ben in this capacity, with his rough, bluff visage, something like that of a bloused farmer from a far northern shire, and his ready tongue and mother-wit shafted to deal with all kinds of men and occasions, even municipally arrayed, would doubtless be carried through with due decorum and dignity. His reply to the presiding magistrate and brethren of the Guild would of course be in rare rattling style befitting the man and his environment; and, that preliminary over, there would be the after adjournment to the 'denner maid' in his honour, where the imagination may well revel amid the doings of that delectable function. For Ben loved his sack (as 'canary' was called) more than passing well; and has not Drummond of Hawthornden declared of him (the Hawthornden cellars might well have endorsed all that the owner said!) that 'Drink was the element in which he lived;' while Aubrey, too, has a naughty sentence to the effect that 'he would many times exceed in drink; canary was his beloved liquor!' Poor Ben! 'rare' in many things, but not, alas! in *that*. There need be no doubt of it: it must have been a pretty 'banequett' to have cost such a sum even in pounds Scots, and with his burgess ticket (so well engrossed as to entail such an expense) to remind him of it, doubtless he would remember the feast to his dying day. As for the burgess ticket and the 'poetical account' of his wanderings in Scotland to which he would likely do full justice, since he was a Scot by descent, his forebears having hailed from Annandale, these were probably consumed in the fire that, it is said, burned his library. If, however, the ticket survived that disaster, it would assuredly fetch to-day quite as much as it cost the ancient brethren of the Guild for its embellishment to present to one whom they deemed so worthy of receiving it. Would that it had been possible for them to have done the same for Shakespeare!

THE MYSTERY OF THE VIOLET STORK.

CHAPTER II.—THE TREK.

WITHIN a week the two adventurers were prepared to start on their new expedition. They took with them two wagons, one of them stocked with a quantity of trading goods. It was part of their programme to combine business with romance; and if the message of the stork were true, it would be better to appear at the Hottentot Nou-ap's kraal as plain traders in the first instance, in order to lull his suspicions and to give themselves time to look about them and make their search for the imprisoned family, if such really existed. In addition to themselves, they took with them six native servants—that is, a driver and leader for each wagon, the invaluable Vleermuis, and a Bechuana lad known as Dot-along. Dot-along had been shot by a Boer in a border foray, and had a stiff knee. Despite this disability, he was a wonderfully active fellow, a fair shot and rider, and an excellent groom. Dot-along's duties were to attend to the hunting ponies, of which they took with them four, and any stock—cattle, sheep, or goats—which they might pick up in the way of barter during the progress of the expedition. All the men were fair shots; two of them, Vleermuis and Titus (one of the wagon-drivers, a Griqua), first-rate marksmen, whether at targets or game.

Thus well equipped, the trek set forth on a fine, clear morning at the beginning of June, steering in the first instance for Griquatown. From Griquatown they made their way to Uisip, on the Orange River. Uisip is a collection of huts on the north bank of the Orange, opposite some Koranna villages that lie south of the great river. Here, years before, Vleermuis had been born and bred. He now wished to make a two days' call to look up his relations, if any existed, and to pick up, if possible, any information that might be useful on the journey that lay before them. The Koranna forded the river, now low, with his best clothes (a suit of canary-coloured moleskins) perched on his head, and having attired himself on the other side, went off in high glee to accomplish his mission. He carried an old Snider carbine, of which he was inordinately proud, by way of impressing his people with his wealth and importance; his coat-pocket bulged with a bottle of Cape brandy, with which he proposed to make peace-offering among his kinsfolk.

In two days' time Vleermuis returned somewhat out of countenance with himself and by no means pleased with his sojourn. Two of his brothers had, upon his seeking them out, at once disposed of the bottle of brandy, but had thereafter manifested no great joy at his reappearance. He had been badly fed, badly housed, and he was by no means sorry to get back to the comforts of a white man's camp, his coffee, sugar, meat, and other small luxuries. He had, however, extracted one useful piece of information.

Nou-ap the Hottentot still dwelt with his clan at his old kraal on the Orange River. Very little was known of him and his people, however. They were a surly tribe, living in a wild, secluded spot, remote from mankind, and their demeanour was not such as to encourage the friendship of native neighbours or even the temporary sojourn of passing travellers.

'That's all right!' exclaimed Jack Spencer. 'Now we'll go ahead. Vleermuis, tell the boys we shall trek to-morrow morning two hours before sun-up.'

For the next fortnight the party were engaged in one of the most difficult and trying pieces of travel in all South Africa. They trekked along the north bank of the river; their path lay through a barren and sandy region almost devoid of water, the river-margin itself being broken up by lofty banks and difficult ravines. Executing a detour to avoid the yet more shattered country about the Great Falls of Augrabies, a huge series of cataracts lying in so broken and so inaccessible a wilderness of rocks as to be almost unknown even at the present day, they now found themselves in a world yet more barren and more forbidding than any they had hitherto encountered.

For eight long days and nights, after passing the Great Falls, they struggled with infinite toil through an inferno of sand and stones, varied by sun-scorched hills and a little grass. To their left frowned the grim mountains of red-brown granite which for some hundreds of miles here hem in the Orange River. For seven or eight days of hard travel it was certain, from the report of the few natives they met and of their own guide Vleermuis, that the river was here completely and absolutely inaccessible. A man might die of thirst amid these mountains, well knowing that within a few hundred yards of him flowed the clear and abundant stream of the mighty river, pursuing its way towards the sea amid precipices completely shutting it off from the approach of mankind.

For ages have these sun-scorched precipices guarded their secret, hugging the river within their grim embrace and denying access to supplies of water that would gladden the hearts of immense districts and make the desert smile over vast areas. Such are the terrors and the difficulties of this region of the Orange that no human being has yet attempted to explore these mighty cañons. Probably cataracts and other difficulties would prove a complete obstacle to any attempt to find a passage by boat. In any case, neither Jack Spencer nor Ralph Brookfield was prepared to attempt such a feat of exploration. They followed perforce the old wagon-spoor across the deserts north of the river, themselves, their people, their cattle, and their horses suffering much from want of water during this burning trek.

On the eighth day they had moved south again and neared the river. Plunging into the wild tangle of mountains, they entered a deep gorge lying amid some of the most rugged and fantastic scenery that the eye of man has ever lit upon. The oxen, sadly reduced by the labours of the past ten days, dragged their burdens slowly and with infinite difficulty through a narrow valley littered with boulders. Outspanning at midday beside a welcome fountain, which here flowed from the rocks and sought a way southward towards the river, the wanderers themselves drank and watered the oxen and horses. The oxen had not tasted liquid for thirty hours, and they now filled themselves until the water ran out from the corners of their mouths.

'Two hours' trek from here-so, my baases,' said Vleermuis to his masters, 'and you see the Groot Rivier and Nou-ap's island.'

'That's very well, Vleermuis,' rejoined Ralph Brookfield in his grave way. 'You've just nicked it. Two more days of the trekking we have had lately, and we should lose at least half our spans. They're good beasts to have stood up so long in such a God-forsaken country. Well, we'll rest here till three o'clock, and then move again.—What say you, Jack?'

'Yes,' returned Jack, 'that will be all right.—Titus,' he continued, looking at one of their drivers, now lying flat beside the fountain pool watching his oxen begin to graze, 'can you trek again three hours before sundown?'

'Ja, baas,' said the Hottentot, sitting up and speaking with difficulty in a hoarse, weak voice. 'We shall so trek.'

There is no harder work in the world than driving oxen through a thirst-country. The men have to be incessantly at work, flogging their charges forward with their huge whips, and urging them up to their yokes with shrill cries. After two or three days of this kind of labour the driver becomes voiceless, worn out, and utterly exhausted. Small wonder, then, that Titus and his fellow-driver, whom the two Englishmen had christened Andronicus, were for some few hours capable of no more exertion. Fires were lighted, and coffee, ever welcome to the South African traveller, was made, and masters and servants refreshed themselves and ate some food.

Presently Dot-along, the horse-boy, having finished his meal and smoked a pipe, rose, stretched himself, and looked curiously about him. Every now and again he opened his wide nostrils and drew in long draughts of air.

'Baas,' he said, looking at Brookfield and speaking, as all their servants habitually spoke, in the Dutch *patois*, 'I see many bees down this kloofje. I think I smell honey hereabouts. I take the bucket and go get some.'

Brookfield's experienced eye ran down the narrow valley in which they were encamped. The Bechuana was right enough. Here, coaxed by the welcome moisture dispersed by the pleasant streamlet, were many flowers yet in bloom: pink lilies, red lilies, gay gladioli, heliophilas, and other flowers adorned the bed of the valley. A little higher grew here and there shrubs starred with hundreds of deep-red blossoms. Amid these delights many wild-bees were to be noticed busily at work. Yes, Dot-along

was right enough. Possibly he even smelt honey, as he alleged. It is impossible for the white man to fathom the instincts of these half-wild creatures.

'Yes, Dot-along,' Brookfield replied, 'fire away! Get as much honey as you like; the more the better.'

The Bechuana went for an iron bucket, which, with a short axe, he slung at his back. Then, carrying a Martini-Henry rifle lent to him by his masters, he limped gaily off, his stiff leg little impeding him. The camp was at rest. The oxen and horses grazed quietly near. In an hour and a half's time back came the Bechuana, his hot, black face gleaming with pleasure and perspiration, his bucket crammed with magnificent combs of honey rifled from some cavity of the mountain rocks.

'Baas!' he said as he came up, 'I saw a man up yonder among the mountains—a Hottentot, I think. He was watching the outspan, and when he saw me he made off. He had a gun; I think he was shooting among the hills. There is plenty game in these mountains. I saw klipspringer, and Vaal rhebok, and baboons, and one tyger [leopard]. I saw, too, spoor of koodoo and wildepaard [mountain zebra]. *Banje wildepaard, baas—banje*' ('Plenty zebra, baas—plenty').

'That's all right,' said Brookfield, breaking a comb and tasting the honey. 'It's real good stuff—delicious.—Try some, Jack!' Jack tried some with infinite gusto, and then the bucket, carefully covered over with a piece of hide, was put away till evening.

'Good honey,' remarked Vleermuis, who had charge of all the stores, as he tied the bucket up with a fair piece of steinbok-skin, 'but not so good as when the doorn-boom [thorny acacia] is out. We Koranna and Hottentots have a saying,' he added to his listening masters, who were watching him at his task, 'that when the doorn-boom's in flower the honey is fat.'

'Well, I never heard of fat honey,' remarked Jack; 'but I suppose the beggar has sense at the bottom of his remark. Certainly, when the acacia is in flower, whether it's doorn-boom or mohatla, or any other kind, the country smells of the sweetness.'

At half-past three they trekked again, pursuing the windings of the narrowing kloof, Vleermuis pioneering the way, until, in an hour's time, they were brought up by what looked like the end of the gorge. A closer inspection proved that, turning an abrupt angle of the mountain, the ravine ran yet farther. Here it narrowed so much that it seemed impossible that any wagon could pass through. The two Englishmen turned to Vleermuis, who was gazing intently in front of him, with blear eyes shaded by his yellow hand, and expressed their doubts.

'We can do it, my baases,' he reiterated. 'I know that a wagon has gone down here; the Hottentots themselves have one, or they had one when I was here as a lad years ago.'

First clearing away the litter of boulders which were apparently placed of set purpose about the entrance to this beetling gorge, they presently passed on. It was a difficult operation; but, driven with infinite dexterity and care, the oxen safely drew the wagons through the narrow chasm, until, after three-quarters of an hour of most anxious travelling, the party suddenly emerged from this hideous pass, and, escaping as it were from semi-darkness into broad daylight, the travellers beheld, stretched out before them, a most wonderful scene.

It was nearing sunset. Before them lay one of the most beautiful valleys in the world, an oasis dropped as it were by the hand of some supreme magician into the wild chaos of great mountains that everywhere hemmed it in. For three or four miles, apparently, ran this sweet and verdurous place along the margin of the Orange, having a width northwards towards the mountain-chain of about half a mile in its broadest part. Along this fair littoral, besprinkled with occasional trees of the spreading giraffe-acacia, wild-olive, and bastard ebony, was evidently to be found excellent grazing. A troop or two of cattle were to be seen, and, far away, the sound of distant bleating told that goats and sheep were at pasture. Here and there about the shore were dotted low circular native huts, well above the highest flood-mark. Gazing at the broad river itself, the eyes of the two white men rested upon several islands in mid-stream. Upon the largest of these, which lay not more than half a mile from them, were more of the round, dwarfish Hottentot huts so characteristic of these people in the aboriginal state. More trees bordered the very edge of the stream, principally thorny acacia and willow. Multitudes of wild-fowl were in the air and upon the water, or wading in the shallows: many kinds of duck, geese, widgeon, and teal, gay flamingoes, storks, cranes, ibises, avocets, and other water-loving creatures. A fishing-eagle or two hovered above, sending occasionally forth upon the still air a wild, harsh cry, which fell upon the ears of the onlookers with a peculiarly mournful—nay, even, as it seemed, a warning cadence. The whole of this wild yet strangely beautiful valley lay wrapped in the warm glow of a flawless African evening.

Jack Spencer gazed long and spell-bound at this glowing picture, his eyes roving hither and thither, drinking in every item of that goodly prospect. He took off his broad-brimmed hat and wiped his streaming brow. Then his lips opened, and he said softly, as if to himself,

> 'Jove, what a day! Black Care, upon the crupper,
> Nods at his post and slumbers in the sun.'

'I don't know about "Black Care upon the crupper," Jack,' said his fellow-adventurer, in short and serious tones; 'but I do see natives flitting about among the huts and the shrubbery yonder, and they seem to be a bit excited at our advent.—Vleermuis,' he continued, turning to the Koranna at his side, 'go you to the wagons, load the rifles, so that every man will have his weapon ready, and then if these people mean mischief we shall be prepared for them. Do it quietly and without fuss.'

'Yes,' replied Jack Spencer, 'I see the beggars buzzing about like a swarm of bees, but I don't think we shall have trouble with them, just yet at all events.—Vleermuis,' he continued, speaking to the Koranna, who was now busily engaged at the wagons, taking each rifle from its place and charging it, 'when you've finished that, bring down our rifles and your own.' This was done in the course of two or three minutes, and the two white men, provided with their rifles, and with spare cartridges in their pockets, were ready.

Meanwhile, as they made their preparations, some sort of rude raft bearing a couple of men had been poled from the island to the shore. A crowd of thirty or forty natives were quickly gathered about these figures; much gesticulation took place; shrill voices, unmistakably Hottentot, could be heard pretty clearly from the distance; and now a movement of the bulk of these people took place. They advanced in a body towards the intruders into their lonely valley.

Jack Spencer had meanwhile dived into his wagon for his field-glass, and levelling it upon the advancing group, spoke to his companion. 'As far as I can see, only three of these men have guns; the rest seem to have assegais and kerries only. I don't think they mean trouble at present.'

'Better go straight down and meet them,' returned Brookfield quickly.—'Vleermuis,' he went on, 'we shall go down and greet these people as if they were good friends. You can come with us. Tell the other boys to stand by the oxen. They are to watch us carefully, and if they see any signs of a row they will get their rifles down and come and help. But they are on no account to shoot till we call to them to do so.'

The Koranna delivered his message at the wagons, and was back in three minutes. The two Englishmen, with Vleermuis at their heels, now strolled quietly down towards the approaching Hottentots with every assumption of nonchalance. After advancing two hundred yards from the wagons, they halted. In another minute or two they were face to face with the leaders of the approaching natives. The foremost among these was a Hottentot of apparently early middle age, attired in an old flannel shirt, a pair of common store trousers, and a battered felt hat. He carried a good muzzle-loading rifle, while his two or three ragged headmen grouped near him had old smooth-bore muskets. Behind this group ranged a wild-looking assortment of savages, dressed some of them in the mere remnants of European clothing, the rest in the old Hottentot manner, having nothing to cover their naked bodies but a few beads, a piece of hide about the middle, and sandals of giraffe-skin. One or two carried the sheepskin kaross, usually worn about the kraals at night or in chilly weather.

The leader of this motley assortment of savages was a typical Hottentot of Hottentots, having the yellow skin, scanty peppercorn-like kinks of wool sparsely scattered about his head, the low stature, high cheek-bones, narrow chin, and other evidences of that singular race. His eyes were slanting and distinctly Chinese-like, while the faint tinge of colour upon his cheeks added yet more to the reminiscence of some far-off Mongolian origin which old travellers have always dwelt upon. This man now spoke, but in language quite unknown to the Englishmen.

'What does he say, Vleermuis,' queried Brookfield, 'and what language is he speaking? Answer me in English. If you speak Cape Dutch he may understand you.'

'He say,' replied Vleermuis, 'that he want to know why you trek in here. This not English country; this not Cape Colony. Who gave baas the road here?'

'Tell him,' rejoined Brookfield, 'that an Englishman has to ask the road from no man. We know that we are in Great Namaqualand; but the Cape has rights here,* and Englishmen have always travelled freely over all this country. We are peaceable traders, and we came in here to get water and to do business with Nou-ap and his people. We can protect ourselves, and we have always the strong arm of the Government of Cape Colony behind; that arm, as all South African folk know, is a long one and can always defend its children.'

Vleermuis translated, and his speech seemed to carry instant weight among his Hottentot hearers, who yet, as they talked together, darted suspicious glances at the white men.

'Vleermuis,' said Jack Spencer, 'who is the headman? We don't even know his name.'

The Koranna spoke, and was answered.

'He say his name is 'Kabip,' replied Vleermuis, with a big click of the tongue upon the palate as he pronounced the K. 'He is son's son to Nou-ap, the chief of the tribe. They are Gonaquas. Nou-ap is very old and ailing, his son is dead, and 'Kabip manages his business and the people for him.'

'The spoor is getting warm,' said Jack quietly to his friend. 'Here are Nou-ap (the Porcupine) and 'Kabip (the Quail), as the letter mentions. So much to the good.—'Tell 'Kabip,' he went on, speaking to Vleermuis, 'that we want to outspan here for a few days, to rest our oxen and trade. We have for sale fine blankets, clothes, powder, lead, caps, a few guns, copper and brass wire, beads, tobacco, coffee, and other things. We can trade cattle, sheep, and goats, skins and karosses, and we will pay good prices for milk, grain, and other things that we may want while we rest here.'

There was long and earnest discussion among 'Kabip and his headmen after Vleermuis had delivered his instructions. 'Kabip at length seemed to be overborne by the volubility of his fellows.

* This was in 1876, before the German occupation of that country and of Damaraland.

He now informed the Englishmen through their interpreter that they might outspan and rest for three days, but that he did not desire them longer. Meanwhile, he and his people would trade, and the trade should begin on the morning of the next day.

The white men now pitched their camp, selecting a site with their backs to the mountain wall, just where a pleasant rivulet broke forth and tinkled downwards to the great river. They preferred this position to the river-margin for defensive reasons. It was too late to attempt anything in the shape of a kraal that night. They kept a man by turns on watch, themselves waking occasionally. The night passed peacefully enough. At earliest dawn they set their men to work to cut thorns and build a strong *scherm* or fence. So well had they laboured that by breakfast-time the camp was well kraaled in by a formidable barrier, which would offer plenty of resistance to invading foes.

It was soon after they had completed this task that Jack Spencer caught the eyes of Vleermuis fastened upon him with a strange, odd expression which he had more than once noticed before.

'Well, what is it, Vleermuis?' he said. 'I know you're bursting to tell me something.'

A broad grin, full of cheerful cunning, crinkled the parchment-like face of the Koranna.

'Baas,' he replied, 'you have a secret, haven't you?'

'What's that to you?' said his master sharply. 'When I want to talk to you about secrets I'll send for you.'

'Very well, baas,' replied the Koranna, with an assumption of deep humility; 'then Vleermuis has nothing to say about what he heard last night. It has to do with a secret; but that he can keep to himself.'

'You're an exasperating beggar, Vleermuis,' said Jack hastily. 'Well, perhaps I have a secret. What have you got to tell me?'

'Well, baas,' returned the native, the smile of provocation still flickering about his yellow and deeply wrinkled face, 'you know why I am called Vleermuis [the Bat]: because I like to wander about at night. Last evening I thought I would go down to the Hottentot's kraal. I saw there among all the Hottentots, gathered at their fires, one Koranna man whom I remembered years ago at Uisip. Well, I watched this man to his hut, and when he had settled himself and the place was quiet I stole in. We had a long, long talk. Baas, this man is sick of Nou-ap's kraal, and only wants to get away from it. He came some years ago, having got into trouble in the Old Colony over a sheep-stealing matter. The Hottentots don't like him, and he doesn't trust them. They think he knows too much, and they would spear him or put a bullet in him for very little. He knows of a secret, and I think somehow that this secret may be yours. He says that the old chief here, Nou-ap, is mad, and that he has got a white family imprisoned somewhere in a kloof among the mountains yonder. What it is all for 'Karap, my friend, doesn't know, but he thinks the old chief keeps them in there as "strong medicine" for himself and the tribe. He says he thinks you may like to try and help these people out; but it will be a tough business, and the Hottentots will surely fight for their secret. He says, too, that he knows of but one way of getting into the valley—he discovered it by chance—and that is by what he calls the Klipspringers' Path, a sort of pass where these buck find their way up and down the mountain. He believes none but a Bushman could make his way down, and that only by a miracle of good luck; but he says that if I like he will take me to-night to the place where it might be tried. I can then show it to you afterwards.'

'By Jove!' ejaculated Spencer, who had been listening to this narrative with kindling eyes, 'you've done the trick, Vleermuis. That's my secret. Now, not one word to the other boys. This is only between you and me and Baas Brookfield. The Klipspringers' Path! That's where I come in. What an adventure! It sounds splendid. I must tell Ralph!'

Ralph was found, and the Koranna's information repeated to him.

'Now, old chap,' demanded Jack, 'do you believe in my yarn or do you not? Vleermuis's report, from an entirely independent source, exactly corroborates the message of the violet stork.'

'Well, Jack,' returned his friend, with a curious smile curling the angles of his mouth, 'I'm bound to confess'——

'Reluctantly,' put in Jack.

'Well, reluctantly if you like,' added Ralph, with a cheery laugh, 'that the whole thing, impossible as it has seemed, is a real live fact. But go slow, old man. This is a tough job we're in for, and we must be very careful.'

'On the contrary,' answered his friend, 'I believe we can only do this business with a rush. We've got to rescue these people, and it must be done quickly, before 'Kabip and his scoundrels can get an inkling of what we're after.'

THE STYLE OF MODERN HANDICRAFTS.

By CHARLES L. EASTLAKE, late Keeper and Secretary of the National Gallery, Author of *Hints on Household Taste*, &c.

THE evolution of national taste in certain forms of art affords an interesting subject for consideration not only to the æsthete but to the antiquary, the social philosopher, and even to the historian. Changes which have occurred, for instance, in the character of architecture were for centuries so many landmarks indicating the progress of science, the trend of literary study, and the direct effect of foreign intercourse. Sculpture and painting have in turn been influenced by moral and religious revolutions. Occasionally the rise of individual genius has diverted the current of popular favour and turned its course into new channels. But, speaking generally, and of bygone times, these mutations have been gradual. Tenacity is the essence of tradition, and as a rule ages were necessary to efface characteristics which it had taken ages to acquire.

Classic Greece preserved and even revived the forms of primitive statuary long after a more natural treatment of the human form had been attained. It is not a little remarkable that Raphael, whose early works were distinguished by an old-world simplicity of style, was born eight years later than Michelangelo, who, in comparison, may be regarded as a realist. Gabled roofs, pointed arches, and mullioned windows were introduced in English homesteads of the Caroline period by builders who must have seen and perhaps admired examples of the Renaissance in London. Notwithstanding the influence of foreign travel, and in spite of his own Palladian predilections, Inigo Jones found it difficult to abandon in some of his designs the distinguishing features of Gothic architecture.

The truth is that down to the close of the seventeenth century the history of all good art shows that most variations incidental to its development have been slowly brought about by the force of circumstances, and did not result from any sudden caprice of fashion.

Up to the period above mentioned there had been a certain affinity of taste in all the arts, even those which lent themselves to the decoration and furniture of domestic houses. But during the long reign of Louis XV. the effete and artificial character of Court life resulted in a restless craving for novelty. French society could not, indeed, vulgarise the dignified façades raised by Perrault and his followers. But it succeeded in filling the rooms inside them with cabinets, buffets, corner-pieces, arm-chairs, and what-not, designed in shapes and enriched after a mode which almost belied their real purpose. There was plenty of carving and gilding, elaborate inlay, and a lavish use of choice woods, precious stones, richly figured silks, satins, and velvets; but all culminating in a result which took no higher rank in artistic manufacture than the works of Boucher and Fragonard do in the field of painting. One can only regret that the exquisite workmanship then frequently bestowed on such productions should have been wasted for so ignoble an object.

Of course English taste did not escape the influence of this effeminate fashion. In the princely mansions of our nobility, and from time to time in the sale-rooms at Christie's, may still be seen examples of cabinet-work, &c., imported into this country two centuries ago. It was imitated to some extent by our upholsterers during the reign of Queen Anne and in the early Georgian period; but their furniture was never so elaborate in detail or so extravagant in form as that which came from abroad. A few generations later the French Revolution swept much of this frippery from France, and under the First Empire there was a notable reaction in favour of purer art.

The new classicism which then prevailed in architecture and painting was not free from affectations and pedantry; but there can be no doubt that, so far as the style of furniture and decoration is concerned, the reform which it effected in domestic taste was at first attended with advantage. An English suite of rooms designed by some follower of the 'Adam School,' and furnished by Sheraton, was a pleasant exchange for the *rococo* surroundings which had previously found favour with householders. But unfortunately, as the craze for Greek architecture gained ground, an absurd attempt was made to invest every article of domestic use with a quasi-classic character. Upholsterers caught the antiquarian spirit. They took the ancient *cathedra* as a model for dining-room chairs, borrowed for a stately wardrobe the details of some Doric temple, and sometimes allowed the mahogany sideboard to assume the proportions of a sarcophagus.

Examples of this ponderous and gloomy class of furniture, which came into vogue during the Regency, may still be seen in old-fashioned country-houses. It probably represents the dullest phase of taste through which English industrial art has ever passed.

In the early Victorian era another influence came into force. The first origin of what is known as the 'Gothic Revival' may be traced to various sources. Horace Walpole had been a collector of medieval relics, and housed them in what he no doubt considered an appropriately designed villa at Strawberry Hill. Sir Walter Scott based many of his romances on old-world lore, and endeavoured to invest Abbotsford with the character of a feudal mansion. Carter, Cottingham, Milner, and Britton

had, as antiquaries, each a hand in drawing attention to the merits of Pointed architecture. But in the nineteenth century its first practical advocate was Pugin. He devoted himself heart and soul to the cause. His pen and pencil were constantly employed in exposing the shams and vulgarities of modern design, not only as regards house-building, but also those productions of manufacture with which, in the form of cabinet-work and upholstery, domestic houses were then filled. The *True Principles* which he advocated in a well-illustrated volume, published more than fifty years ago, may be regarded as the first attempt to invest English furniture with a rational and artistic character.

The spread of ecclesiastical sentiment, followed as it was by extensive church-building and the introduction of objects incidental to advanced ritual, encouraged good taste and skilled workmanship in the production of wood-carving, metal-work, and textile fabrics. Almost contemporary with this movement was the rise of that short-lived, but for a while popular, school of painting rather foolishly named pre-Raphaelite. Associated with it was a little band of artists who not only affected in their own domestic surroundings an extreme simplicity of style, but also helped to found an establishment in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, which for many years was regarded as the headquarters of decorative art manufacture.

From a material point of view, the furniture produced by W. Morris & Co. was remarkable for little else than a reversion to primitive forms and a strict adherence to the details of sound construction. It was on the design of wall-papers, curtain stuffs, and, above all, of stained glass that the Bloomsbury firm brought their inventive faculties to bear with a skill and sense of beauty which in modern days had not been approached, and which for a time remained unrivalled. But the practice of their art did not long remain a monopoly. The rising generation of cabinet-makers, decorators, and metal-workers soon recognised the necessity for adapting the style of their goods to the fashion of the day. With the assistance of experienced designers, they succeeded in imitating, and sometimes with considerable dexterity, a phase of taste which was then described as *æsthetic*. Shop windows were filled with what tradesmen were pleased to call 'art-furniture.' It varied considerably in merit, but on the whole it indicated a vast improvement in the character of handicraft. The general form of every article produced, the treatment of its details and enrichment, were no longer left to ignorant caprice, but were rationally based on material expedience. Old models were looked up and carefully studied with a view to their adaptation for modern requirements. One of the chief results of the movement was a chromatic reform. Curtain stuffs, chintzes, and printed goods, which had hitherto been either gloomy or garish, were now produced in subtle shades and harmonious combinations of colour. Gaudy aniline dyes were replaced by delicate tints in upholstery such as had been seen in no English warehouse for half a century.

Within the memory of middle-aged men the minor arts of this country were in a most hopeful condition. But no educated artist who has watched the trend of public taste during the last decade can fail to admit that the standard of his early days has since lamentably deteriorated.

In some respects there has been a disastrous reaction. The shapes now devised for cabinet-work, 'overmantels,' chairs, and sofas are losing simplicity of outline, and assuming the senseless contours which prevailed during the early Victorian period. Wall-papers, the design of which ten or twelve years ago was based on an abstractive treatment of foliage, are now replaced by vulgar hangings in which bouquets of flowers, pictorially rendered, alternate with coloured stripes. Not long since I looked through a pattern-book at a well-known warehouse, hoping to find some of my old favourites. They had all disappeared. The very blocks from which they were printed had been destroyed. The graceful 'guilloche,' the classic 'fret' and Greek honeysuckle borders, once so usefully employed to crown a wall or enclose a 'dado,' are discarded in favour of some wretched type of ornament suggestive of French millinery.

The fashionable cretonnes and chintzes are just as bad. Roses, dahlias, and tulips sprawl intemperately over space, diversified with knots of pink or blue ribbon. Carpets and curtain stuffs have to some extent escaped the general *débâcle*, and it is noteworthy that in their cheaper forms many of them are distinguished by a better class of design than the more expensive goods; but with the present trend of public taste no one knows what may happen as time goes on. I am always expecting to see Boucher's nymphs woven into our *portières*, and the once-popular Bengal tiger reappearing on domestic hearth-rugs.

Thirty years ago a great reform was promised in the nature of table-glass. The charming reproductions of old Venetian ware, originally introduced into England by the efforts of Dr Salviati, were a welcome change from the heavy imitations of cut 'crystal' which had previously been used. But then the Italian manufacturers were content to adopt light and elegant shapes for the ware, and colour was always used temperately. Some of us remember the decanters and 'beakers' of that period, lightly blown, overlaid with delicately spun threads, and decorated with little raspberry-shaped bosses of ruby, *aquamarina*, or *turchino* (but rarely in mixed hues), the chastely tinted *avventurino*, and modest opalescent lustre. Such objects were real works of art. Venetian glass shops still exist in London, but their contents have been vulgarised to suit modern British taste. The shape of bottles, vases, goblets, &c. has become complex and elaborate. A great deal of the work looks as if it had been cast in a mould. There is a lavish and inharmonious use of polychromy. The stem of a wine-glass must

differ in colour from its stand, and the bowl from both. The material is as good as ever, and no doubt skilled workmanship is still available; but the refined taste which once distinguished such articles has disappeared.

If we turn to the productions of ceramic art in England, the prospect is no brighter. Our porcelain, unrivalled as it is for material quality, has in modern days rarely been affected by any 'æsthetic' influence. Woodwork, metal, and textile fabrics have all in turn reflected reforms in national taste; but, with a few exceptional specimens dating from Minton's time, our chinaware has no more varied in general character than the style of a silk hat. Notwithstanding our schools of design and in spite of the fact that pretty Japanese plates can be bought for a shilling apiece, British dinner-services and tea-sets are as humdrum in pattern and as uninteresting in colour as they were fifty years ago. Outlines are, indeed, accurately printed, and tints are laid with the irreproachable evenness of a coach panel; but little can be said as to the artistic character of this industry.

Pottery, however, has been more susceptible of improvement, and during the last quarter of the nineteenth century examples of glazed vases and dishes known as 'Burmantoft' and 'Bretby' ware won great admiration for their graceful shapes and dexterously applied colour, suggestive of Oriental antiques; but they were not appreciated by the general public, and now seem to be as extinct as the dodo. In this and many other cases, manufacturers can hardly be held to blame if they cease to produce objects of art the demand for which depends on ignorant caprice, and which are set aside for no better reason than a woman of fashion would give for changing the shape of her bonnet.

Good design in metal-work has been mainly sustained by the old world style of church fittings, but it is now rarely found in objects of domestic use. Area-railings retain the cast-iron spear-heads which were in vogue during the reign of George IV. Hinge-fronts, door-handles, and lock-escutcheons, which had begun to assume a rational and picturesque form during the 'seventies,' are either relapsing, like other examples of decorative brasswork, into the commonplace, or are distinguished by some extravagance of mould inconsistent with their use.

One hears a vast deal in these days about the advantage of 'technical education' for the workman and the means by which he can best acquire it. Whether horseshoes are stronger or better shaped than they were a century ago I do not know; but it is certain that the village blacksmith who at that time could hammer out a stout and comely wrought-iron bracket for the sign of a rustic inn would be far to seek nowadays, notwithstanding the wide range of our 'science and art' instruction.

For the promotion of ability in the practice of industrial art various societies, both of a public and private nature, exist, and one of them holds a periodical exhibition of works which are supposed to represent the *fine fleur* of modern skill in their production. But it must be confessed that a careful examination of these objects does not, as a rule, impress one with a belief that national taste is advancing in excellence. It is true that in some directions (as, for instance, the application of plaster-relief and pictorial designs to friezes) instances of considerable ability may be noticed. Enamel-painters show that they have at least overcome some of the technical difficulties of a revived art. Occasionally one sees the result of experience and well-directed study in examples of ecclesiastical embroidery and crewel-work. Bookbinding is also represented by some refined and deftly wrought specimens of work.

But when we come to domestic furniture in the shape of cabinets, escritoires, sideboards, and other articles of joinery, or look at the objects of metal-work (whether in iron, brass, or copper) intended for household use; when we examine the amazing combinations of line and colour which are too frequently presented under the name of wall-papers, it is painful to feel how inferior the modern designer is to his predecessors not only in a sense of beauty but in the intelligent practice of his craft.

If certain specimens of cabinet-work recently exhibited at the New Gallery, London, and elsewhere are to be taken seriously, artificers in this branch of handicraft must confess that they have been on a wrong tack for many centuries past. A sense of convenience and a practical knowledge of joinery are the first requisites for capacity to design articles of this description, and the best forms into which wood can be fashioned for domestic purposes have resulted from this twofold qualification. Even the nature of ornamental detail should depend on the material employed, and when that condition is ignored there is no limit to the extravagances which may ensue.

On the other hand, nothing is gained by an aim at simplicity which is not justified by strength of construction or a desire to save expense. A kitchen dresser may be an excellent prototype for a dining-room sideboard; but if in the course of transformation the stability of the former is sacrificed—if a strong panelled back is replaced by trellis-work, while cupboard-doors which should be straight are planned on a curve and hinged in a corner—it becomes a question whether such a sideboard is, after all, superior in make or appearance to that which could be obtained at any good West-End shop.

Recent cabinet-work inspired by the taste for what is stupidly called *l'art nouveau* takes remotely different forms; but they have one characteristic in common: they are all distinguished by oddity. Features requiring strength are strangely attenuated, while unimportant details assume sturdy proportions; the pretty floriated hinge-front of old days becomes a parallelogram in cast-iron; a complicated arrangement of struts and braces is perhaps adopted

when four deftly turned wooden legs would have sufficed for support; boxed 'finger-holes' are substituted for drawer-handles, with the certain result of increasing cost of manufacture; and wardrobes are crowned with cornices which might have been devised by Batty Langley, the eighteenth-century architect.

When the taste for Gothic architecture was revived in England by Pugin and his followers, geometrical patterns for surface decoration were greatly in vogue. The walls and curtains of domestic houses were quatre-foiled and diapered *ad nauseam*. The designer's flora was limited to the Tudor rose and the *fleur-de-lis*. The late Mr W. Morris was among the first to break away from these ultra-purist affectations. In one of his earliest and most successful wall-papers, pomegranates and lemons were the principal features of his design. In another, rose-bushes trained over trellis-work supplied him with an excellent scheme of ornament. Later on, the vine, jasmine, and lily were in turn selected for this purpose.

It is to be observed that in all these cases the artist's aim was decorative, not pictorial. The shape and character of each leaf or flower were accurately given, but with a minimum of chiaro-scuro, and cast shadows were omitted altogether. Morris was perhaps the first decorator in our time who combined a close observation of nature with that rare instinct of *limitation* which is indispensable for the design of ornament in which natural forms are introduced. He also possessed in an eminent degree the ability to cover a given space with units of pattern so arranged that their repetition over a large surface should meet the technical conditions required by manufacture without involving monotony of effect.

But there are two other requisites for success in this branch of art—namely, a sense of proportion and a sense of colour. In most of Morris's designs these qualities are conspicuous; in a few they were strangely deficient. Whether, as time went on, he grew impatient of the manner in which the style of his inventions was imitated and sometimes rivalled by other manufacturers, and so determined to differentiate his own art from such productions, or whether towards the close of his career he entrusted to less able hands work which he had no time to supervise, may be doubtful. But it seems certain that the principles of his early taste were occasionally abandoned in the later productions of his factory.

The School of Art Needlework has done much to revive and encourage a branch of industry peculiarly adapted for the employment of women, and capable of combining in its best productions delicacy of manual skill with an exquisite play of fancy in form and colour. But success in such a field can only result from long experience and careful study of old examples. Unfortunately its practice is followed by a large number of lady amateurs who, with no special training and with more energy than taste, have taken to this occupation not only as an amusement but as a business. Industrial art exhibitions have opened their doors only too freely for the display of objects which, however pretentious in design, betray to the eyes of every educated connoisseur defects naturally arising from undisciplined taste. That order of sentiment which finds expression in the embroidery of altar-frontals and other articles of church furniture is largely shared by many fair devotees who enter upon such work with more enthusiasm than skill.

They affect the obsolete forms of medieval design without recognising the fact that its aim was to *typify*—not to caricature—natural shape for decorative purposes. The birds, beasts, and fishes, the tree-trunks and foliage, which we find in old tapestry, mosaics, or primitive missal-painting were based on physical facts in organic life. Such representations, without pretending to pictorial effect, were substantially accurate in detail. The modern amateur who enters on this field of design, in attempting conventionalism, only succeeds in producing what is abnormal. Characteristics familiar to every student of botany or zoology—the proportions of an animal's head or wing, the structure of flowers, variations of foliage or laws of tree-growth—are frequently ignored in the presentment of devices equally removed from art and nature; while a judicious sense of colour, which might redeem some of these defects, is unfortunately too rare.

Regarding certain forms of ancient craft, it may be fairly questioned whether the technical difficulties attending their revival, the limited area of their application, and the cost which must exclude them from general use justify the devotion of talent, time, and money on arts so remote from the conditions of modern life. Decorative enamel-painting may be cited as an example. For the occasional enrichment of church metal-work it may serve a useful end. The *virtuoso* who desires the reproduction of a twelfth-century shrine may obtain it if he is content to pay dearly for workmanship far inferior to that of the original. But in ordinary domestic households the *raison d'être* of enamelled work has disappeared with the great advance made in the taste and technical excellence of other kinds of ware nearly as attractive and far less costly.

The future of industrial art in this country has, however, only too little to fear from the reproduction of ancient crafts. Most of the errors in modern taste are due to a foolish craze for novelty at any price. As though ashamed to designate it by an honest English word, our youthful reformers ascribe their inventions to what is known across the Channel as *l'art nouveau*. Now, if this exotic term be used as an apology for the production of eccentricities which defy tradition and common-sense in their material appearance, it is appropriate enough. But to suppose that a new style in any form of art can be suddenly created, with absolute indifference to everything which has preceded it, is to suppose an absurdity.

Ruskin once justly remarked that you can no

more invent a new style of architecture than you can invent a new language. The same remark may be applied to the fashion of furniture. No one wants square plates, sofas shaped like a gondola, or paperhangings which imitate a tartan plaid. There is a meaning in all things. Even primitive builders placed a capital on the top of a column and a base at its lower end.

The contour of mouldings, the character of ornamental inlay or carved work, even the panels of a cupboard-door with its hinge-front and handle, derive their origin from the nature of material and centuries of experience. When we find such details not merely elaborated or refined, but travestied and perverted in a design which reminds us of nothing we have ever seen before, the result is certain to be unsatisfactory.

This is, of course, an eclectic age. In architecture, sculpture, and painting we have had to seek models of excellence in the past. Unfortunately there is no consensus of opinion as to which period affords the best examples for imitation. But of one fact we may be sure: that any attempt to raise a standard of taste which entirely ignores tradition will end in dismal failure. If there is any hope for a healthy development of national taste in the minor arts, it must be based in the first instance on a careful study of early work, which has long since won the admiration of connoisseurs.

To what purpose have we filled our museums with choice examples of ancient handicraft, from fire-irons and encaustic tiles up to the productions of Cellini and Della Robbia? Is it only to gratify the taste of the antiquary or to supply some literary expert with material for a handsome volume? For half a century past South Kensington and Bloomsbury have possessed treasures which under competent advice might have supplied a standard of excellence for imitation, and thus rescued the taste of British manufacture from ineptitude and vulgarity.

We have heard a great deal about the benefits supposed to be derived from National Schools of Science and Art. But the system on which they are at present administered does not seem to have had any permanent or practical effect in improving the productions of trade. Exhibitions annually organised by the Education Department for the display of students' work submitted in national competition afford periodical occasions on which the possibility of such improvement may be gauged. Their contents frequently indicate considerable ability in the delineation and modelling of the human figure, animal form, and vegetable life. But in the wider field of constructive skill and choice of applied ornament, the capacity for design seems to be lamentably deficient. With a few creditable exceptions, cabinet-work, metal-fittings, pottery, paperhangings, even lace and jewellery, are fashioned on a plan indicating either an ignorance or a total disregard of the principles which underlie old craftsmanship in the best periods of art.

If the aim of modern manufacture is to produce a class of objects differing in æsthetic character from anything which the civilised world has ever seen before, the result may be easily obtained. But it is very doubtful whether public taste in our day can afford to ignore the limits of technical tradition. We shall never succeed in approaching the excellence of ancient work until its best examples have been more attentively and intelligently examined.

HENRY BELL AND HIS SHARE IN STEAM NAVIGATION.

ALTHOUGH steam navigation is one of the greatest benefits bestowed by inventive genius on Great Britain, as well as Greater Britain and the world beyond, it is accepted as a matter of course, as a natural evolution of our commercial and industrial progress, and few give a thought to the pioneers who were labouring a hundred years ago to bring it to birth. As the motor-car and the bicycle are evolutions, in the sense that many cunning hands and inventive brains wrought at their development, and no single person can be set down as inventor of either, so we are indebted to several individuals for working out the problem of practical steam navigation. It is well-trodden ground, if unfamiliar to the man on the street, to whom the pioneers are names and nothing more. A visit to the birthplace of Henry Bell and the publication and perusal of *The Clyde Passenger-Steamer: its Rise and Progress during the Nineteenth Century, from the 'Comet' of 1812 to the 'King Edward' of 1901*, by Captain James Williamson (MacLehose, Glasgow), afford an opportunity of returning to the subject.

There is a great lack of modesty and moderation of statement in much that has been written about the pioneers, Miller of Dalswinton, James Taylor, Henry Bell, and William Symington. Much of what has been written is special pleading, so that each one of these men in turn receives the sole honour and glory of originating steam navigation. The *Life of Henry Bell*, by Edward Morris (1844), also errs in this respect. The author indulges in what now seem ridiculous and bombastic statements. There is a great deal of the author's personal sentiments and opinions, and very little about Henry Bell and steam navigation. We say this although the author was singularly well affected to the Messrs Chambers. For example, here is a prophecy which has come partly true:

'Bell's steamers will convey Chambers's bales of publications, swift and safe, to every land. They will soon be republished in the Chinese language; and the mandarins of the Yellow, and the Black, and the White Rivers of that vast empire *will catch the generous flame which these publications emit.* These works have mighty power! They are esteemed through Europe, Asia, Africa, and America; and the writer of Bell's Life has often employed his leisure hours not only in perusing *Chambers's Journal*, but in writing articles for the public and press unfolding their utility and endeavouring to aid their circulation amongst his countrymen.' But, alas! Edward Morris never caught the practical tone of *Chambers*, although, as a generous friend to Bell, he may be forgiven much. Robert Chambers did justice to Bell in his *Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*. There was a carefully written biography of Bell in this *Journal* for 1838. In the second volume of *Chambers's Journal* for 1833 there is a biographical sketch of the tutor to the family of Patrick Miller of Dalswinton, entitled 'James Taylor, Originator of Steam Navigation.' The bust of Symington in the Royal Scottish Museum of Science and Art, and his monument at his native Leadhills, give him the credit of originating steam navigation; while the monuments to Henry Bell at Row and Helensburgh give the credit to the man who launched the *Comet*. Maughan's book on Garelochside is very fair to Bell. Rankine's brief Life of Symington, published at Falkirk, is entirely for Symington. Professor T. H. Beare gives Symington, in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, the credit of devising the first steamboat for practical use. He employed a piston-rod guided by rollers in a straight path, attached by a connecting-rod to a crank fixed directly to the paddle-wheel shaft, 'thus devising the system of working the paddle-wheel shaft which has been used ever since that date.'

Some private papers enable us to get a glimpse of the position of the pioneers. How keenly Symington felt the position of being on the verge of success when the Forth and Clyde Canal Trustees dropped further experiments in 1803 may be learned from a memorial, which we have seen, drawn up by Mr R. Wight, Edinburgh, 26th December 1814: 'In despite of his patent right, a set of tradesmen in Glasgow have copied his boat, and by making a little variation in the steam-engine, are at this moment drawing amongst them upwards of ten thousand pounds a year of clear profit by plying between Glasgow and Greenock, *while the memorialist has not wherewithal to supply his large family with the necessaries of life.*' The ten thousand a year was a fiction, at least as far as Bell was concerned. A visit to Glasgow with his law-agent, Mr Wight, in June 1814, was of no practical use in establishing Symington's claim. This throws a pathetic light on the troubles of inventors, and shows how the iron had entered his soul. Symington had made the discovery that owing to a defect in the specification his patent rights were not protectable. 'It seems to me,' says Mr John Wight, son of the gentleman who went to Glasgow with Symington, in a communication to the present writer, 'that it was owing to his reliance upon the patent that he allowed the *Charlotte Dundas* to lie for years at Lock No. 16, exposed to the prying eyes of all the world, protected by the patent which had cost him eight hundred pounds. Without some such explanation as this it is difficult to see why he did not in 1803, when the *Charlotte Dundas* was laid up at Lock No. 16, take out her machinery, which Mr Fulton from America and others minutely inspected and made careful drawings of. It may be asked why, on being refused permission to drag barges through the canal, he did not go to Glasgow and exert himself to do that which Henry Bell did some years afterwards: set his vessel, another *Charlotte Dundas*, upon the Clyde waters.'

From the advent of the *Comet* in 1812 till the launch of the turbine-steamer *King Edward* in 1901, there have been three hundred and nine Clyde passenger-steamers; and the forty steamers or so in active service during the last ten years of the nineteenth century carried about four million passengers per annum. As the Clyde was the birthplace of steam navigation, it is also the centre to which the world looks, and does not look in vain, for an object-lesson in equipment and efficiency. The floating hotels which give rapid and pleasurable access to the Firth of Clyde and the west coast of Scotland are comfortable, artistic, and, as in the case of the *Columba*, can carry the population of a considerable village, and reach a speed of over twenty miles an hour if necessary. Something like one hundred thousand letters pass every year through the floating post-office on board the *Columba*. The Clyde still takes the lead in all that concerns efficiency, comfort, and up-to-dateness.

Before the *Comet*, what were known as flyboats, wherry-rigged, of eight tons burden, sailed between Glasgow and Greenock, taking four or five hours to the passage. Andrew Rennie, town drummer of Greenock, had a boat built with two paddles worked by manual labour. The work was found too hard; so Henry Bell may have received the suggestion to use steam-power from Rennie's boats. Certainly he had seen and minutely examined, along with Fulton, Symington's *Charlotte Dundas* on the Forth and Clyde Canal. Both profited thereby, and Fulton was first in the field with his *Clermont* in 1807 in American waters. It was five years later before Henry Bell impressed first a Scottish and then a European public with the coming power of steam in navigation by the launch of his *Comet* on the Clyde in 1812. He was not the first to suggest or invent methods of steam navigation, but he was the man who persevered in the face of difficulty with his experiments until crowned with success. Jonathan Hulls (1736), Marquis de Jouffrey (1781), Miller of

Dalswinton, assisted by Symington and Taylor (1788–1803), and Fulton (1807), were all before him.

James Watt threw cold water on Henry Bell's schemes, for he wrote in 1801: 'How many noblemen, gentlemen, and engineers have puzzled their brains and spent their thousands of pounds, and none of all these, nor yourself, have been able to bring the power of steam navigation to a successful issue.' This was exactly what Henry Bell was destined to do, although at one time this man with the restless, ingenious mind, 'a chaos of extraordinary projects,' looked unlike doing anything of the kind. Many of his projects, for lack of accurate scientific calculation, he was unable to bring to birth. For this and other reasons he has been called 'the hero of a thousand blunders and one success;' but that success, as we know, has led to stupendous results in our national life.

The cottage of Henry Bell at Torphichen Mill Bridge, on the Avon, Linlithgowshire, occupied a very lonely site at the end of an alluvial bit of land in the Avon valley, quite away from Torphichen village. It is now only a ruin, and is sheltered by a steep bank to the south. An elm throws its sheltering arms over the ruin. When we saw it a thistle bloomed beside the gable, while rose-bushes and hawthorn grew luxuriantly within the area of the building. The Avon here murmurs on its way between high wooded banks to enter the Forth west of Bo'ness. Near where the Avon enters the Forth, and but five or six miles away, stands Kinneil House, occupied by Dr Roebuck, founder of Carron Ironworks, when Bell was a growing youngster here. Bell was but three years of age when James Watt, at the invitation of Roebuck, came to Kinneil to work out the problem of his pumping-engine. The outhouse which was used as a workshop by Watt still stands at Kinneil. About eight miles away William Symington made his experiments on the Forth and Clyde Canal, which quickened the interest and increased the knowledge of Henry Bell in the problem of steam navigation.

Torphichen is otherwise remarkable for the fine views it affords of the upper range of the Ochils and the summits of the Grampians. Bathgate, two and a half miles away, was the birthplace of Sir James Young Simpson, of chloroform fame. Torphichen village is visited by the archæologist and the curious for the ruins of the Preceptory of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, about which Dr Beatson has published a monograph. Only the nave or choir remains.

When Henry Bell was born at Torphichen Mill, on the Avon, in 1766, the industries of the parish were agricultural labour, for which the wages were one shilling a day, or sixpence with food; and there were blacksmiths, tailors, weavers, masons, and wrights. Henry Bell's relations on both sides of the house were engaged in mechanical pursuits, his own father, Patrick Bell, being a millwright. His mother's friends were builders; they were engaged in the construction of the Carron Ironworks, the first part of the Forth and Clyde Canal, and Leith wet-docks. Others were employed under Telford. This may have helped to stimulate and direct the energies of the young man. After a plain education at Torphichen School and Falkirk, when he was sixteen Henry Bell, at first intended for the mason trade, was sent to learn that of a millwright with his uncle, Henry Bell, at Jay Mill. He learned ship-modelling and engineering, and spent some time under Rennie in London. It is said that as early as 1786, while with Messrs Shaw and Hart, shipbuilders, Bo'ness, he conceived the idea of applying steam to navigation. In 1787 he was with an engineering firm at Bellshill. He was settled in Glasgow in 1790, and next year became a partner in the firm of Bell & Paterson, builders. His name appears as a member of the Corporation of Wrights of Glasgow in 1797. In 1798 the utilisation of steam for navigation occupied his attention, and in 1800 he made experiments with an engine in a small vessel. Various applications made to the Admiralty met with no success, although Lord Nelson expressed his conviction as to steam being the coming power. The visits paid to Symington's *Charlotte Dundas* at Falkirk must have further encouraged him. He was established in Helensburgh, conducting a hotel and baths, when his great experiment was made.

At last the *Comet* of thirty tons was built by John Wood at Port-Glasgow. The engine was made by John Robertson, Dempster Street, Glasgow. Captain Williamson says: 'It was four nominal horse-power, with a single upright cylinder of twelve and a half inches diameter and sixteen inches stroke, driving by means of two rods a pair of half side-levers. The crank-shaft, on which was fixed a heavy flywheel, was worked from the levers by a connecting-rod. The slide-valve was driven by an eccentric on the main shaft through a rocking shaft, while the condenser was placed between the side-levers which drove the vertical air-pump. Originally the engine was fitted with a smaller cylinder; but after being used for some months, this was replaced by the one described. Steam was supplied by an internal-flue boiler built by David Napier. The vessel was originally propelled by two paddle-wheels on each side, driven by spur-gear, with the paddles on detached arms; but this arrangement giving trouble, complete wheels were substituted, and subsequently, after the vessel had been lengthened about twenty feet, the number of wheels was reduced to two. A speed of about five knots per hour was attained.'

There was a crew of eight hands, including a piper. Captain William Mackenzie was her first master. At first the sailings were between Glasgow, Greenock, and Helensburgh, from the Broomielaw, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays about mid-day; and from Greenock on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The fare for the best cabin was four

shillings; for the second, three shillings. The sailings were extended beyond Greenock, *viâ* Tarbert and the Crinan Canal to Oban, Port Appin, and Fort-William. Then the *Comet* was transferred to Grangemouth, reappearing on the West Highland route in August 1819. On the passage from Fort-William to Glasgow, 13th December 1820, she was wrecked outside Crinan. Henry Bell was amongst the passengers, all of whom were saved. The original engine of the *Comet* is preserved in the South Kensington Museum, London.

Comet number two was also doomed to misfortune. She was employed in the West Highland trade, when on 21st October 1825 she collided with the steamer *Ayr* off Gourock, and sank in three minutes with seventy of the passengers. The disaster was due to those in charge not showing a proper light. The *Ayr* steamed off without attempting to assist the unfortunate vessel, but arrived in Greenock in a sinking condition. Captain Wemyss Erskine Sutherland and his wife were amongst those who perished. He leapt overboard with his wife, and essayed to swim ashore, but in vain. One lady was saved through the efforts of a dog. About nine months afterwards the wreck was raised, and the accoutrements of Captain Sutherland were discovered; a silver teapot, one of his wife's wedding presents; and a parcel of bank-notes amounting to about one thousand pounds, belonging to Mr Rollo, W.S., Edinburgh, one of the drowned. The *Comet*, after being raised, became a sailing craft, and engaged in the coasting trade till 1876. This was the last of Bell's steamship enterprises. Late in life a subscription was raised for this pioneer; and the Clyde Trustees bestowed an annuity of one hundred pounds upon him, which after his death in 1830 was continued to his widow.

Amongst Bell's other schemes were steam-driven carriages for railways and common roads, a canal between East and West Tarbert, a canal across the Isthmus of Suez, partial drainage of Loch Lomond, and reclamation of waste lands in Scotland. His prophecy that wherever there is a river with water four feet in depth there will speedily be a steamboat has become true. With some of Watt's inventive faculty, he is also said to have possessed in a good degree the energy and knowledge of men which characterised Boulton. In person Bell was about middle size, stout-built, and fresh-complexioned, with a hearty, genial manner. One who knew him says: 'His features were regular and expressive, impressing a stranger at a glance with a good opinion of him as a shrewd, pawky Scot—an impression which ten minutes' conversation stamped as sound. His general knowledge was extensive, and he had a peculiar aptitude for seizing the salient points of any new invention, and making himself master of the subject. He was a great talker when excited by any favourite hobby, and nothing delighted him more than an intelligent listener, to whom he would descant all night on any of his multifarious plans or schemes.' Besides the memorial statue to Bell in Row Churchyard, where he is buried, there is a stone obelisk at Dunglass, on the Clyde, and a granite obelisk at Helensburgh which bears this inscription: 'Erected in 1872 to the memory of Henry Bell, the first in Great Britain who was successful in practically applying steam-power for the purposes of navigation. Born in the county of Linlithgow in 1766. Died at Helensburgh, 1830.' Bell had been first Provost of Helensburgh (1807–1810). He succeeded neither as a builder nor steamboat proprietor, and it seems doubtful if the three hundred and sixty-five pounds due for the engine of the *Comet* was ever paid.

The *Elizabeth* was the second Clyde steamboat; then came the *Clyde* and the *Glasgow* in 1813. Nine steamers were launched in 1814. From 1815 to 1819 twenty-six steamers were constructed. When, in 1825, Messrs James Lumsden and Son published their *Steamboat Companion and Stranger's Guide to the Western Islands and Highlands of Scotland*, steamboats were plying to Liverpool, named the *Majestic*, *City of Glasgow*, *James Watt*, and *Henry Bell*. All the Clyde ports and resorts were well served, as well as the West Highlands. How much the Clyde and the rest of the world have been indebted to Robert and David Napier has been set forth in an article in this *Journal* for October, and also in one upon the 'Progress of Steam Navigation' in the May issue. Captain Williamson does all these men ample justice, and his whole book, with its list of steamers, their builders and owners, forms a valuable contribution to the subject. The last chapter is devoted to the rise of the firm of Denny of Dumbarton, under whom the turbine as a method of propulsion begins a new era in steam navigation which may work a revolution in the near future. There is a world of difference between the four-horse-power *Comet* and the newest Cunard turbine-steamer, which, when completed, will be about eight hundred feet long, of forty thousand tons displacement, seventy-five thousand horse-power, and will steam twenty-five knots. It would almost seem as if more progress has been made with the steamer within the past half-century than the railway locomotive.

LONGING.

Will you come homeward from the hills of Dreamland,
Home in the dusk, and speak to me again?
Tell me the stories that I am forgetting,
Quicken my hope, and recompense my pain?

Will you come homeward from the hills of Dreamland?
I have grown weary, though I wait you yet;
Watching the fallen leaf, the faith grown fainter,
The memory smoulder'd to a dull regret.

Shall the remembrance die in dim forgetting—
All the fond light that glorified my way?
Will you come homeward from the hills of Dreamland,
Home in the dusk, and turn my night to day?

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

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SIXTH SERIES.

THE 'CONTRABANDISTA.'

By Commander E. HAMILTON CURREY, R.N.

THE hill rises some seven hundred feet in the shape of a truncated cone, and it is buried deep in the forest. Around its base for three-fourths of the circumference a river foams and dashes, while the remaining fourth presents an inaccessible precipice unscalable by man or beast. To its sides clings a village, the typical *aldea* of Andalusia, with brick floors and white-washed walls. At the summit is a round tower of stone, and great reservoirs of the same material attest to the one-time domination of the ubiquitous Roman. A man stood leaning over the parapet wall, and stared at the wooden bridge which spanned the stream.

'*Carramba!*' he muttered impatiently; 'Pedro de los Perros is not given to being late, and it is past two o'clock.' Even as he grumbled a man emerged from the forest and passed on to the bridge. '*Bueno;* that is Pedro. I would know that old slate-coloured ass of his anywhere.'

Slowly up the steep, winding path came the old ass, bearing a still more ancient man. Arrived at the summit, he dismounted slowly, and turning the beast to graze, advanced to where the other man stood.

'*Buenas tardes, señor,*' was his greeting; 'I fear me that I am five minutes late.'

'*No importa,*' answered the other, 'so that you are here. And now to business.'

'Let us be seated, Don Carlos,' said the old man.

The two seated themselves in the shade, with their backs against the wall of the tower, and lighted the eternal cigarette.

'What would you of me, Pedro de los Perros? You know that since I married and became the *boticario* [chemist] here, I have ceased having any dealings with the *contrabandistas.*'

'That I have heard, Don Carlos,' replied Pedro de los Perros (Peter of the Dogs); 'but I am not come to ask you to take the road again, for you have passed the time of life when I have any use for you.'

Don Carlos, a fine, handsome man of barely middle age, started angrily. 'I am not so old as all that,' he retorted; 'and if you, Pedro, can conduct the business of a *contrabandista*, why not I?'

The old man chuckled and spat on the grass at his feet. 'True, Don Carlos, that is very true; you are not as old as I by some thirty years; but you are a *boticario*, you have a house and a wife and children, and what I have to propose is not for men such as you. Listen,' he went on. 'To ply the trade of the *contrabandista* there are but two sorts of men wanted: the old who are cunning and the young who are rash. I, Pedro de los Perros, am the former; and thou knowest, Don Carlos, that the man who trains the dogs to smuggle is no fool. Every night the dogs, laden with tobacco, race across the neutral ground from El Peñon [Gibraltar]; and whither do they come?'

'That is what no one knows,' answered Don Carlos, smiling.

'*Bueno.* Therefore, señor, you know that I can keep my own counsel, for he who hunts Pedro in the forest is apt to lose his way. You, Don Carlos, I know, can also keep a still tongue; therefore I come to you to help me.'

'What is the scheme?' asked Don Carlos, lighting a fresh cigarette.

'It is difficult,' said Pedro, 'for a man in my position to find suitable men to carry out a really big thing—for small affairs it is easy, comparatively; but this is *otra cosa.* Dost remember Juan Comisca, who carried out that affair with Nahoon the Jew in Ronda? He was shot by the Guardia Civile, which was a pity, as he would have been my man. As it was, I lost a mule and a load of tobacco, and Juan lost his life.'

'Let us get to business,' said Don Carlos. 'I did not come up here to talk of Juan Comisca, though I was sorry when he was shot; it was bad luck.'

'It is a big thing, señor, and one that I have not tried before; but my old customer Nahoon has moved to Jaen, and he has sent me an order for twelve mule-loads of tobacco to be delivered

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there. Now, it would be impossible for me to take the contract by land from Gibraltar, as even when I had got all the tobacco out, which would be a big business, the land journey is too long to Jaen. I have heard from Nahoon that Joaquin Pla the Catalan will act as guide from Granada to Jaen, but that all arrangements necessary till Granada is reached must be left in my hands. I have a felucca down in Gibraltar Bay, and I intend to load up there and sail her to Motril, where I will land the stuff, and leave one man in charge of the vessel, and the rest must take the mules, which I also provide, to Granada.'

'And what is all this to me?' asked Don Carlos.

'I have come to ask you the whereabouts of your nephew Narcisso Campillo, as he is the man I intend to place in charge of the affair.'

'Why Narcisso?' asked Don Carlos again.

'I have watched Narcisso,' said Pedro, 'since he was a boy of sixteen, and I have employed him from time to time. Lately he has been gun-running in Morocco and the Riff, and has made quite a good thing of it; but he wants to make money quickly, for there is a girl, look you, in Gibraltar, whom the fool wishes to marry. But I have heard nothing of Narcisso for some weeks, and time presses. Don Carlos, canst tell me where I shall find him?'

'And *my* share in the enterprise, Pedro?' questioned Don Carlos, with the true Andalusian love of a bargain.

'I can do with money, señor; and for every hundred dollars you like to advance there will be two hundred if this thing comes off.'

'It is a big risk,' said the *boticario*.

'But a fine profit,' added Pedro dryly.

. . . . . .

The west wind blew strong and true through the Gut of Gibraltar, and with flowing sheets a striped-sailed felucca danced merrily along with wind and tide in her favour. Mysterious business at Rabat, on the Morocco coast, had apparently been satisfactorily concluded, and several stout grass-bags bursting with dollars lay snugly locked up on board. She rounded Carnero Point and made straight for the Old Mole; and shortly after she anchored, her skipper and part-owner, Narcisso Campillo, stepped into a shore-boat and landed. As he walked up the steps of the landing-place a hand was placed upon his shoulder, and looking up, he saw his uncle Don Carlos.

When the matter had been explained to Narcisso he declared himself quite willing to undertake it, as the price offered was entirely to his satisfaction. Don Carlos acted as intermediary in carrying out all arrangements at Gibraltar, a place for which Pedro cherished an aversion, and it was arranged that Narcisso, in his own vessel, was to make a preliminary trip to Motril, and communicate with Pedro's agent at that place.

Narcisso discharged his own crew and shipped a choice selection of Pedro's men. Foremost among these was Juan el Tuerto (the One-eyed), an old acquaintance of Narcisso's, half-seaman, half-muleteer, and, if the truth must be confessed, a very considerable scoundrel, but staunch as the great *navajo de Sevilla* which he wore in his waistband, and entirely honest when engaged in a definite enterprise. Juan had been in one or two smuggling trips before with Narcisso, and expressed himself as willing to serve under his leadership. The remaining five hands employed by Pedro call for no comment; they were strong, hardy, and obedient, and would do their best to secure the very liberal pay dependent upon success.

'You will be ready, then, in a fortnight from now,' said Don Carlos to his nephew at the end of a lengthy conversation, in which all details had been explained to that daring *contrabandista*.

'It is well,' answered Narcisso. 'I will sail tomorrow in my own boat for Velez Malaga, where I shall see Barbarossa the fisherman; he will tell me if there is any movement among the Guarda Costas.'

At the end of a week Narcisso was back, and met his uncle again.

'Is it satisfactory, Narcisso?' asked the latter.

'I think so,' answered his nephew; 'but Barbarossa tells me that that old tub of a Guarda Costa which the fishermen nickname *El Gato* has been at Malaga once or twice lately; therefore I will not start unless she is at anchor at Algeciras.'

A light breeze from the north-west just ruffled the placid surface of Gibraltar Bay on the night on which Narcisso slipped out to sea with his contraband cargo. *El Gato* had been safely located at anchor at Algeciras; the wind, though light, was fair; and every precaution had been taken that ingenuity could suggest. 'Keep well out to sea,' had been Barbarossa's instructions, 'and try and make Motril at midnight; in any case the mules will be waiting every night from nine o'clock till daylight.'

But the stars in their courses fought against Narcisso. He made a good offing, and then steered to pass Malaga at a distance of from ten to fifteen miles; but the wind fell light, and eventually died away into a stark calm, and Narcisso found, to his horror, that the current was sweeping them steadily landwards. It was the afternoon of the third day out, and a malignant fate had caused the felucca to drift immediately opposite the port of Malaga, which lay some five miles on her beam.

'Juan,' said Narcisso to that worthy, who was sprawling half-asleep alongside the mainmast, 'there will be a breeze soon; the Levanter is coming up.'

Far in the west a dark cloud hung over the Rock of Gibraltar, and catspaws ruffled the surface of the water. But just as Narcisso had pointed the felucca's head S.S.W. for a stretch off the land, an exclamation from one of the men caused him to turn.

'*Carramba!* it is *El Gato*,' he shouted.

El Gato, a clumsy, pot-bellied little gunboat mounting a four-inch gun in the bows, was just clearing the harbour of Malaga. The wind was

very light, but there was a promise of more in the dark clouds which veiled the eastern horizon. Narcisso eased his sheets until he got the wind a point abaft the beam; the felucca was a noted sailer, and this was her best point. But as yet the wind came puffily, and *El Gato* was waddling out from the shore at some seven knots an hour. Anxiously Narcisso watched her close. Now she was six miles off, now five, now four, and at a distance of three she fired a blank charge and signalled the felucca to heave-to. But by this time the wind had come; a sharp, heavy squall laid the little vessel nearly gunwale under, but she lifted gallantly, and then sped southwards like a racing cutter.

'We may do it, Juan,' whispered Narcisso excitedly; 'she is as slow as a barge.'

But the gunboat had narrowed the distance between the two vessels, and from the volumes of smoke pouring from her funnel it was evident that she was making a great effort. She now lay about a mile and a half on the starboard quarter of the felucca, and was evidently overhauling her.

Narcisso, who was at the helm, checked his sheets a little and eased her a point farther from the wind. As he did so *El Gato's* four-inch gun spoke once more; but this time its crack was hard and sharp, and after a breathless pause a shell smacked into the water just ahead of the felucca.

In Spain there is not that intense tenderness for the evil-doer which characterises the English method of doing business. The captain of *El Gato* meant the felucca to heave-to, and if she did not he most decidedly intended to sink her. But the wind was freshening momentarily, and there was a jump of a sea on; the felucca, lying well over to it, was snoring through the water at a pace which bade fair to distance the clumsy old gunboat wallowing on her starboard quarter. Another shot actually threw the spray aboard of the felucca and over her crew, who were lying prone on the weather-side of her deck in the fashion of the racing yachtsman.

'*Madre de Dios!*' exclaimed Juan el Tuerto, 'she will sink us, Narcisso. Are we gaining?'

'Yes,' answered the *contrabandista;* 'we are slipping away from her, and shall see Motril to-night. A pull on those sheets, Juan; we are a bit too far off the wind for her best point of sailing.'

A sharp squall, carrying with it a blinding deluge of rain, hid *El Gato* from their sight for some five minutes; when they saw her again the distance between the two vessels had materially increased. Narcisso, a gallant figure, stood at the tiller; his cap had blown off, and his dark, curly hair streamed back from his handsome, well-cut face. '*Por Dios*, Juan!' he was saying when the gunboat fired again, 'she will never'——

There was a hideous thud, a red rain in the air, and Narcisso Campillo had vanished as if he had never been; a four-inch shell had struck him in the middle of the back. The little craft, which was carrying considerable weather-helm, shot into the wind with furiously shaking sails almost before the crew had realised what had happened to their luckless commander.

Then Juan el Tuerto leapt for the tiller and jammed the helm hard up. 'Lie still, comrades!' he shouted. 'No occasion to touch the sheets; she is paying off.'

White and shaking, the men did as they were bidden. A staring splash of blood on the side of the tiller was all that remained of what had been Narcisso Campillo.

'We had better give in, Juan,' growled Jaime, one of the hands, 'or we shall all follow Narcisso.'

'Peace, fool!' snarled Juan back at him; 'and if we go to join Narcisso we can but go below. It is either that or Ceuta for us if we are captured.'

Another shot splashed just under the stern, and the men winced again; but, grim and imperturbable, Juan stuck to his post. He knew the hell upon earth which awaited the captured *contrabandista* in Ceuta, and was taking his chances, if the gunboat did not sink the felucca before dark, and now the sun was almost down.

The wind had increased until the gallant little vessel was almost gunwale under from the weight of it; she was extended and racing for dear life, and with her fine entry and beautifully clean-run hull, was slipping through the water at an amazing pace. With teeth clenched, and oblivious to all else in the world save the desire to escape, Juan el Tuerto nursed his craft. The tense silence which reigned on board was broken only by his curt command to haul in or check the sheets. But it was not to be. Again the hateful sound of the four-inch gun, and then she seemed, as it were, to dissolve and cease to be. Juan el Tuerto was conscious that two of his shipmates reached the water mangled and shapeless, and he heard, amid the tumult of the waters, the drowning shrieks of the others. For himself, he clung to a broken spar, and was picked up by the gunboat.

Now, Juan was by no means devoid of shrewdness, and he managed to convey to the mind of her captain that whatever the errand of the sunken vessel may have been, he (Juan) was as innocent as a babe unborn. After repeating his story, which did immense credit to his imagination, at the court in Algeciras, he was permitted to go free, and found his way the same afternoon to Gibraltar, where he sought out and found Don Carlos. The interview, as may be imagined, was a gloomy one, for Don Carlos had been really attached to Narcisso, and, besides, he had embarked five hundred dollars on the venture, which were at present reposing at the bottom of the Mediterranean.

Slowly and sadly did Don Carlos and Juan el Tuerto ride out of Gibraltar to seek the home of the former, whither Pedro de los Perros had asked Don Carlos to bring the *contrabandista* that he might interview him.

They reached the house of Don Carlos late at night, and the following day they stood together on

the top of the hill where such a short time ago the promising plot had been hatched.

Juan moved restlessly round the tower, and at last asked Don Carlos if there were any means of getting inside.

Don Carlos pointed to a broken aperture in the wall some ten feet from the ground, and said, 'I believe if you can get up to that place you will find a broken staircase inside; but, for me, I have never troubled to look.'

Curiosity being a strong point in the character of Juan, he immediately clambered up and disappeared inside the tower.

Just as he did so Pedro de los Perros appeared upon the scene, mounted on the slate-coloured ass. Pedro's was not a pleasant countenance at the best of times; but the scowl with which he greeted Don Carlos rendered his appearance more than usually forbidding.

'This is a pretty business,' he began.

'How can it have happened?' replied Don Carlos. 'There were none but tried men employed, whose very bread depended upon a successful issue. Dost know anything, Pedro?'

'Ay,' answered the old man, 'that do I. Some one has mixed himself up in my affairs. Who it is I do not know at present; but I will find out, and then'——

'And then?' queried Don Carlos.

'Santissima Trinidad, señor, you ask me such a question!' He put out a skinny hand and laid it on the other's arm. His eyes absolutely blazed with fury, and his frail body was literally shaken by the vehemence of his passion.

Don Carlos, brave as he was, was startled by the demoniac violence of the man.

'There have been others, señor, who have crossed my path. Where are they now?' He laughed sardonically. 'Ask of the *contrabandistas*, señor; perhaps they can tell you.'

It came to Don Carlos's mind that he had heard wild tales among the men of the sierras, the bull-fighters, the muleteers, and the sailors of awful vengeance taken by this ill-omened, illiterate, violent man. He was recalled from his brief reverie by the voice of Pedro.

'Where is the *marinero*, the fool Juan el Tuerto? You said that he would be here. I do not see him.'

The old man was peering about him.

'He is here,' answered Don Carlos; 'but he climbed up into the tower.'

'He climbed up into the tower?' repeated Pedro, with a shriek of fury. 'Ah, now I see; now I understand! Oh, thrice accursed fool!'

Don Carlos regarded him, naturally enough, with supreme amazement.

'What is all this?' he said.

'Call that fool out of the tower, and I will tell you,' answered Pedro.

Juan was called down, and stood somewhat nervously before Pedro, whom he evidently regarded with considerable dread.

'We will sit where we sat before,' said Pedro, turning to Don Carlos; and, preceded by Juan, they walked over and sat down with their backs against the tower.

'And now, señor, I will trouble you to read this which has been sent to me. You are aware, perhaps, that I cannot read.' He took off his *sombrero*, and from the lining produced a folded and extremely dirty bit of paper.

Don Carlos took it from his hand. 'It is your pleasure that I should read this to you and Juan?' he said courteously.

'Even so, señor,' answered Pedro, with a sneer.

Don Carlos unfolded the paper, and read as follows:

'To Señor Don Pedro de los Perros,—You are, after all, a fool, for all that you think yourself so clever. The next time you make a plot, don't do it outside a tower; there may be some one inside. The Guardia Civile and the Naval Commandant at Algeciras were promptly informed by the person who heard it all. A Well-Wisher.'

'Get inside that tower, you,' said Pedro to Juan, 'and see if you can hear our voices.'

This was done, and Juan reported that he could hear perfectly.

Pedro got up from the grass slowly and mounted his ass.

'Whither do you go?' asked Don Carlos.

'To find my well-wisher,' answered the old man. 'You may be sure that I shall find him, señor.'

'And then?'

'He will wish that he had never been born;' and so saying, he urged on his beast and disappeared down the slope.

'It is ill jesting with Pedro, señor,' said Juan.

'Ah, is that so?'

'I would sooner face *El Gato* and the four-inch gun again than stand in the shoes of the man who wrote that letter. Pedro will catch him, and then'——

'And then?' echoed Don Carlos.

The man made no answer, but shivered slightly and followed Pedro de los Perros into the forest.

THE QUEEN'S LIMNER FOR SCOTLAND: SIR NOEL PATON.

By JOANNA SCOTT MONCRIEFF.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.—HIS ART.

THE avidity with which people of every class absorb the smallest detail relating to the work or personal life of a living genius is but the inevitable expression of homage paid to a master-mind. When the man himself has passed from sight, this curiosity is, if anything, increased, and cultured and uncultured alike seek, if possible, to discover something of that hidden force which moved to successful issue the creative brain and gifted hand that can work for them no longer.

The late Sir Joseph Noel Paton, R.S.A., LL.D., united in himself and combined in his work an abundant wealth of talents. His eager imagination, unable to exhaust itself through the medium of brush and pencil, overflowed into other channels; and we find him excelling as sculptor, architect, poet, and philosopher. Such a union of endowments is rarely to be found, and it is no less remarkable that, in whatever direction he applied his vigorous brain, he produced distinguished work and obtained recognition which might have gratified the ambition of any aspirant for fame.

On the 13th December 1821, in the old historic town of Dunfermline, the great artist first saw the light. His father, Mr Joseph Paton, was a designer of patterns for the damask manufacturers of his native town, and had in his young days worked as an art-student under Andrew Wilson, Master of the 'Trustees'' Academy, where Sir David Wilkie, John Burnet, David Scott, and other renowned artists also received their training. Joseph Paton was, from every account, a man of outstanding individuality and force of character, permeated also with so strong a religious faith that, from holding Methodist views, he joined, shortly before Sir Noel's birth, the Society of Friends. Thus the artist and his brother and sisters were as children educated as Quakers. Later on Mr Paton became a Swedenborgian, and finally adopted and preached an unauthorised doctrine of his own. The artist's father had two absorbing interests in life: his religious beliefs and his art collection. Having gratified the first by joining the Society of Friends, he proceeded to indulge the second by becoming a member of the Society of Antiquaries. He was an enthusiastic admirer of everything antique, and all his life collected with unflagging zeal books, armour, casts from the Greek, engravings from old masters, and weapons of every kind brought from every conceivable place, so that his house, Wooer's Alley, where young Paton spent his earliest years, was a veritable museum crammed in every possible corner with treasures of art.

The external features of Wooer's Alley were no less calculated than the objects within it to foster and excite an artistic temperament. The house itself, built by Mr Paton in the bend of a narrow glen at the outskirts of the west end of the town, was embedded in trees and within sight and sound of the brown burn that runs through the dell. It also commanded a view from the doorway of the gray ruins of the old Abbey rising in calm dignity, and of the Royal Palace of Dunfermline, the centre for so long a time, and now so long ago, of all the regal might and ecclesiastical pomp of Scotland, where knights and kings were born, and beneath whose shade the dust still lies of Malcolm Canmore and Margaret, his noble queen; the great Robert the Bruce himself; and many another hero famous in Scottish history. Such a spot, replete with old-world associations and bound up with the records of the past, would stir emotion even in an unimaginative brain, and could not possibly fail to foster and enhance all that was romantic in a mind so susceptible as that of Sir Noel Paton.

The impressions received from outward objects were no doubt greatly stimulated in the mind of the boy by the teaching of his mother, a woman who combined with unusual goodness a romantic and sensitive disposition. Mrs Paton belonged to an old Scottish House, being immediately descended from the MacDiarmids of Glenlyon and the Robertsons of Struan. As she had, therefore, undiluted Highland blood in her veins, one need look no farther than this source for the boy's imaginative gift, which enabled him to absorb so fully and to assimilate so thoroughly those tales of fairy and brownie, those legends and folklore, that she poured on her children with romantic enthusiasm, colouring all she related with vivid and dramatic additions of her own, eminently calculated to inspire and quicken their vision of the unseen. Thus the weighty and the airy threads of fact and fiction might well unite together and weave in the young poet's mind a material substantial enough almost to conceal the common stuff of daily life, our petty personal affairs and interests, and place in their stead dreams of an ideal life in undiminished majesty and beauty, and a state of feeling wherein the past is the reality that we grasp and handle, and the consciousness of to-day but as the fading shadow of a dream.

From these visionary imaginings young Noel, after some instruction from a Quaker governess, passed

to the fierce reality of the Dunfermline school, where he went through the usual painful experience of a sensitive nature in the hands of the barbarous.

His great delight in art, however, consoled him even in those early days for much misery at school, and at home he quickly forgot his troubles in constantly watching his father's skilful labour, and imitating him on every possible occasion. His first attempts at drawing were made with a burnt stick for pencil and the hearthstone for want of a board; and with much ingenuity he would coax the maid, bribing her with sweeties, to whiten the stone several times during the evening that he might the better practise his art. He also turned his attention at a very early age to modelling in clay, but was discouraged from this pursuit for the time being by his inability to preserve his work from drying and so being destroyed.

A memorandum of Sir Noel's may here be quoted: 'The circumstances and surroundings of my boyhood made it all but impossible that I should be anything but an artist, my father's tendencies and pursuits being all in that direction. Though unfortunately, as I now feel, he always put the *thought* before the *thing*, and encouraged me in perpetual scribblings at *subjects*, instead of obliging me to copy *objects*—a habit that has stuck to me all through life with more or less injurious results to my work, realistic enough as much of it has been. In fact, I never had any technical training, for though I obtained my studentship at the Royal Academy, I never studied there.'

At the age of seventeen Sir Noel's school-days were over, and he accepted, rather against the judgment of his parents, the directorship of the design department in one of the principal manufactories at Paisley. Here he remained for three years, continuing meanwhile his art education by constantly working both in colour and pencil outline. He became very soon the centre or originator of a small literary and artistic circle of young people, to whom his departure to London in quest of greater things was the loss not only of a leader but of a friend. In the winter of 1839–40, while still at Paisley, he completed his oil-painting, 'Annot Lyle singing' (the subject taken from the *Legend of Montrose*); but his first considerable work was executed in water-colour previous to this date, and represented the fight between Bothwell and Balfour, taken from Scott's *Old Mortality*. From Paisley young Paton proceeded to London; and although he obtained a studentship in the Royal Academy schools, he did not, as already mentioned, make use of this privilege. Sir Noel, speaking of these days, writes: 'But one happy result of my probationary work at Trafalgar Square was the formation of a lifelong friendship with Millais, then a full-blown student, though still quite a boy. Our friendship began thus. I had got a place on the floor of the antique room, the semicircle of raised seats behind being fully occupied, and was struggling with a drawing of the Fighting Gladiator on a large sheet of unstretched paper that dangled over each side of my drawing-board (a circumstance that seemed to amuse some of the other workers), when one day a beautiful little fellow who had been jumping all over the place came and stood beside me, not reaching much above the level of my head as I sat. After some general remarks, he told me his name was Johnnie Millais, and I gave him mine. On his asking what sort of art I was "going in for," I took from my pocket a small note-book containing numerous first ideas in outline for illustrations for Milton's *Comus* and Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, necessarily treated somewhat *à nue*. He glanced at one or two of these jottings, and exclaiming in a depreciatory tone, "Oh! is that the sort of thing you do?" turned quickly away. I caught him by the skirt of his little black surtout—it had three rows of buttons up the front, I remember—and saying rather grimly, I suspect, "You sha'n't go till you've looked at them," put the note-book in his hand. He turned over a few leaves carefully, and finding they were not "the sort of thing" he had hastily assumed, he threw his arm round my shoulder, saying in a very different tone of voice, "Oh, you are all right!" and from that moment we were friends.'

This meeting with Millais took place in the spring of 1843, and for over fifty years he and Noel Paton enjoyed an unclouded friendship. Millais' early style, as displayed in his 'Academy drawings' for 1843, is criticised by the Scottish artist as follows: 'I found them, though somewhat conventional in character, full of fancy and distinctly ambitious in aim, some of them containing great numbers of figures, all treated in a more or less sketchy manner. But I observed in regard to the details generally, and the extremities in particular, they were dangerously loose and wanting in study; and while according to the designs as a whole my warm and almost wondering admiration, on the strength of my seniority by several years, and of my greater growth by a good many inches, I ventured—despite my consciousness that already this "marvellous boy" was more of an *artist* than I—to draw his attention to this defect, and to urge that he should altogether avoid crowded scenes, and choose subjects embracing not more than two or three figures to be thoroughly studied and wrought out, especially in regard to the hands and feet. For these strictures and suggestions, the propriety of which he freely admitted, he thanked me cordially, and when closing the street-door on my departure, looked after me with a kindly smile and nod, saying, "I shall not forget about the hands and feet."'

Many years afterwards, when Millais was at the height of his fame, he confided to Sir Noel the frequent difficulty he experienced in his work and his almost invariable dissatisfaction with its results. Sir Noel writes: 'I could not help laughingly expressing my inability to conceive how he, with his consummate mastery of technique—and that mastery so universally acknowledged—could so feel. "Ah! my dear friend," he replied, in tones that

vouched for the sincerity of his words, "that is all you know! Why, there are times when I am so crushed and humiliated by my sense of incapacity that I literally skulk about the house, ashamed to be seen by my own servants!"—a confession from which I could not but derive consolation, as others may. Again, after many more years of brilliant achievement—he was then engaged on the splendid "Lord Salisbury"—when about to enter the studio, he paused with his fingers on the handle of the door, and turning to me, said almost gruffly, "But what have I to show you that you will care to see? I am only a portrait-painter." Needless to say that my reply was, "My dear Millais, in painting such portraits you are painting history!"'

This extreme sensitiveness and humility was also a marked characteristic of Sir Noel. He was often oppressed by what he felt was an inadequate attempt to express his meaning; and although he was ever ready to doubt the criticism of his own cultured eye, a word of spontaneous admiration from a little child would often lift him from doubt and again renew his confidence in himself.

In 1845 Paton's cartoon sketch, 'The Spirit of Religion,' gained one of the three premiums offered by the Westminster Competition Committee for the decoration of the walls of the Houses of Parliament. The subject is allegorical, and the whole picture a wonderful conception powerfully worked out. Many years later, in 1881, Sir Noel presented this cartoon to the corporation of his native town. A friend, writing at the time of the success to congratulate the artist, says: 'Next to Maclise's cartoon . . . yours had the greatest number of admirers. It is a noble and glorious work, and full, like Maclise's, of mind—mind of the highest order—and imagination most varied and powerful. I assure you that this great triumph you have achieved in the "young morning of your days" is but an earnest of what, by God's great blessing, will follow.' The prophecy of good work to follow was not long in being fulfilled, for in the year 1847, in a similar competition, Sir Noel's oil-picture, 'Christ bearing the Cross,' and 'The Reconciliation of Oberon and Titania' jointly gained one of the three hundred pound prizes of the second class. In the same year he was elected an Associate of the Royal Scottish Academy, and began a companion picture for the 'Reconciliation' in the 'Quarrel of Oberon and Titania,' which was exhibited in the Royal Scottish Academy three years later, when Sir Noel was elected a full member of that body (1850). Both pictures hang in the Scottish National Gallery; the first was purchased by the Academy for a very handsome price, and the second was bought for the National Collection by the Association for the Promotion of the Fine Arts in Scotland.

Sir Noel Paton's art may be divided roughly into four classes: allegorical works, representing in various ways the triumph of good over evil; fairy scenes, depicting that world only visible to childhood's eyes; historical pieces, such as 'Malcolm Canmore' and 'Luther at Erfurt' (considered one of his best); and those subjects which deal directly with some fundamental human emotion. This last class includes 'The Empty Cradle,' 'The Dead Lady,' 'Home from the Crimea' (a replica of which was in the possession of the late Queen), 'In Memoriam,' a scene from the Indian Mutiny, &c.; and from the extreme popularity of these pictures, there can be no doubt that they will live as long as the universal truth which they depict appeals alike to uninitiated and connoisseur.

His fairy scenes are considered the most wonderful of Sir Noel's works for intricate and complicated drawing. Here myriads of fairy forms in wheeling grace float through glowing tints, fade, die away, and vanish into nebulous air. Flowers, trailing grasses, birds, shells, insects, abound on every side, and there is a joyous abandonment of life in each radiant figure which shows how close to Nature herself beat the heart of this great artist. Although Sir Noel attained later in his allegorical works a more powerful and a simpler style, yet the refinement and delicacy of his fairy pictures have never been surpassed, and the exquisite accuracy of each detail demands the minutest study and will amply repay the trouble of repeated visits. Millais, amazed at Sir Noel's mastery of composition, is reported to have said, on seeing one of these pictures, 'If Paton had my hands and I his power of design, either of us could have done anything.'

Sir Noel's popularity rests mainly on his allegorical works. He was a teacher *par excellence*, bent on enforcing by aid of his splendid gifts and at all costs the only lesson in life worth learning. He had practically nothing of the tendency to any form of wrong which infects most of us, and the underlying idea of his religious work was the importance of distinguishing between right and wrong, believing that the failure to distinguish was the source of evil. He possessed the rare gift to discern and portray moral beauty, and to express the highest ideal of purity; and it may here be noted that, whatever material the artist employed through which to embody his thought, the predominant note that persistently asserts itself and pervades all his work is a conviction of the supreme importance of duty in man and a profound understanding of the spiritual dignity of life.

His religious works followed each other in quick succession. 'The Entombment' and 'Gethsemane' were exhibited together in the Royal Scottish Academy in 1860. They were small in size, and were bought by Mr Sharp of Endwood Court, after whose death they were sold at Christie & Manson's for exceedingly high prices. In 1866 his 'Mors Janua Vitæ' ('Death the Gate of Life') was exhibited in the Royal Academy. The simplicity and beauty of this picture attracted universal admiration. In 1867 'The Fairy Raid,' representing the queen of the elves with her retinue bearing into captivity a mortal changeling, obtained instant popularity. In 1871 appeared 'Faith and Reason,' then 'Christ and Mary at the

Sepulchre,' followed in 1874 by 'Satan watching the Sleep of Christ.' 'Christ the Great Shepherd' was dedicated by special command to the late Queen, who commissioned the artist to paint the reduced replica which formerly hung in the Prayer-Room at Osborne, along with replicas of 'The Man of Sorrows' and 'Vigilate et Orate.'

'Thy Will be Done,' painted as a companion picture to 'The Man of Sorrows,' was dedicated to the memory of Princess Alice. In 1879 'Lux in Tenebris' appeared, and by many is considered not only Sir Noel's greatest achievement, but one of the greatest religious pictures of our time. In the same year he painted a life-size head of Christ, with the title, 'O Jerusalem!' and also the 'Dream of Patmos,' now in the National Gallery of Victoria. In 1881 appeared his well-known work, 'Faith arming the Christian Warrior.' It was not completed until 1882, when his 'Midsummer Night's Dream' was exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy. 'The Choice,' begun in the following year, was finished in 1886.

In 1887 'Queen Margaret and Malcolm Canmore' was executed as a commission for his old school-friend the Hon. Alexander Hay of Adelaide, South Australia.

In 1889–90 Sir Noel painted 'Vade, Satana,' and 'Beati Mundo Corde,' and in 1892 finished 'De Profundis.'

Until he was well on in life Sir Noel's powers of persistent work were very remarkable. He would paint from nine to six, with no lunch but biscuits and water; and in summer-time, after dinner, would model or draw or continue the day's work as long as the light lasted.

The last picture Sir Noel painted was called the 'Prayer of Hermon.' Owing to its size, he had to stand on the top of the studio-steps to reach it, and often worked several hours at a time in spite of the infirmities of advancing age. The picture was finished about three years before his death. Most of Sir Noel's large religious works were painted in the south studio adjoining his residence in George Square, Edinburgh, a semi-sacred place even to those who were always freely admitted. The artist's mind was illuminated by the habitual contemplation of the Highest Subject, and his susceptibility to this sacred impression was one of the elements of his genius. It is the good fortune of the present generation and those to follow that his great gift rendered him capable of manifesting the effect of this inspiration.

The taste for this or that style in art may, indeed does, change, as each little school of human thought holds ascendency; but the picture which inspires all who see it with a longing to hold within themselves something of the limitless purity of Christ, and makes honour to glow in their hearts, is a reality beyond all fluctuations of fashion, and this is what we have received from Sir Noel Paton through his art as an imperishable legacy.

THE MYSTERY OF THE VIOLET STORK.

CHAPTER III.—THE KLIPSPRINGERS' PATH.

THE greater part of the next day was occupied in trading with the Hottentots. Although uncommunicative and suspicious, they were very willing to obtain such goods as they wanted—at their own prices. The Hottentots spent a long morning and most of the afternoon bartering with the Englishmen. Trade, as always happens among Africans, went very slowly. The native loves nothing better than to prolong the luxury of his bargaining; and it was not till late in the day that business became brisk and items changed hands freely. The two Englishmen had, for very sufficient reasons, determined not to part with any rifles—if they parted at all—until the last hours of their stay in this place. 'Kabip and two or three of his headmen were anxious to deal; but the price they offered was rejected as quite unworthy of the arms they sought. Day closed in, the goods were put back in the spare wagon, and the crowd of traffickers—men, women, and children, for all had collected outside the white men's *scherm*—reluctantly departed to their kraals, discussing with shrill voices and animated gestures the events and fortunes of this, to them, most exciting day.

Vleermuis had returned by the next morning, and reported to his masters as they sat at breakfast what he had seen and done. The night had been a moonlight one, and his friend the Koranna had taken him without great difficulty, though the climb had been very tough, to the point above the valley whence an attempt at a descent might be made.

'That settles the matter, Ralph,' said Jack Spencer eagerly so soon as Vleermuis had finished his report. 'I'll take Vleermuis before dawn to-morrow morning, and as soon as it's light I'll try the climb down. Meanwhile, you stay here, old man, and look after the wagons. We can't trust these Hottentots, and one of us must stay in camp.'

'Well, I suppose a wilful man must have his way,' replied Ralph. 'I don't half like this wild-goose chase of yours; it sounds a fitter job for a dassie [rock-rabbit] or a lizard than a man. However, if you must go, I'll stay and look after the camp. I believe we shall have trouble over this business. Here come the Totties already. Now to prepare for another day of trade.'

That night, before retiring, Jack Spencer had made careful preparation for his attempt of the morrow. Two hours before dawn he was awake,

and after a hurried cup of coffee and some bread and cold meat, passed with Vleermuis silently out of the encampment and stole along under the lee of the cliffs. After proceeding about a mile, in such quietness that not even a Hottentot dog at the kraal below marked their passage, they suddenly turned to the right, and made their way slowly and with difficulty up a boulder-strewn and well-bushed kloof. Reaching the end of this, they climbed a steep, rocky mountain, thence descended into another valley, and then set their faces for a long and arduous climb up a very difficult mountain-side. This at length surmounted, they found themselves, as it were, upon the summit of a very wilderness of rock and mountain. Day was dawning. Already a pale, cold light was creeping over the face of the eastern sky. Presently faint tinges of colour showed—pale yellow, sea-green, a lovely rose. A rock-thrush sounded its first clear pipe. The primrose and pale-green sky became more strongly imbued with colour; great streamers of pink and red flaunted far upwards towards the zenith. They had steadily advanced along the broken mountain-top; as they made their way round a screen of bush, a berg canary flitted to the top of a boulder, and facing full to the east, put forth its sweet song. Just at that moment a broader and bolder display of light told that the day had risen once more amid those unknown places of the earth.

'Baas,' whispered the Koranna, 'sun-up! We are close to the place.'

'Yes,' returned his master; 'and yonder bird is wishing me good luck.'

By this time the light shone clear upon the rufous upper colouring and white underparts of the berg canary, just now busily engaged in its song of welcome to the sun. It shone, too, upon the glossy blackness, relieved by a white collar stripe, of the little creature's head, neck, and throat. The two men hastened on, yet the bird, in no wise disturbed by their passing, finished its song, and then flew away to seek its breakfast among the grass-seeds.

They approached what seemed to be the edge of the mountain. Suddenly a quick, light, trampling sound was heard. Before they could guess at its cause, a pair of klipspringers, handsome little mountain antelopes, with coats of a curious grizzled olive-brown colouring, bounded like india-rubber balls over the edge and darted away in front of them.

'*De klipboks' pat, baas!*' said Vleermuis quietly, pointing to the spot.

'The Klipspringers' Path, truly,' echoed Spencer. 'Now for the secret.'

They reached the place whence the little antelopes had emerged. This was not, as Jack had expected, the actual edge of the valley they sought. From where they stood, the mountain trended in a not insuperably difficult slope for some seventy feet to what looked like the real beginning of a precipice. Aided by bushes, to which they clung here and there, they soon made their way to this lower krantz. Crawling forward upon hands and knees, they approached the edge and looked over. Spencer's keen eyes instantly drank in the wonderful scene below them, and with a gasp, half of pleasure, half of surprise, he ejaculated, 'Jove, what a valley!'

Nearly four hundred feet below them, hemmed in everywhere by sheer and immense walls of ruddy-brown mountain rock, lay an oblong kloof of wonderful beauty, stretching between its encircling ramparts for a long mile or more, and about half a mile in width. Through the centre ran a clear stream of water, in places bordered by thin groves of acacias and some bush, in others open to the sunlight. Bush and grass diversified the floor of this fair vale. Right below them stood a long hut or cottage, thatched with reeds, and surrounded by a patch of garden-ground and a fence of thorns. Just beyond, fringing the bed of the stream and also enclosed by a thorn fence, lay a patch of two or three acres of what looked like ploughed land. Two or three kraals, not far distant from the cottage, contained small flocks of sheep and goats, which were even now bleating to be let forth for their long day of pasturage. No smoke issued from the chimney. Not a human being was abroad. Apparently they had not yet risen.

'This is the place right enough, Vleermuis,' said Spencer to the Koranna in a low voice. 'Now to get down. You will take my rifle and bandolier. If any one comes and tries to interfere—I mean from among the Hottentots—shoot, and shoot well.'

'Ja, my baas,' returned Vleermuis, taking the rifle and belt, and glancing as it were instinctively in his rear, 'I shall look after you. I will shoot fast enough.'

For two or three minutes they surveyed the precipice beneath them. It was a fearsome place to think of getting down. Yet it was evident that here and here only had the klipspringers, probably during long ages of the past, chosen the one spot by which access could be gained to the kloof below. For a long three minutes more Jack Spencer made his survey, with eyes that wandered over every tiny foothold and every pinnacle and ledge of the yawning face of the cliff-wall. As a youngster he had been a great collector of wild-birds' eggs; the sea-cliffs of Yorkshire and Northumberland were familiar to him—he had scaled most of them; yet here, as he confessed to himself, he saw before him a task more difficult than any he had ever yet attempted.

'Baas,' said the Koranna as his master rose to his knees, 'no man can do it. Don't try!'

Spencer smiled grimly. His face was set and anxious.

'I think it can be done, Vleermuis,' was his reply, 'and I'm going to do it.' Letting himself gently over the edge of the precipice, he began the clamber down, moving with wonderful ease, caution, and dexterity, following the tiny path

worn by the antelopes, hanging on now by a bush, now by a jutting cornice of rock, and making his way steadily yet very slowly. As he hung now and again with one leg swinging out over that yawning abyss below, the Koranna, lying on his belly, his eyes riveted on the scene, scarcely breathed for anxiety. The palms of his hands became moist; the sweat-drops sprang to his yellow brow. His heart almost stopped as his master edged as if by a miracle round a huge projecting boss of rock, and hanging in air for a moment, dropped with the lightness of a cat upon a little ledge below. Jack had well taken the measure of this difficult place, and as he lit he grasped very gingerly a tough little bush which here found roothold in the rock-face. It was a risk, but it had to be taken. The friendly bit of bush was sound and tough, and he breathed again more freely for a little space.

In preparation for this descent the Englishman had put on a pair of soft velschoens, Boer-made and of untanned hide. How he thanked his stars during the climb downwards that he had not omitted this precaution! By this time he was a third of the way down the cliff. He was streaming with perspiration, but he had thorough confidence in himself; his muscles and wind were unimpaired. It was a beast of a climb, but he thought somehow he should accomplish it. Overhead, as he looked up, a great black eagle, a *dassie-vanger*, swam on vast wing, with an ease that seemed unspeakably secure, through the clear firmament. What, thought Spencer to himself, would he not give to be that eagle for a few fleeting moments!

For another hundred feet the way, narrow and dangerous as it was, was not impassable, and by dint of great care and deftness, united with the climber's wonderful activity and sureness of foot, it was at length overcome. He had reached a huge shoulder of rock, whence there was a drop of some ten feet on to what was apparently a broadish ledge beneath. How to reach that ledge was the difficulty. The klipspringers had evidently made their pass here by springing upward and downward along a tiny ledge of rock to the right and a projection or two jutting from the cliff-face. These vantage-coigns were just enough for klipspringers, perhaps the most marvellous rock-climbers in the world; they were absolutely impossible for a human being. There was but one chance of surmounting the difficulty. A stunted old tree of wild-olive had somehow found anchorage generations before in a deep cranny of the rocks. By climbing a few feet up to this, and then letting himself down by the longest and toughest limb, the adventurer might be able, with great good luck and a supreme effort, to reach the sanctuary he sought. It had to be done; he doubted very much whether, even if he cared to face it, he could accomplish the climb upward again. Crawling out to the extreme edge of the shoulder of rock on which he stood, he placed one foot on a slight projection, and hanging on by his finger-tips and hugging the cliff closely with his body, managed at length to clutch the tree. Thank God, it was sturdy and dependable! Now letting himself down by the main branch with extreme care and caution, he gained a friendly projection with his right foot, and thence with a quick, light spring reached the coveted ledge.

As he lit a yellow cobra, which had been sunning itself in the strengthening warmth and light now penetrating to this place, struck at the unwonted intruder with the speed of lightning, and hit him smartly upon the leg. It was a hideous moment. Spencer, in casting one momentary glance at the ledge as he sprang thither, had not noted the golden-yellow coil of this dreaded reptile. Even if he had seen it sooner, such was his situation that he must have sprung. As the yellow flash uncoiled and struck him he gave one fierce, convulsive, scraping kick, and, more by good luck than good judgment, sent the vile thing tumbling down the rocks below. This assuredly was a shock worse a hundredfold even than the nerve-racking peril of that downward climb. For a few moments Spencer was in safety—if, that is to say, the serpent's teeth had not touched his flesh. He stood on a broad ledge where he could rest comfortably if need be. He stooped and looked carefully at his right gaiter, then unbuttoned it. Luckily it was of good pigskin, so tough that even the fierce stroke of the cobra had been powerless to penetrate it; there were two scratches on the leather, but no more. Upon the bare flesh of his leg there was not a trace of those fatal, needle-like fangs which, if they had reached him, would have ended at once his career and his climb in a fashion of which he shuddered even now to think.

Jack Spencer fastened on his gaiter again and clapped it gently with his hand.

'God bless the pig that gave his skin for you, my friend!' he said softly to himself, with a grim smile. Then he stood erect, stretched himself, took a deep breath or two, and from the edge of his temporary place of refuge surveyed his further path.

Hitherto he had been making his way down the cliff-face left-handed; now the Klipspringers' Path suddenly turned and trended to the right. He had yet about ninety feet to negotiate. So far as he could see, the descent was no worse, rather it seemed less difficult, than that which he had already accomplished. His spirits rose; the little rest had refreshed him; the encounter with the snake, so far from shaking, had steeled his nerves. He moved out from the broad ledge and took to the path again. He had proceeded smoothly enough for about forty feet, and was turning the angle of a big projection of the precipice, when his eyes, glancing for an instant from the enthralling task of clinging to that dangerous cliff-face upon which he hung fly-like, saw below him at last signs of life about the cottage. Two figures, those apparently of a boy and a girl, issued from the door and came forth into the pleasant sunlight. They had not seen him; of that he was certain. No doubt they would do so speedily

enough. For himself, he could look that way no longer; his whole energy and attention were needed for the accomplishment of his task. He rounded the shoulder, and now prepared for the last portion of his descent. Just as he had gripped a projecting elbow of rock, and was stretching downwards for his next step, the sound of three shots rattled suddenly from the cliff-top, their echoes reverberating with deafening reiteration around the grim walls of the valley. He looked upward. At that moment, from above a projecting angle, where the cliff jutted forth somewhat, three dark heads appeared. The heads went down. Jack guessed instinctively what was to follow. Three bullets rattled viciously upon the rock-wall to which he clung. One of them must have struck within a few feet of him. Again came the reports of the three guns—a rifle and two muskets, as he could easily distinguish. In the next instant the projection to which he clung with his right hand, just above his head—struck by a fourth bullet—crumbled in his grasp; he fell, down, down, down. He remembered striking into a thicket of bush, turning over in the air, a huge shock, and then all was blank.

How long it was before Jack Spencer came to his senses he had not the remotest conception. As a matter of fact it was no more than some twelve or fifteen minutes. Jack was a tough subject, having a hard head, a strong heart, and a capital constitution; and, despite the fact that he had fallen fifty or sixty feet before he struck the bottom of the valley, luck had befriended him. The mass of bush through which he had crashed in his course had broken his fall completely, and in fact saved his neck. He had thereafter cannoned severely against a rock, broken his left forearm, and badly bruised his shoulder; but otherwise he had reached the bottom of the valley unhurt. When his eyes opened he perceived with astonishment no less than five people grouped about him. A handsome girl, with clear blue eyes, a sun-tanned skin, and a mass of fair brown hair touched with gold, which fell down her back in a thick plait, was gazing into his face with rueful eyes, in which traces of tears remained. The girl had by her knees a rude basin half-full of water. Much moisture about his face and hair convinced Jack Spencer that she had been taking the usual means to restore him from his swoon, or rather from the shock of his fall. Upon his other side knelt a middle-aged woman, apparently the mother of this girl. Beyond were an old man with a venerable white beard, a sturdy lad of fifteen or thereabouts, and a little fair-haired girl of perhaps eleven or twelve.

Jack Spencer suddenly sat up. His mind was in a curious state. Yet, despite the shock of his terrible fall, his brain clung tenaciously to one central idea—that which had impelled the adventure.

'By Jove!' he exclaimed, 'it must be the Emerton family. Am I right?'

His revival had been so sudden, the odd way in which he put his query so unexpected, that the faces of his hearers turned with one accord from an intense, an almost rueful, gravity to instant cheerfulness. They all beamed with delight; the girls and the lad broke into downright laughter.

'You've hit it first shot, sir,' said the lad instantly. 'We are the Emerton family.'

'I got your letter,' went on Jack stoutly—'that sent by the violet stork; and here I am in response.'

This time the whole family party broke into a ripple of laughter, and Spencer himself, realising the absurdity of the situation, laughed with them. He tried to raise his left arm to the inside pocket of his coat. The member hung limply and refused to do his bidding.

'Hullo!' he said. 'Broken, is it? Well, it's lucky it's no worse. That was a dickens of a fall. I can't present my letter of credentials; but I have it all right.' He patted his coat-breast with his right hand. 'And which is Mary Emerton?' he went on.

'I am,' replied the girl near him, a warm flush of colour rising to her smooth cheeks.

For a long moment Jack looked into her comely face, and especially into her clear blue eyes. 'I thought so,' he said. 'And the postscript on the back of the letter was written by this lady,' he added, bending his head towards the elder woman.

'Yes,' responded the girl. 'Mother wrote that.'

'Well, I'm pretty right now,' pursued the young man. 'Please help me up and we'll see what's to be done.'

The girl sprang up, and getting behind him and stooping, put a strong arm beneath his right shoulder; then, with the boy pulling at his right hand, they got him on his feet.

'By-the-bye,' went on Spencer, 'where are the infernal Hottentots?'

The old man replied. 'They've decamped,' he said, 'after firing at you. I'm afraid there is more trouble brewing. They can't well hurt us in here—at all events for a day or two. We are hermetically sealed at the entrance by which we were thrust into this place, and no living man but yourself would have attempted to descend that terrible cliff. My son tried to climb by that path four years ago. He fell and met his death. We have no firearms, and in case of an attack we are practically defenceless. However, no one can harm us for the present. Come to the house and have some food, Mr'—— He paused for the name.

'Spencer—Jack Spencer,' responded the young man quickly.

'Mr Spencer,' continued the old gentleman, 'and then we will see what we can do towards setting that broken arm for you. Thank God, your injuries are no worse! Thank God, too, that He has heard our long prayers, and has brought some assuagement of

our sorrows in this lonely place—some faint possibility of escape from this prison.'

They walked together to the cottage, and there—Jack's arm having been first set and deftly put into rude splints and bandaged by Mrs Emerton and her daughter—they all sat down to breakfast, and thereafter to a long account of the mystery of the Emertons' imprisonment.

FACTORY-WORKERS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

By Priscilla E. Moulder.

> Honour and shame from no condition rise;
> Act well your part, there all the honour lies.
> —Pope.

NOT so very many years ago factory-workers were looked upon by the 'unco guid' as being a race of people quite outside the ranks of respectable society; and although in 1904, thanks to the spread of education, this feeling has in a great measure died out, yet still the old saying that 'one half-the world does not know how the other half lives' is as true now as ever it was.

In the early years of last century, when the industrial revolution had fully begun its work in this country, the general condition of those who had the misfortune to be employed in our large factories of Yorkshire and Lancashire was a disgrace to any civilised nation. One writer says: 'The proofs are not to be found in the pages of hysterical reformers or excited agitators, but in the dry official records of the blue-books containing the results of the parliamentary commissions of the early part of this century.' From the ill effects of this long season of degradation factory-workers have not yet fully recovered. The three great factory reformers, Robert Owen, Richard Oastler, and Lord Shaftesbury, did, indeed, engage in a noble work in helping on the recovery; and factory-workers of to-day cannot possibly realise what they owe to these men, who patiently endured abuse, ridicule, and contempt for the sake of those who could not help themselves.

The nature of the work which employs so many girls and young women may vary a little in detail, but is substantially the same in all textile factories. At the present day no child is allowed to commence work in a factory under twelve years of age. Many children begin their apprenticeship to factory-life as half-timers. At fourteen or fifteen they begin work as full-timers, and are found rendering assistance in various departments—namely, drawing, combing, carding, winding, twisting, mending, and weaving. There is not sufficient space in this short article to go into details concerning the various operations necessary to transform wool as it comes from the sheep's back into ladies' dresses and gentlemen's suits; but the mode of life peculiar to factory-workers will no doubt be more interesting to the general reader than a minute description of complicated machinery.

The majority of those employed in textile factories commence the day's work at six o'clock both summer and winter, and leave off at half-past five at night. Half-an-hour is allowed for breakfast, and an hour for dinner; making, after deducting these meal-hours, a working day of ten hours. On Saturdays work is stopped for the day at twelve in all textile factories; so that, with five and a half hours for Saturday, and ten hours for the other five days, this makes a full working week of fifty-five and a half hours, the limit allowed by law. It will be easily understood that the present working conditions show a striking contrast to the days when Mrs Browning wrote her pathetic poem, 'The Cry of the Children,' days when boys and girls of tender years were worked twelve, fourteen, and even sixteen hours a day.

Those factory-workers who are fortunate enough to live near their work can go home to their meals; but a large proportion always come from a distance, and of course are obliged to take their meals inside the factory. Tea is made on the premises, and sold to the 'hands' at a halfpenny per pint. Factory-tea is not noted either for its quality or flavour, and so it happens that a large percentage of the workers prefer to bring their own tea ready made, and then warm it at the factory. Eatables are brought in tin boxes or baskets, and can also be warmed if necessary. Taking meals in a factory is not at all productive of a healthy appetite. The atmosphere is stuffy, the temperature in some departments very high, and tea for breakfast, tea for dinner, and tea when they return home at night, accompanied by new bread or pastry, is too often the usual week-day diet of factory-workers.

The weaving department in a large factory presents a sight unique in its way. Picture to yourself, if you can, a large room on the ground-floor, well lighted from the top, and containing perhaps five or six hundred looms. Naturally, the noise made is simply terrific. The thud of the great engines, the rattle of the looms, the constant click of the shuttles as they fly to and fro, all combine to render ordinary speech impossible. A stranger on passing through a weaving-shed for the first time can hear the noise for hours afterwards, and when the engines stop the sudden stillness seems unnatural.

During meal-times it is customary for the weavers to sit in groups of five or six, and sometimes more. When they have done eating they bring out some fancy-work, crochet or knitting; some will read aloud from a sensational novel or a touching

continued love-story in a weekly paper, some will begin an impromptu concert, while others will keep up an animated conversation about the doings of their neighbours. During a general election there is plenty of fun in a weaving-shed. On such occasions weavers are keen politicians, and will decorate their looms with blue paper for the Tories, yellow for the Liberals, and red and white for the Labour Party. When the news of the relief of Mafeking was flashed all over the land, weavers were not behindhand in showing their pleasure at the brave deeds of their countrymen, and the weaving-sheds in most of the factories were decorated right royally for the occasion.

In the majority of factories the weavers far outnumber the rest of the 'hands.' They literally rule the roast in factory circles, and consequently think no small beans of themselves. It was to a deputation of weavers that old Sir Titus Salt is reported to have said, 'Ye lassies might be ta'en for duchesses if ye'd nobbut hod yer tongues.' But George MacDonald's words are equally true: 'There are common ladies and there are rare ladies; the former may be countesses, the latter may be peasants;' and 'rare ladies' are not unknown even in a factory.

The mending department is perhaps the nicest work in a textile factory, and consists in mending the cloth-pieces after they leave the looms, sewing broken ends in, picking the burrs out, and removing other flaws. Of course the work requires strong eyesight and quick use of the needle; but there is no machinery to clean, no nasty smells of oil or tallow, and so a 'mender' is looked upon as belonging to the aristocracy of factory circles.

His Majesty's Inspector of Factories has no stated seasons for paying his visits; he pops in at any time, and generally when least expected. There are now lady inspectors for factories and workshops, and they are spoken of as doing much good for their own sex in the shape of better sanitary arrangements.

In the matter of amusements factory-workers are not hard to suit. They can never be truthfully accused of having that chronic dislike to 'pleasurin' days' which characterised that worthy lady Mrs Poyser. The amusements chiefly patronised by factory operatives are dancing, theatre-going, fancy-work, the reading of light literature, and what is known in factory circles as 'tripping'—that is, going for a day's or half a day's excursion into the country or to the seaside. As may be readily imagined, the reading portion of a factory community is not a large one, and the reading indulged in is neither very varied nor very deep. Some girls are assiduous devourers of weekly papers of the novelette type, but comparatively few take advantage of the free libraries. Those who do so take a delight in reading the books of Mrs Henry Wood, Annie S. Swan, Miss Braddon, Miss Worboise, Miss Carey, Charlotte M. Yonge, Mrs Craik, Silas K. Hocking, Miss Alcott, and E. P. Roe. Theatres are fairly well attended throughout the year, and during the pantomime season they are crowded with factory-workers of both sexes. Then there are the Christmas parties at home or at friends' houses, and the various entertainments in connection with church or chapel bazaars, sales of work, and even 'At Homes.' Every winter, too, there is the usual throng of mesmeric and thought-reading professors, travelling minstrel troupes, and popular concerts for the people.

As summer approaches, most factory-workers have their evenings out, as well as Saturday afternoons. They may be seen in the public parks on band-nights among the crowds of fashionably dressed promenaders, or in some secluded paths with their sweethearts. Then come the annual holidays: generally two days at Easter, the same at Whitsuntide, one day at Christmas, and one or more on the occasion of the local fair. In accordance with the Factory Acts, six whole days must be given as holidays during the year; as many more as the employers choose, but no less. Summer and early autumn is the time for excursions. There are pleasure-parties organised to go somewhere or other every Saturday, mostly in connection with the different places of worship. Trips are then the order of the day; there are choir-trips, Band of Hope trips, teachers' trips, and scholars' trips.

As regards dress, factory-workers are never behindhand. They never dream of asking themselves the question, 'Should sensible women follow the fashions?' They simply follow them without a murmur. The motto of factory-workers is, 'Better be out of the world than out of the fashion;' and certainly those who know them best will testify that they possess the courage of their convictions in this respect at least. There are those who will spend as much as a guinea on one hat for a summer. Jewellery is always more or less in evidence, and is displayed indiscriminately at any time of the year. Sundays in spring and early summer are utilised as the occasions on which to air the new clothes for the public benefit. Then, indeed, factory-workers may be seen in all the glory of their new war-paint. And now, just glance at the striking contrast. One day in the week you may see them resplendent in the very latest fashion, and it is utterly impossible to tell whether they are factory-workers or the members of some severely respectable middle-class family. Then go into the streets at a quarter to six on the following morning, and you will see the same girls trudging cheerfully to their work. Strong iron-shod clogs have taken the place of delicate kid boots; mill-skirts and thick shawls over their heads are worn instead of costumes and fashionable hats. What a transformation!

In factory circles any one who does not speak in the dialect of the district, but uses 'English undefiled,' is said to 'talk fine.' Naturally, it does sometimes happen that there are occasions when factory-girls wish to 'talk fine,' and the result is often amusing. They are very much like that

much-talked-of Irish lady of whom it was said 'she never opened her mouth without putting her foot in it.' To the majority of southerners the various dialects of the northern counties sound like so much Dutch. An amusing story is told of a Yorkshire family who went to live in London fresh from a small village where the genuine Doric language flourished in all its splendour. The father of the family soon had occasion to buy a pair of boots for one of the children, which were to have pink heels, pointed toes, and cropped straps for clasps. And this is the way he asked for them: 'I pray ye, noo, han ye getten ony neatly fettled shoon, pointed toen, pinked at heel, and strops crapped for claspses?' 'Sir,' answered the shoemaker, 'what's that you say?' 'Why, I pray ye, noo'—— and he repeated the question as before. 'The family who speak French,' said the polite shoemaker, 'live next door.'

It is no doubt true that even to-day factory-workers are still looked askance at by those who pride themselves on their ultra-refinement. To such as these the everyday language of factory-workers will sound shocking, and their general behaviour appear coarse and vulgar, but it is not so in reality; and, moreover, it is very unfair to judge the lives of factory-workers from the standpoint of a refined and cultured lady. True, they have not that softness of speech or polish of manner which is said to be possessed by Londoners; but they have plenty of grit and backbone in their characters. Perhaps they do often err on the side of brusque, not to say blunt, language to strangers; and they do not always know where to draw the line between servility (a quality detested by north-country people) and common politeness. To an outsider the ordinary speech of factory-workers will sound terribly vulgar, but the girls mean nothing by it; to them it is nothing more than their everyday mode of speech. As to their behaviour being rough and boisterous—well, it is only natural that young people, after being shut up for ten hours in a stuffy factory engaged in monotonous labour, should find an outlet for pent-up spirits in loud laughter and language the reverse of subdued. James Russell Lowell somewhere says: 'Human nature has a much greater genius for sameness than it has for originality;' and it is quite within the range of possibility that if those higher in the social scale could change places with factory-workers they would soon develop the same characteristics of speech and manner.

That factory life has its drawbacks and disadvantages cannot be denied; but what is true of other phases of life is true also of factory life: 'one thing is set over against another;' and, compared with the lot of some poor souls, the lives of ordinary factory-workers are peaceful and pleasant. When a factory-lass marries her mechanic or overlooker, with his twenty-eight or thirty shillings a week, she feels quite as proud as Lady So-and-so can possibly do when she marries her lord with his rent-roll of a few thousands.

To those who may consider this picture of factory life and work commonplace, the words of George Eliot will perhaps not be out of place: 'In this world there are so many of these common, coarse people, who have no picturesque, sentimental wretchedness! It is so needful we should remember their existence, else we may happen to leave them quite out of our religion and philosophy, and frame lofty theories which only fit a world of extremes.' At any rate, as far as personal experience goes, I have always found that in the humble lives of factory-workers

> Two things stand like stone:
> Kindness in another's trouble,
> Courage in our own.

THE ROMANCE OF OLD-BOOK COLLECTING.

By Clive Holland.

THE recent discovery of the manuscript of the first book of Milton's *Paradise Lost* has drawn attention to the romance which so often attaches to old manuscripts and books. Although it is true that nowadays 'finds' are becoming more and more rare, there is still a sufficient element of romance attaching to the old-book trade to endue it with a great amount of interest and even excitement. Nowhere, probably, are 'finds' more likely to be met with than in the famous second-hand book-market of the Paris quays or in the book-shops of Amsterdam.

The second-hand bookstalls of London have long ago become so systematically and thoroughly scoured that 'finds' in them are of very rare occurrence.

Many have probably heard of the wonderful Chaucer which was discovered a few years ago in a lumber-room of a Warwickshire manor-house, and only escaped burning by use as fire-lighting material because the servant happened to show some of the quaint initial letters to the butler, who reported the discovery to his master. Had the book been burned the fortunate owner of it would have been seven hundred pounds poorer.

Quite recently too, in a Breton farm, a travelling artist unearthed a beautifully illuminated missal on vellum (bereft of its covers, it is true), which he purchased from its peasant-owner for a matter of twenty or thirty francs, and on his return to Paris sold it to one of the largest dealers for a thousand times as much; one interesting feature of this volume being the introduction of the portrait of Joan of Arc in one of the initial letters. Like many other price-

less *objets d'art*, it found its way across the Atlantic, the American purchaser paying something like one thousand five hundred pounds for its possession.

Less than twenty years ago a 'find' of a monkish illuminated breviary took place in the second-hand book-shop of a west of England town. The business had recently changed hands, and the new proprietor knew very little of the trade he had adopted. On attending a sale at a neighbouring mansion, and purchasing an odd lot of books, he scarcely took the trouble to examine the volumes, with the result that a shabby old black-letter book was placed in the sixpenny box by his assistant, where it lay for days before a passing and well-known bibliophile spotted it, and with fear and trembling at the value of his discovery, tendered the sixpence in payment. When he got home he was enraptured to find that the book he thought might be worth at least a five-pound note was worth twenty-five times as much.

In the book-boxes of the open-air market on the quays by the Seine bargains may yet be found, for it is only the other day that a first edition of one of the rarest of Swinburne's works was picked up for the infinitesimal sum of thirty centimes, and was afterwards sold to a book-collector for something like a hundred times as much. About a dozen years ago a volume of one of the rarest Elizabethan poets was picked up at this same spot for half-a-franc, and was afterwards sold in London for upwards of one hundred and twenty pounds.

The wonder is that, with the numbers of persons who daily inspect the contents of the book-boxes which are fastened to the parapets of the Quai de Conti and Quai Voltaire, such treasures should for a moment escape the eye of a collector. But we imagine, from conversations we have had at various times with the proprietors of these book-boxes, that few of the curious who turn over the contents possess much knowledge of the value of out-of-the-way volumes; and, of course, when the latter happen to be in a foreign language their ignorance on this point is still greater and more excusable.

Not many months ago the owner of a series of these book-boxes purchased an odd lot of volumes turned out of the lumber-room in one of the old houses, once a nobleman's palace, situated in a narrow street off Île de la Cité. Amongst the miscellaneous collection—which included copies of Voltaire's works and Montaigne's—were several valuable English books of the reign of Henry VII. and (greater than all these) an imperfect but otherwise well-preserved Caxton. This thick, clumsy-looking volume, bereft of one of its covers and minus several pages, had remained for quite a long time in the fifty-centime box of its ignorant purchaser. One day an English undergraduate, whose hobby lay in the direction of early-printed books, happened to be spending a few days in Paris; he saw the book while turning over a multitude of others, and recognised that it was a Caxton. He acquired it at the remarkably low figure of fourpence three-farthings, and carried it back with him to London. The volume, rebound in ancient style, with what remained of the original cover forming a portion of the binding, is now one of his most treasured possessions. It is difficult to say what its precise value may be, but it is scarcely likely to be less than several hundred pounds—a 'find' of which the owner has every reason to be proud.

But it is not, of course, in Paris alone that such discoveries are occasionally made. In an old second-hand dealer's shop in one of the larger towns of the Potteries district quite recently an early printed book was discovered by a passing and cycling bibliophile, which, purchased for a few pence, proved to be worth many thousand times as much; it was afterwards sold in one of the London auction-rooms to an American millionaire, who paid a truly remarkable sum for the privilege of taking the book across the Atlantic and placing it in one of the libraries of Pennsylvania.

In Bristol, too, a copy of that very rare book *Poems by Two Brothers* (Alfred Tennyson) was recently discovered by a collector, who gave sixpence for it, and is now congratulating himself on possessing a treasure which is scarcely likely to prove of less value at any future time.

In the second-hand book-shops of Berlin not a few valuable 'finds' are occasionally picked up, though, to do him credit, the Berlin second-hand bookseller appears to be by no means the least intelligent of his class, but rather the reverse; and it is only in English books that bargains are frequently found. His knowledge of early Continental books and of illuminated missals is such that he seldom makes any mistake in the value he puts upon them.

But in some few of the smaller curiosity-shops in the obscurer streets of Berlin bargains may sometimes be found, as witness the purchase of a Venetian illuminated manuscript of the fourteenth century in 1894 by an English tourist of artistic taste, which, when brought to England, was valued by a well-known authority at four hundred and fifty guineas; this manuscript having cost the fortunate finder less than as many pence.

It is probable that systematic search through the cottages and houses of Touraine would better reward the bibliophile than any other district in Europe. Out of the abbeys of Touraine must have come many hundreds, if not thousands, of valuable illuminated manuscript books; and many of these may still remain to find their way ultimately into well-known collections and public libraries and museums.

Not so many years ago a magnificent illuminated copy of *A Book of the Hours* was discovered in a little hamlet of this ancient province; it is now separated from its old home by some thousands of miles of sea, having been acquired by an American collector for the enormous sum of two thousand five hundred guineas. What the finder paid the peasant in whose ancient farmhouse (once a portion of an abbey) the almost priceless treasure was found did not transpire; but it is scarcely likely that the

sum paid was as many sous as the ultimate purchaser paid guineas.

Also in this district, in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, were discovered portions of a magnificent work on vellum—incomplete, it is true, but still of immense value. The circumstance of this discovery was a very curious one.

A tourist—or rather perhaps we should say a traveller—came to the village, and finding the one or two spare beds of the inn already occupied, sought shelter for the night in a neighbouring cottage. He was shown into a small attic-room, lit by a window of four smallish panes. He did not particularly notice the window that night; but, waking soon after dawn the next morning, he was astonished to see what he took to be stained glass in the window. Rising to examine this, he speedily discovered that the supposed stained glass, through which the light of day was somewhat faintly passing, was in reality the illuminated vellum pages of some ancient book. Although not a collector, the traveller, one Jean Goulet, was a man of some education, and at once recognised that these pages must have formed a portion of an interesting, if not valuable, Latin manuscript. On descending for breakfast and making an inquiry regarding it, his hostess explained that he was correct, and that the 'paper' with which they had sought to mend the cracked panes and replace the broken ones had formed a portion of a book which her father had found in a neighbouring château some thirty years previously, at the time of the French Revolution.

The peasant woman did not evince any great interest in the matter, but admitted the rest of the book was somewhere. After considerable pressure put upon her by her guest, a search was made for it, and it was discovered in a little cupboard near the fireplace. An attempt had evidently been made to light the fire with some of the pages, for several charred and shrivelled ones were still in the cupboard. In the end the remaining leaves—some ninety in number—of this most interesting and beautiful book were acquired by the traveller for a few francs. But nothing would persuade the peasant woman to permit the four or five leaves which had been used for the mending of the window to be taken away! 'No,' said she; 'we've no more glass, and they serve their purpose well enough for us.'

Scores of interesting finds might be quoted; but one which occurred in the Midlands not more than four or five years ago must suffice.

In a manor-house not far from Derby some workmen were employed in the enlargement of one of the upper rooms, and after breaking into what was supposed to be a solid wall, they were very much surprised to find the crowbars crash into space. A few minutes sufficed to open up a gap sufficiently large to admit one of their number, and much to the man's astonishment, when pushing his head through the breach in the wall thus formed, he discovered that below him lay quite a considerable chamber, unknown at least to any of the then occupiers of the house. The little room or 'priest's hole' thus discovered was partly above and partly below the floor-level of the room in which the workmen stood. About nine feet in height and perhaps five feet six in length, the chamber thus disclosed was of sufficient size to have accommodated without discomfort one or two people. Its sole contents at the time of the sudden breaking into it were a wooden platter of Elizabethan make, a wooden fork, a few bones, and a little silver crucifix placed on a narrow shelf, on which also was an illustrated manuscript volume which dated from the early part of the fifteenth century. Fortunately the owner of the house came upon the scene soon after the workmen had discovered the little chamber, and the book and crucifix were promptly seized by him; otherwise it is more than possible that the former might have been considerably damaged at the hands of its discoverers. In a well-known saleroom this same little volume eventually brought, under the hammer, a sum of upwards of three hundred and fifty pounds. A lucky find indeed for the owner of the house!

Though such finds are by no means common nowadays, those who know the subject of the romance of books and the extraordinary places in which early printed and beautifully illuminated works are frequently found, are agreed that many inestimable treasures must still lie concealed in the manor-houses and cottages of various countries, in which examples of the beautiful work of the monks of long ago are even nowadays occasionally discovered.

AT A BOOKSTALL.

'All this lot sixpence' ran the legend trite
Upon the shelf;
Tales, poems, sermons, here's a medley quite.
Pray, help yourself.

Here 'twas I found it, packed betwixt a pair
Of dog-eared Scotts;
The little book with the inscription rare
And mildew spots.

'*The Seasons*, by J. Thomson,' was the way
The title read.
Betwixt the faded gilt-edged pages lay
A marker red.

And on the fly-leaf, in a writing stiff,
This message ran:
'To her I love. To win her pardon, if
Forgive she can.'

Was she his wife, his sweetheart? Did he plead
To maid half-won?
And did she give her pardon? Or, indeed,
What had he done?

Did she refuse his gift, or give it grace?
We may not know;
But here upon this shelf it holds a place
Not fit. And so

Home let me take it; though of Thomson I
Think less than *nil*;
Yet, for it speaks a love of days gone by,
Take it I will.

F. W. Saunderson.

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WOODCOCK.

By Lady Napier of Magdala.

IT was winter-time at Glenmore; and according to Duncan the gamekeeper, a good few woodcock were in; and golden plover had also been heard calling by the shepherd as he walked through the dusk to his home the previous evening. 'But they brutes will be away now; they never bide long,' said Duncan sadly.

So it was settled that there should be a day at the woodcock, and an early start the following morning. Breakfast was ordered, and the long-suffering glass anxiously tapped the last thing at night, but as it showed no signs of moving, our friends retired full of pleasing anticipations for the morrow.

Stars were still shining in at the windows as he and she poured out their coffee and blinked at the candles on the breakfast-table; but a mysterious light was showing in the east, throwing up the shoulder of Ben Lo in velvet shadow.

Sketching-bag, cartridge-bag, lunch, wraps—all the delightful impedimenta, in short, for a day out—were at last packed into the trap, and the dear little ponies, shaking their wise heads and jingling their bells, started off full trot, their hoofs ringing out in the stillness of the frosty morning air.

The loch was like a mirror, reflecting the great hills in sombrest tones. A perfect chorus of shore-birds, great and small, greeted the new-born day—plover, curlew, dottrel, and a host of others. The fussy redshanks flew shrieking from the rocks as they drove along, adding to the tumult, and causing more than one sly old seal, who had come up the loch from his home in an outlying island, seeking what he might devour in the way of stray salmon, to sink cautiously out of sight, his snub nose only above the surface, safe and comfortable according to his ideas of safety and comfort.

A lovely drive, truly; and now the sun was gilding the stems of oak and birch, and a gentle breeze was scattering myriads of diamonds on the still surface of the loch. The road turned away from the shore. A shapeless mass away on the hillside, showing up against the sky, turned out to be Duncan the gillie, the dogs, and game-bags; and so the trap was quickly deserted and the business of the day begun.

The dogs, shrieking, slobbering, and trembling with eagerness, hurled themselves against their master and mistress when 'lowsed,' as Duncan called it, then plunged madly into the tempting coverts of hazel, alder, and birch which crept down the hillside to the shore, the sportsman and his wife keeping on the outskirts, or walking through the fringe of the little wood, many being the springs and soft green spots of loveliest moss carefully to be avoided as traps for the unwary.

The air was delicious and frosty; the little breeze had died away; the sun shone through a luminous veil and wreaths of mist, gray, rose, gold, and silver. Exquisite tones of purple, cobalt, and tender grays showed up the modellings of mountain and distance.

'A pleasure to be alive!' said they two.

So the woodcock seemed to think. There were none to be seen. An old owl flitted softly forth from the most promising covert, and escaped with his life, endangered for one perilous moment as he blundered forth from the thicket. A little flat was crossed, and a few snipe found their way into the limp game-bag; but of woodcock there were none. They looked blankly at each other. Duncan scratched his head and muttered in Gaelic. 'They will be lying out on the hull,' he said.

And so they were. On one sunny, heathery slope nine were picked up, and many others on other bare and treeless ground. Smiles wreathed all faces, and the word 'Lunch' was passed around. A beautiful spring was found, the dogs being roughly cuffed out of it by the gillie. Sandwiches were unpacked from delicate white papers. Proper sandwiches: careful slices of game and meat, freed from every *soupçon* of skin, gristle, and fat; some passed carefully through a mincing-machine, well seasoned, and spread on slices of stale loaf, with immaculate

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butter, a pinch of mustard, and cress or strip of whitest lettuce-leaf. A feast for the gods; and what nectar could compare with the sparkling, ice-cold spring-water?

'Well, I suppose we had better be moving,' said the hunting animal at length.

'I think I will stay here and sketch,' said his spouse; 'it is so warm in the sun. I shall be quite comfortable and happy, and I suppose you will come back here. You will find me on the shore.'

So they parted, an immense blue cloud from his pipe staining the air. The tide was far out, the great plain of the sea stretching away white and still to the horizon, where lay pale islands with broken outlines. The cry of a great northern diver rang sadly out in the stillness, and the curlews and shore-birds kept up a plaintive wailing and muttering in the little sandy creeks and bays. The great masses of tangle waved in the tide, and made splendid colour against the white sea and black rocks; and there was a delicious salt-fresh smell in the air.

An old crone, or *cailleach*, as she would have called herself in her native Gaelic, groped with a broken shearing-hook among the holes in the rocks for crabs, or perchance a stray lobster or conger eel. She greeted our friend in Gaelic, and remarked on the 'prettiness' of the day in her pathetic old voice, with its minor key, the key to which this dear land and all that belongs to it is set.

'It is sad to be old, it is sad to be poor; it is sadder still to be old and poor,' said one of the best men of his or of any other generation, Field-Marshal the late Lord Napier of Magdala, in answer to the remonstrance of a hard-headed friend; he having just bestowed half-a-crown on an utterly disreputable old hag who had begged of him in the street.

'It is surely better, however, to be old and poor here than in Glasgow or London, or any other town,' thought our friend, as the gentle words of the tender-hearted, splendid old soldier flashed through her mind, as she watched the bent form among the rocks, on its desultory search for shellfish, pausing ever and anon to rest and gaze with dim old eyes over the sea away to the pale islands.

Though so late in the year, it was not too cold for sketching, and two blissful hours slipped away, spent in the most enchanting and engrossing of all work, before a shot fired at no great distance betokened that the end of that pleasant day was at hand. A few last fond touches to the canvas, a hurried scraping of the palette, a huddling of bag and brushes into the recesses of the dear but dirty old bag, a happy meeting, and a not quite unwelcome subsiding among the cushions of the 'machine' by the two.

The Norwegians stamped and jingled, full of greedy delight and knowledge that their velvet muzzles were pointed mangerwards, and off they went full trot, the moon slowly climbing over the shoulder of Ben Lo, the evening star thrusting a silver spear into the placid bosom of the loch as they trotted up the approach to Glenmore.

THE MYSTERY OF THE VIOLET STORK.

CHAPTER IV.—THE RESCUE.

PUT shortly, their explanation (so far as it went) was this. Five years before, the family—including James Stuart Emerton (son of the old gentleman, John Emerton), husband of Mrs Emerton and father of her three children, and the mainstay of the family—had quitted the Hantam district of Cape Colony, and were moving north of the Orange River into the country now known as Gordonia, then loosely termed Korannaland, where James Emerton had picked up a large tract of land and was going in for ranching and horse-breeding upon a considerable scale. They moved slowly, taking their stock with them, and carrying their goods, stores, and household gear in three wagons. Crossing the river at the ford called Zendling's Drift (the Ford of the Missionaries), they had trekked painfully along the north bank of the Orange until the terrible lack of water, the heat, and the burning sands of this inhospitable region began to make serious inroads upon their flocks, herds, and trek-oxen. For more than fifty miles it was impossible, so hemmed in was the river by an impenetrable wall of wild and desolate mountains, to approach its course and procure water. In despair, hearing of the Hottentot kraal and of a good water-supply, they trekked through the grim pass and found themselves in the smiling valley of Nou-ap's kraal. Here they were well received; their flocks and herds were conducted to water; their troubles were apparently at an end. That night their native servants, enticed down to a feast and honey-beer drinking at the Hottentots' village, were shot down or speared to a man, their own encampment was surrounded, and there was nothing for it but to surrender themselves into the hands of their adversaries. At first they feared nothing but a cold-blooded massacre such as had overtaken their servants. It became presently manifest that a milder fate was in store for them. On the morrow they were taken along a deep and narrow ravine, down which flowed a stream of water, and thence led, or rather driven, through a kind of tunnel in the mountain wall, whence, after walking some fifty feet, they emerged into the valley of their imprisonment.

For two days and nights, while their captors had

supplied them from their own wagons with various impedimenta that seemed to them necessary for their captivity—for such, it was made clear to them, it was meant to be—the exit from this tunnel had been jealously guarded. At the end of that time the entrance was most carefully closed by a huge barrier of rock-boulders, stones, and earth. This barrier was the work of some days, and upon it the captives found it impossible to make any impression whatever from the inward side. They were now in what time and discovery proved to them to be in reality a very complete prison. First they set themselves to the building of a shelter; and after the labours of a month they had erected the cottage in which Jack Spencer now found them. The Hottentots had supplied them with some of their household furniture and stores, clothing, a plough and other implements, a fair amount of seed-corn, and enough grain and Boer-meal to last them until the harvest should come round, as well as a flock of goats and another of sheep. No sooner was the house completed than they set to work to plough land and sow wheat, mealies, potatoes, and some vegetable seeds which they had brought with them. These had for the most part prospered well, and thenceforth, with the natural increase of their sheep and goats, and such game as they could capture, there had been no fear of want before their eyes.

Two vine-stocks which had been handed over to them had flourished exceedingly, and from these they had plenty of fruit in season, from a portion of which they dried their own raisins. The children's education had by no means been neglected. They had among their treasures a box of books, which proved of inestimable comfort to them. Writing and arithmetic were taught them by their mother with a pointed stick on a fair stretch of sand, and some attempt at drawing had been made in the same way. No weapons, save knives and forks and a hatchet or two, had been allowed them; but Fred Emerton, the lad, had, taught by his father, learnt to fashion bows and arrows, and with these and various methods of snaring, a good deal of food —small antelopes, partridges, guinea-fowl, doves, and pigeons—was secured.

Upon the whole, their life had not been an altogether unhappy one, save for the natural anxiety as to their future and the knowledge that they were in truth prisoners in their valley. One sad portion of the strange narrative had to be touched upon; it was told by Mrs Emerton in a low voice and amid the tears of her children. Her husband, searching everywhere for some means of escaping from their prison valley, had long noted the Klipspringers' Path, and had in the second year of their confinement essayed the climb. When more than half-way up the cliff he had slipped, and, falling on to some rocks at the bottom of the valley, had met his death. His remains lay buried near the house. Undeterred by the fate of his father, of which he had been the only witness, Fred Emerton, as he grew older, longed to make the attempt at escape himself. His mother, however, saw too many risks before her child, even if he had surmounted that terrible cliff, to let him do so. The awful fate of her husband was ever before her mind, and she had obtained the lad's promise not to attempt the climb. Such, greatly condensed, was the narrative to which Jack Spencer listened that morning.

'And now,' said he at the conclusion of Mrs Emerton's tale, 'why, in the name of fortune, have these people kept you imprisoned all these years?'

'That,' she replied, 'is to this hour an absolute mystery to us. Mr Emerton here, my dear husband, when he was alive, and I have time after time tried to solve the problem. We have always been baffled. We have no more idea at this moment why we are kept here than you have yourself.'

'It is a strange thing,' said Spencer musingly—'a very strange thing.—And how'—he turned to the girl as he spoke—'did you get your message away from the valley?'

'Oh,' she answered, a sunny smile rippling over her face, 'we had some trouble about that. I first thought of it, and Fred and I at once put our wits to work. We were always fond of pets, and by degrees, by catching young birds, we got quite an aviary together. You shall see it when you go out. Suddenly it came into my mind one day, a year or two ago, that we might make use of some of these birds to send messages telling of our imprisonment and begging for help. We got the idea, of course, from carrier-pigeons, of which I had read before we trekked to these parts. Now, you must remember that I was a girl of fourteen when we first came here. First of all we thought of doves and pigeons, of which there are any number always about. These, however, never seemed to leave the valley, so they would be useless. Then we tried emerald cuckoos, which are birds of passage, and which alight here occasionally. Fred managed to snare a couple, and by these we sent messages. We had a fair amount of paper taken from the fly-leaves of our books, but we had no ink. A pen was easily made from a wild-goose quill, and for ink Fred supplied some blood whenever I wanted it.'

'I'm the family hunter and butcher, sir,' broke in Fred, 'and I had no trouble about that.'

'Well,' pursued the girl, 'we sent messages by these two emerald cuckoos. Mother knew that they go south, and that they are often shot in the Colony for their lovely plumage. We had great hopes of them; but, alas! nothing ever turned up from that quarter. We have tried wild-geese—the Egyptian geese (*berg gans*, as the Boers call them)—which build here occasionally, snared sand-pipers, and other birds. Two years ago Fred took the young of a pair of violet storks which nested upon a rock-ledge at the far end of the kloof. Two of these survived and became splendid birds, and by each we sent a message. They evidently wanted to fly at the beginning of the dry season, and we let them go.'

'Well,' interrupted Jack, 'I was a lucky chap to come across one of these two birds. It was the purest fluke in the world that I turned out of camp one evening to shoot a few duck, and then up got your violet stork. How far up-country do you think it was that I shot him?'

The girl had grown interested in the narrative of her experiences. A pretty flush had risen to her cheeks. She clasped and unclasped her hands, which, sunburnt as they were, as Jack had already noticed, were soft and very shapely. 'How can one tell?' she exclaimed, looking at him eagerly. 'We don't even know where you came from. You fell into our valley as if from another planet.'

'Well, it was a long way off where I shot that stork and found your message. Right away in the Bamangwato Country, North Bechuanaland, at least six hundred miles north-east, as I reckon. At first we thought it was some practical joke—your letter, I mean—a fairy-tale devised by some person with a good deal of spare time and very little brains. And yet, as I thought it out, it came into my mind that there was something in it, that some white people were in trouble, and so here I am.'

'God bless you for your kind heart, and the trouble you have taken, and all the various dangers you have gone through!' ejaculated Mrs Emerton.

'Yes, God bless you indeed!' repeated the girl, looking at him with tear-dimmed eyes.

There was something very comforting to Jack Spencer, somehow, in these few words, and especially in those uttered by the girl. His present aches and pains, the remembrance of his toils and troubles on the way thither, all seemed to vanish under the spell of the kind glances and the beautiful eyes of this fair prisoner of the wilderness. His heart swelled within him; he felt that here indeed his labours had been already more than well repaid.

Since he quitted the summit of the cliff and essayed the descent, the young Englishman's attention had been so much distracted by his fall, his strange surroundings, and his new-found friends that he had almost clean forgotten his comrade and the dangers that might threaten their outspan in the Hottentots' valley. What, too, had become of Vleermuis? Had he been slain by the men who had subsequently fired upon himself as he made his perilous climb downwards? He expressed these thoughts to the Emertons. Here the old gentleman, who hitherto had left most of the conversation to the nimble tongues of the ladies, put in his word.

'Mr Spencer,' he said, 'I have been thinking all this over. For the present you can do just nothing at all; nor, in fact, can any of us. I gather that your friend and servants are well armed, strongly encamped, and very much on their guard. They will now almost certainly be attacked. They have plenty of rifles. The Hottentots are not over well armed, and, as we believe, have no more than twelve or fourteen old muskets. If your people can manage to beat off the first attack, I think they will cow these people and perhaps drive them out of the district. The business of our rescue is, then, merely a question of time. We are all in the hands of God; He has preserved us, especially in your recent danger, wonderfully hitherto. We can but put our trust in Him yet a little further.'

'You are quite right, sir,' answered Spencer. 'We shall have, I am afraid, a very anxious time of it for the next few days. Here we are comparatively secure—for the present. If the Hottentots get the best of my people there is no knowing what may happen. I believe with you, however, that my comrade Ralph Brookfield and our men are quite capable of rendering a good account of 'Kabip and his scoundrels if—there is always that terrible *if*—they are not taken by surprise.' He rose from his seat somewhat unsteadily, his good-looking face wrung with an expression of pain. 'I had thought,' he said, 'that I should have been well enough to go outside and look round your little domain. I noted many interesting things as we came here: your menagerie, tame wild-ducks, tobacco lands, and so forth. But I find my fall has made me a good deal stiffer than I had reckoned upon. I think, Mr Emerton, if you'll let me, I'll lie down for a bit and try and get a nap.'

With every expression of sympathy, the young man was taken to old Mr Emerton's chamber and there carefully bestowed on a bed neatly made of timber and hide-thongs, and well covered with comfortable skin karosses. In a few minutes he was in a sound sleep, where for the present we may leave him.

Vleermuis, lying flat on the cliff-top watching the descent of his master, had been utterly unconscious of the peril dogging them from the rearward. He had, in fact, reckoned a good deal too much upon the unsuspicion of a naturally suspicious tribe. 'Kabip had, for various reasons of his own, sent his spies abroad upon the previous night. Tidings had been brought to him of the departure of one of the white men and his native servant from their camp; and taking with him a couple of his clan, they had followed the pair through the dim early morning with extraordinary precaution. Finding that the white man had passed up the kloof which led to the Klipspringers' Path, the Hottentot chief had little doubt of the object of the journey. He and his men were not in time to prevent the early part of Jack Spencer's descent; but, creeping up, they had espied Vleermuis lying at the edge of the precipice watching his master's fateful climb. Just at a crucial point the Koranna had raised himself upon his hands and knees, and at that moment 'Kabip and his men, now within fifty paces, had discharged their pieces at him.

'Kabip's bullet had struck Vleermuis in the fleshy part of the shoulder, by no means a dangerous wound; the others had missed clean. Snatching up his own rifle, but leaving his master's weapon lying on the cliff, Vleermuis turned and fled. Before the three Hottentots could reload their pieces he had darted

into some bush and was speeding at a break-neck run downhill in the direction of the camp. If the man had had a few moments for reflection he would probably—for he had plenty of pluck—have turned and stood his ground; but he was utterly taken by surprise, the odds were three to one, he was already hit, and his savage instincts prompted him to run for his life. Meanwhile the three Hottentots, reloading their guns, had rushed to a projecting angle of the precipice, whence they could gain a better view of the white man, and from there had fired three more shots at Spencer as he hung, like some gigantic spider, upon the face of the cliff. One of these shots, as we have seen—it was 'Kabip's—had hurled the unfortunate climber to the bottom of the valley, and the three natives, believing that their purpose had been achieved, and knowing that for the present they could do no more here, had set off at a rapid trot back to their valley, where, after rousing the whole fighting strength of his clan, 'Kabip set forth instantly to attack and destroy the intruders in their camp.

Vleermuis, flying madly down the kloofs and passes, had reached the outspan in safety. Breathless and bleeding, he had, so soon as he could gather speech, told Ralph Brookfield what had happened.

'And do you mean to say,' said Brookfield sternly, 'that you never fired a shot, and left your master to his fate?'

The Koranna stared shamefacedly at the ground.

'Baas,' he said at length in a husky voice, 'I was surprised. I could do nothing for Baas Spencer, who was half-way down the cliff. I lost my head and ran. I am not a coward. The Hottentots will be on us directly. I will show you that I can fight.'

Brookfield, with a heavy heart—for he knew in what dire peril his comrade must have been—at once set about preparations for a desperate defence. He knew it must be a fight to a finish. Perhaps, if he could sufficiently punish the assailants, he might yet save his friend. He and his men had their backs to the mountain; that was well. The strong half-moon fence of thorns in front of them was an obstacle difficult to storm. The wagons were already in defensive positions, side by side. These they converted into a sort of fort or keep, making them as impregnable as possible by piling up rocks and boulders against the wheels and in the spaces left open in front and rear. Earth and a few sacks of mealies and Kafir corn aided in making this inner defence practically impervious—when all were lying down—to the bullets and assagais of an attacking force. In little more than an hour the Hottentots would be upon them. Looking occasionally through his field-glass down the valley, Brookfield had noted the intense commotion which had followed what he knew must be the return of 'Kabip to the kraal. In a little while a band of Hottentots issued from the collection of huts and marched for the wagons. Brookfield counted forty-two men, of whom fifteen or sixteen were armed with guns.

For the defence of his camp he mustered, with himself, eight men, all of whom were well used to firearms. This number included Vleermuis's friend the Koranna, who had escaped from Nou-ap's kraal during the night, and had now definitely thrown in his lot with the white men. Safely entrenched as they were, armed with good breech-loading weapons, and each man having a reserve of two loaded muskets lying at his side, Brookfield—himself using a couple of good double-barrelled rifles—had no great anxiety as to the result. Still, numbers must tell if the Hottentots were able to break through the thorn fence and rush the wagons. The attack was made with wild yells. Three bold charges were attempted; seventeen Hottentots were hit, the majority of them fatally; 'Kabip himself was shot dead while actually hacking at the thorn fencing with a hatchet; and then, manifestly having had their fill of fighting, the remnant of the clan turned and fled down the valley. The defenders, rushing out in pursuit, followed them some way, hastening their flight with an occasional bullet. In all, twelve Hottentots were slain and seven wounded during the hour of fighting, for the attack and flight had lasted little more.

Brookfield returned to his camp, adjusted his defences, and then turned to the wounded men. By the time he had attended to their injuries, a messenger arrived from Nou-ap's kraal begging for peace. Most of the survivors of the besieging force had fled away over the mountains; the remnant of the tribe would submit themselves to the leniency of the conqueror. Brookfield, having left a guard of two of his men with the wagons, marched down the valley. Having ascertained that few able-bodied Hottentots were in the place, he at once collected the arms of the vanquished by a hut-to-hut visitation. His next step was to secure the chief of the clan. Ascertaining that Nou-ap still remained on the island—at the Spider's Ford, as the Hottentots called it—he sent across and had the old man brought to him. He came, a miserable and decrepit figure, bent with years, his scanty kinks of wool white as snow, his skin hanging loosely about his withered frame.

From the headman who had sued for peace, the Englishman now learnt how the captives had been immured within the valley. It was his next and instant care to free them. For two long days did the remaining Hottentots and Brookfield's own men toil at the task of removing the masses of rock and earth with which the mouth of the tunnel leading to the prisoners' kloof had been filled up. On the evening of the second day an entrance was effected, and the Emertons were released. They and Jack Spencer had heard the good tidings of rescue from Vleermuis, who, frantic with joy, had appeared at the top of the Klipspringers' Path, and attracted their attention. Then by means of a piece of raw-hide *riem*, to which was attached a stone and a

letter from Brookfield, the Koranna, with one prodigious hurl, had slung his tidings down to the floor of the valley.

It was a happy meeting indeed! That night, as they sat by a pleasant camp-fire after a sumptuous supper at the wagon-kraal, they exchanged narratives of the events of the last few days. Then Mrs Emerton retold briefly, for Brookfield's information, the story of their captivity.

'And now,' said Jack Spencer during the pause that ensued, 'I want to know the secret of all this extraordinary mystery. *Why* was this family held captive?'

'My baas!' here interrupted Vleermuis, who was holding the coffee-kettle, with which he had been replenishing the cups of the party, 'there is only one man who can tell you that. There he sits.' The Koranna as he spoke pointed to the figure of the old Hottentot chief Nou-ap, who, wrapped in his sheepskin kaross, sat huddling for warmth close up to another fire fifteen paces away. The old man, together with the Hottentot headman, who sat beside him, was now held as hostage in the white men's camp.

'Tell Narookas,' said Spencer to Vleermuis, 'to bring the villainous old dodderer over here, and let's see what we can get out of him.'

Narookas the headman did as he was bid, and presently the old fellow was brought tottering to the white people's fire and placed in the centre of a ring which they formed round him.

'Now, Vleermuis,' pursued Jack, 'you are installed interpreter. Tell Narookas that we want to know why this family were taken prisoners and held captive in the valley. We don't understand, and Nou-ap must now tell us.'

Narookas held some confabulation with the old man, who spoke to him in a small, quavering voice not strong enough to make itself heard by the audience seated around him.

Narookas, who spoke only Hottentot, rendered the old man's speech to Vleermuis, who, in turn, translated it into Cape Dutch, which was comprehended by all the audience. It was a strange, wild scene: the dark, velvety curtain of night overhead, pierced by the myriad diamond-points of stars; the cheerful fire, throwing its ruddy gleams upon the interested faces of the white folk; upon the aged Hottentot, whose ape-like, shrunken face just protruded from his sheepskin cloak; upon Narookas the Hottentot and Vleermuis the Koranna, yellow-faced, with dark eyes somewhat excited by their task. The pleasant, never-ceasing hum of the Orange River, hurrying along in its useless passage to the sea, rose always upon the ear, yet so subdued by distance as to lend no impediment to the proper hearing of the speakers' voices. Far down the valley twinkled redly the fires of the Hottentot kraal. The white folk gathered about the camp-fire never forgot that June night by the great river.

The old man murmured out his tale, which Vleermuis rendered thus:

'My masters and mistresses, Nou-ap says he is very old, so old that he was a big lad when the English first came and took the Cape from the Dutch.'

'That was in 1795,' interrupted Jack Spencer.

'His father,' pursued Vleermuis, 'was chief of the Gonaquas, a Hottentot clan which dwelt in those days towards the Fish River in Cape Colony, and had much land. As the white men moved east, the tribe dwindled; and Nou-ap, having succeeded his father in the chieftaincy, bethought himself of seeking a new country, where his people could hunt and he would be beyond reach of the Boers, whom he hated. He was also moved to this by the prophecy of a famous old medicine-man and soothsayer in his clan, who, when he was a lad, predicted that he should in his old age yet make the tribe strong and famous, as it had been in the years before the coming of the white men. This witch-doctor foretold that Nou-ap would twice move his people to a distant part of the country; that he would settle finally by a great river; and that when he had captured and kraaled a family of white people, thenceforth his clan should flourish, and their ancient fame and riches return to them. Twice had the tribe moved: first to the Zak River, then to the valley here. Yet never, till a little while back, had a white family come among them as the soothsayer had predicted. Nou-ap's grandson 'Kabip was, like himself, ambitious, and believed in the future glory of the clan. At last one day came the white family into this valley. 'Kabip flew to his grandfather. They put their heads together, and having slain the white people's servants, kraaled them in the big valley and built up the entrance with rocks and stones. Here is the end of the tale. Nou-ap sees to-day that he was deceived. He has followed a false dream. The soothsayer lied to them. His grandson 'Kabip, the hope of the tribe, is dead; Nou-ap is near his end; the Gonaqua people are broken and destroyed. He is sorry for what he has done. It has been all wrong together.'

The old man paused, having in fact little breath remaining to him. Unwrapping his great kaross, he drew from it a long staff or cane, in shape something like what running footmen and lackeys carried in Georgian days. This he handed to Vleermuis, who bent his ear down to the old fellow's mouth to catch his words.

Vleermuis rose, came over to Ralph Brookfield, and delivered the staff to him.

'Nou-ap says that is his chief's staff, given to his father by the Dutch Governor at Capetown long before the English came. He has finished with it. His people are no more. He renders it to the Englishman who has beaten his clan and taken him a prisoner.'

Brookfield took the staff from the Koranna. It was between four and five feet long, and had manifestly been once a very fine specimen of Malacca cane. Now it was worn and battered.

The top was surmounted by a massive head or boss of copper, on which was engraved in Dutch the word 'Kaptein,' signifying that its first possessor had been in the eyes of the Dutch Governor chief or captain of his tribe.

'Very well, Vleermuis,' said Brookfield after he had carefully inspected the staff and handed it round to the company; 'tell the old chap that I accept it. Now, let him lie by the fire and sleep, and thank his stars, after what has happened, that he has fallen into the hands of Englishmen and not of Dutch. I'll warrant he would have had but little shrift from his old masters.'

When the camp awoke next morning the old Gonaqua was found dead—cold and stiff—by the remnants of the fire. The fierce excitement of the last few days had been too much for his aged frame. There was nothing more to live for, and after nearly a century of chequered existence, the lamp of life had suddenly flickered out. The English party all trekked from the valley two days later, and went their various ways in the world. A report regarding the Hottentot evil-doers was made to the nearest Resident Magistrate, and some two months later a strong patrol of Cape Mounted Police, having crossed the river, made their way to Nou-ap's kraal. They found the valley completely deserted. The Hottentots had all vanished, probably in the wake of their remaining fighting men, who had fled northward after the struggle. It is believed that some remnant of the tribe is settled in the eastern part of Great Namaqualand, now an integral portion of German South-West Africa.

It is now something like seven-and-twenty years since these occurrences happened. Jack Spencer and Mary Emerton—long since man and wife—are folk well on into middle age, with grown-up children of their own, some of whom have themselves gone forth into the brisk and busy world of Southern Africa. They live in a most comfortable homestead on an excellent farm in Griqualand West, where old friends—Ralph Brookfield among the number—and passing travellers are always sure of a hearty welcome and old-fashioned hospitality. In the dining-room at Gemsbok Fontein there stands on a bracket of its own a glass case, wherein, beautifully set up and in first-rate preservation, is still to be seen that violet stork which freed a family from a dreadful fate and introduced Jack Spencer to the wife whom to this day he enthusiastically describes as 'the best woman in the world.' Below the violet stork, carefully mounted and enclosed in a handsome oak frame, is the very letter, carried so many hundred miles by the far-migrating bird, and discovered by Jack Spencer and his comrade in far Bechuanaland upon that momentous evening in the month of April 1876.

THE QUEEN'S LIMNER FOR SCOTLAND: SIR NOEL PATON.

PART II.—HIS COLLECTION.

DURING the whole of his long life Sir Noel Paton was an enthusiastic collector of all sorts of art treasures, and probably no man had made greater sacrifices in order to surround himself with them. In the year 1859 he had married Margaret, daughter of Alexander Ferrier of Bloomfield, Dumbartonshire, and settled in Edinburgh. His house, situated in a retired and secluded part of the town, was the delight of his friends; and Sir Noel himself, with good-natured kindness, would often dedicate an hour or two of his valuable time to show them the most precious and interesting of his possessions. His various treasures completely covered the walls of staircase, library, hall, dining-room, and studio. The drawing-room was ornamented with rich tapestries, old church vestments, and curiously carved figures. His choicest possessions, however—those things connected with Robert the Bruce, Mary Queen of Scots, or Prince Charles Edward Stuart—were locked in the wardrobe of his bedroom.

Some of these curios came from the Goodrich Court collection, Lord Cadogan's collection, and the collection of Prince Demidoff; others were gifts from such private friends as Mrs Robertson of Struan, Miss Macdonald of Lochshiel, Lady Jane Dundas, Dr Laing, and others. In a collection of eight hundred pieces one is somewhat at a loss where to begin a description; but some of the things which came from the Wooer's Alley collection on the death of Mr Joseph Paton are described by Sir Noel as follows:

'Dagger, found on removing the thatched roof of a cottage near Magus Muir, the scene of the dastardly murder of Archbishop Sharpe by the Covenanters in 1679.

'Carving of a unicorn, chained, and gorged with a royal crown, bearing a banneret and surrounded with a roughly executed ornament. This rude but interesting piece of Scotch carving of the sixteenth century was formerly over the door of the chamber in Linlithgow Palace where Mary Queen of Scots was born. It was presented to my father in 1835.

'Extremely fine and interesting Gothic offertory coffer in iron fourteenth-century work, found among the ruins of Cambuskenneth Abbey, near

Stirling, about 1830, at which date it came into my father's possession.

'Piece of the plaid worn by Prince Charles Edward at Culloden, with original certificate as under:

'"Prince Charles, when retreating from the field of battle at Culloden, threw down his plaid, which being picked up by Mr Blair of Inchtyre, he threw off his own plaid and immediately put on that of the Prince. Mr Blair kept it in his possession as long as he lived (made into a morning-gown, which he seldom put on). At his decease the plaid fell into the hands of his daughter, who married Mr Bett, minister of Inchtyre. The plaid was ordered to be taken down by Mr Bett and made into a covering for an easy-chair. [Picture it! Think of it!] Janet Wallace, the housekeeper, having married Mr Cochrane (at present merchant in Leith), gave it to her husband, who has kept it in his possession upwards of thirty years. He was offered twenty pounds for it, but would not part with it on any account, his father having been a partisan of the House of Stewart, and having been along with Prince Charles during his unfortunate career in Scotland.

'"The above specimen of Prince Charles's plaid was presented to me by Captain James Wilson, the present harbour-master of Leith, who received it from Mr Cochrane, merchant in Leith.

'"FLETCHER YETTS.

'"EDINBURGH, *20th June* 1823."

'Cabinet, in walnut, rosewood, and ebony, with beautifully carved masks, &c., and ivory inlaying of two Roman soldiers killing a bear. This cabinet, which had long been known as "Queen Mary's Aumrie," came from Lochleven Castle, and was obtained by my father about 1830 in a labourer's cottage on the shore of Lochleven.'

'MEMORANDUM *regarding two portions of the Skeleton of King Robert Bruce, formerly in the possession of Mr J. N. Paton, Wooer's Alley Cottage, Dunfermline,' written by Sir Noel, January* 1896.

'During operations in connection with the build- of the New Abbey Church at Dunfermline, workmen came on the burial-vault of the king, 17th February 1818. After partial examination, the vault was again closed, "temporarily," under directions from the Barons of Exchequer, pending the roofing in of the building. On 5th November 1819 the whole was laid open by the same authority, and again "carefully covered in with wood," awaiting official inspection by Dr Gregory and Professor Munro, which took place on the same date.

'On this occasion, the lead in which the body had been wrapped was found to be more decayed than it was represented to have been at first opening of the vault in February 1818, especially "at one of the knees and at the feet, through which the bones of the skeleton were quite apparent." Thus it would seem that the body, at first only "ordered to be carefully watched," was left somewhat imperfectly protected for a year and nine months. It was probably during this interval, if not on the occasion of first opening (on this point my recollection is at fault), that these bones were abstracted by Mr Angus, postmaster, Dunfermline, by whom they were subsequently presented to my father, along with other spoils of the tomb—namely, one of the six iron handles which had been fixed into the lower of the two flat stones covering the vault; one of the "two or three iron nails with very broad heads, which had certainly been in the wooden coffin," found among the "rubbish" at the bottom of the vault—these little more than nodules of rust; and a small piece of the leaden shroud.

'Unfortunately my father made no memoranda as to dates or other matters connected with the obtaining and subsequent presentation to him of these relics. But my recollection of the whole circumstances, as frequently related by him, is sufficiently distinct to enable me to record them with practical certainty.

'Mr Angus, who lived immediately opposite the north gate of the churchyard, in which he was accustomed to walk, was a man of the utmost respectability, and it was only after much searching of heart that he yielded to the temptation offered by the exposure of the small bones of the feet, and abstracted two of these, the fourth and fifth metatarsals of the left foot, both broken off at the lower extremity. Mr Angus, it appears, never felt altogether comfortable in the possession of these treasures, of which he was reluctant to speak. Indeed, he had frequent thoughts of reinterring them in the adjoining consecrated ground. But the instinct of the collector prevailed. During my early boyhood he presented one of the bones, the fifth, to my father, by whom it was kept as a sacred relic, scarcely to be looked at, never to be touched, by his children save with the utmost reverence.

'Many years later (but this date also has escaped me), Mr Angus, finding his end approaching, sent for my father and handed him the companion bone, the fourth, along with the other Bruce relics above mentioned, which, with a small portion of the *toile d'or* shroud, elsewhere obtained, are still in my possession. On the dispersal of my father's collection after his death in 1874, these bones, the sole remains of the patriot king now above ground, were again separated; my late brother, Mr Waller H. Paton, R.S.A., becoming possessor of *this* one, while I retained the other.'

Such are a few of the articles to be found in this valuable collection. Many people feared, when it was necessary to break up the old home at the time of Sir Noel's death, that the things brought together by him and his father with such labour would have to be scattered far and wide among private individuals. The Government, however, have stepped in to avert this misfortune, and the curios, to the satisfaction of the public, will probably find a permanent resting-place in the Royal Scottish Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh,

where they will be known as the 'Noel Paton Collection.'

The year after the artist's marriage a public movement was set on foot to erect a suitable national monument to Sir William Wallace on the Abbey Craig, near Stirling, and the competition among sculptors for the honour of designing it provoked keen interest. Sir Noel entered the lists, and his model, a lion with a broken chain bearing down a crowned typhon, was judged the best by the committee. Owing to some misplaced apprehension that the symbolism of the design might give offence south of the Tweed, the committee asked Sir Noel's leave to set aside his very powerful work and to adopt in its stead a purely architectural design.

The artist executed another beautiful work for the Scottish National Memorial to Prince Albert, to which Queen Victoria gave her warm approval. The committee, however, decided in favour of the late Sir John Steele's equestrian statue, which now stands in Charlotte Square, Edinburgh.

In 1863 Sir Noel went abroad, for the first time, with his brother and his great friend Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, visiting with the keenest interest the art galleries of France, Germany, and Italy.

On his return from the Continent in the same year, Sir Noel made studies at Windsor Castle of Queen Victoria and seven of the royal children. The drawings were meant to be grouped in the form of a memorial picture, which, however, was never finished. Sir Noel was received by the late Queen with much favour; and though he more than once avoided going to Balmoral when 'commanded,' he always recalled with great pride and pleasure the intercourse he had at Windsor with Queen Victoria and other members of the Royal Family.

In 1866 Sir Noel was appointed Her Majesty's Limner, an ancient office in the Royal Scottish Household. Ten years later he received the honour of knighthood at Windsor, with Sir George Harvey, who was at that time President of the Royal Scottish Academy. In the same year (1876) that post was rendered vacant by the death of Sir George, and Sir Noel was urged, as on other occasions, to accept the honour of the presidentship. His reply, which appeared in the *Scotsman*, is as follows:

'*29th July* 1876.

'In your notice of the general meeting of the Royal Scottish Academy held yesterday, I find my name coupled with my old and esteemed friend Mr Macnee in connection with a candidature for the vacant presidential chair of the Academy. With a view to prevent needless complications, I think it right to state through your columns that I have not, and indeed never had, any intention of allowing myself to be nominated as a candidate. It is unnecessary, I consider, to give here any explanations, as my more intimate friends in and outside of the Academy have too long known my sentiments on the subject to be surprised by this declaration; and I cannot suppose that the general public can take any interest in the considerations which have dictated my decision.'

The fact is that Sir Noel felt himself from circumstances incapable of filling the chair of the president. The duties, social and otherwise, would have prevented that contemplative retirement he required for his work; and with a family of eleven children, and no private means to speak of, he could not abandon steady work. Had he given his time to the official duties he would have made a perfect president, but he could not accept the honour and neglect the duties.

In 1875 the University of Edinburgh had conferred on Sir Noel the honorary degree of LL.D., and in 1881 Dunfermline presented its famous son with the freedom of the city. In 1882 he designed the stained-glass window for the Abbey Church, which was presented to that town by the generosity of Mr Andrew Carnegie. In later years Sir Noel very rarely could be persuaded to leave his own house; but it was his custom in summer to take his family for their holidays to the Western Highlands, where his delight in the sea and boating pursuits could be fully gratified. On his arrival at his country quarters he more than once, on finding oil-pictures too horrible for words on the walls—particularly bad portraits of ugly people—amused the family by altering them in water-colours, and on at least one occasion he was requested by the owner to leave the picture as he had made it.

Sir Noel Paton began to write verses as early as the year 1841, and continued to indulge this taste up to the last year of his life. His first published work, *Poems by a Painter*, appeared in 1861, and the second, *Spindrift*, in 1867. These poems are full of melodious descriptions, and 'Actæon in Hades' is a most powerful work from the first line to the last. Some of his verses have been set to music.

> With the sunshine and the swallows and the flowers,
> She is coming, my beloved, o'er the sea,

was written to Lady Paton before their marriage, and is especially popular.

A verse from his poem, 'The Golden Hour,' will illustrate his power of word-painting:

> O radiant shape! O dream Elysian!
> Fade not from my raptured vision!
> Fade not till my pencil trace
> The unearthly sweetness of thy face,
> Thy form's unearthly grace,
> That draws yet still eludes the eye,
> As in the evening sky
> The young moon, when she trembles through
> A cloud of vapoury dew,
> That dims, but cannot all repress,
> The light of her maiden loveliness,
> Even as translucent verse may fold
> Its woven music round a thought of gold!

The last years of the artist's life were passed in reading and resting, for he quietly retired within himself for occupation, and found in the depth and

tenderness of his domestic affection all that was necessary for his happiness. In his younger days, however, he went out a good deal among literary and artistic people, where not only his gifts but his singularly imposing personality and appearance made him much sought after. As he advanced in life he seemed to shrink from society through a natural shyness of disposition, so that for some time before his death, beyond the immediate circle of his own family and their friends, Sir Noel as a man was hardly known. But in a long series of years, and through a long series of works, he revealed to all capable of understanding him the various moods and aspects of his thought.

In the spring of the year 1900 Sir Noel sustained an irreparable loss in the death of his wife. For many years he had himself been in failing health from an affection of the heart, which, although it did not actually lay him aside, yet rendered him weak and unfit for exertion.

On the 25th of December 1901 a large number of his own immediate descendants assembled as usual in his house for the Christmas gathering, and in spite of his not being well and confined to his room at the time, he was able to take an interest in all the children's amusements and gave a warm welcome to every one. His family left him rather tired out, though apparently much in his ordinary health. On the morning, however, of 26th December he was found resting, as it were, peacefully in bed, having passed away during the night, evidently, from the expression of his face, quite painlessly and without a struggle. The news of his death was received throughout the country with the profoundest sorrow; and on the day of his funeral the large concourse of people from far and near who assembled to follow his coffin to the grave bore testimony to the universal feeling of homage that his genius had inspired, and spoke eloquently of the national reverence for a name which will ever be associated in the annals of history with that which is noblest and best.

COLOUR-PROBLEMS IN AMERICA.

By JAMES BURNLEY.

PART III.—THE YELLOW MAN.

LORD WOLSELEY, in his *Life of a Soldier*, says that to him the Chinese 'are the most remarkable race on earth,' and he 'has always thought and still believes them to be the great coming rulers of the world.' In the ordinary view, the glorification of the Chinese character is a matter of a very remote past; but the gallant Field-Marshal turns his gaze in the opposite direction, and sees the Chinaman exalted in a distant future to the position of conqueror of the earth. A Chinese Alexander is not a vision that rises readily to the imagination of the average man; but then the average man has not had the advantage that Lord Wolseley has enjoyed of studying the Chinese at close quarters in their own land. Such a deliberate opinion as that expressed by Lord Wolseley may well give one pause; but it is not an opinion that is held in the United States, in Australia, or in South Africa, where John Chinaman is simply a labour unit of the lowest scale, and does not come within the possibilities of social distinction. That such a race should be destined to become the ruling power of the world is difficult to conceive. Still, amongst the happenings of the unexpected, even this may come to pass; and should philosophy eventually supersede arms as the arbiter of international affairs, the cult of Confucius would probably suffice as well as some latter-day philosophies.

In America, however, the Chinese communities do not suggest any speculations of this kind. Among the hundred thousand odd Chinese now living within the boundaries of the Republic, there are not half-a-dozen men who are entitled to be regarded as in any way distinguished. This may be because these yellow aliens belong mainly to the lowest classes, possessing neither education, culture, nor opportunities of advancement. Yet, among similar classes of other races there is always a fair proportion who 'break the bar of circumstance' and rise to higher things. But no budding Li Hung Chang soars to the heights of diplomacy from the dingy atmosphere of the Chinatowns of New York or San Francisco. No Chinaman in America becomes a shining light in religion or letters or science; the only trait of the American character that the Chinaman catches is that of money-hunger, though his sphere of money-making is hardly that of the American. He operates on a lower level and by Asiatic methods.

But even the American samples of the Chinaman bear out the assertion that the Chinese are a remarkable race. Other peoples are remarkable in great things; the Chinese are remarkable in the minutiæ of life—in little details of existence which hardly count in the case of the Caucasian. Life in its larger view does not seem to come under their notice. They do not lift their eyes beyond the circuit of their humble daily routine, and are little concerned with outside events. Of the questions that agitate the American people or the actual current of American affairs they know nothing, and want to know nothing. For one thing, they have no rights of citizenship; for another, they are too much absorbed in their own work and personal aims to be able to spare a thought for extraneous

matters. They have not come to America for the love of that country or its institutions, but solely for the opportunity it gives them of scraping together the modest hoard which will mean comparative affluence for them in their native land.

I have seen much of the lives of the Chinese in San Francisco and New York in later years, since the coming into force of the Exclusion Bill which prohibited Chinese immigration; but familiarity never subdues the wonder and sympathy they first aroused in me. Their patience, their good temper, their industry, their obedience to hard conditions, constitute a characterisation altogether unique. In their heart of hearts they doubtless resent the restrictions under which they live in the United States, but they never show the least sign of grumbling or repining. They submit and plod along. Their adaptability is amazing.

To-day, probably three-fourths of the Chinamen in America are engaged in laundry work, the rest in the humblest kinds of domestic employment. They do the work that white men would refuse to do. At the outset of their American experience they were engaged on railway construction. They practically built the Central Pacific Railway. Fifteen thousand of them, brought over mostly from the district of Canton, worked for thirty-five dollars a month and boarded themselves, while the white labourers received forty-five dollars a month and were boarded as well. The Chinese helped to develop the mines, and to reclaim the delta of the Sacramento and Edgcumb Rivers, by which a tract of five million acres of fertile land was added to the country. They did a good deal to establish the horticultural arts in the West; and the wine and fruit industries owed much to their efforts. Then the agitation against Chinese labour sprang up, and they found themselves suddenly shut out from more remunerative spheres of labour, and the bulk of them betook themselves to laundry work.

From that time to this it has mostly been a matter of 'washee-washee' for John; but he has stuck to it day in and day out with a diligence that far exceeds that of the white labourer in any occupation.

It is marvellous to behold this devotion to one of the humblest occupations that man can put his hand to in a country where on every side the modern business doctrine of hustle and bustle is being practically illustrated by the Americans themselves. There is no rushing pace, no bang and rattle, about John as he pursues his work at the wash-tub or the ironing-board. The only time that he makes any approach to noise is when he blows a mouthful of water over the clothes he is ironing; for the rest, he is subdued, silent, placid, and patient. When he moves across the room he does not walk, he glides like a pig-tailed, loose-bloused phantom; and the serenity of his smile remains through all trials and privations. Whites and blacks begin work as late and leave off as early as possible, on Charles Lamb's principle; but the Chinaman begins so soon and leaves off so late that his white neighbours get the impression that he does not go to bed at all. He would work the Sunday through as well if the law would let him, for there is nothing in his religion to debar him, and he is never aweary. What John does, moreover, he does well. No laundrymaid could be daintier with laces and fine linens, no country washerwoman more thorough in producing spotless cleanliness. Nor is this a sign of effeminacy; it is simply his genius for taking pains. When he delivers the washing at your house or flat he displays a child-like geniality, and only becomes serious when receipting his bill or giving change. His attempts at conversation do not carry him far, unfortunately; but he shows genuine curiosity in the different things he sees, and is especially interested in children. To a regular customer he will occasionally make a present of a Chinese lily or a grotesque ornament which has of course come 'allee way' from China; and, on the whole, it is pleasant to do business with him. He is regular as clockwork, and appreciates and expects prompt payment of his bills. It is in the suburbs of the great cities that he makes the most headway; in the busier districts of Chinatown there are distractions and temptations which are sometimes too much for him, devoted as he is to his one aim of saving money enough to take him back to the Flowery Kingdom. The opium or gambling dens may seduce him from the path of industry, and when once he has given way to either of these vices he soon loses both his self-control and his money; but it is a mistake to suppose that the majority of Chinamen indulge in these degrading practices. By far the larger portion stick resolutely to their task, and are seldom to be diverted from it.

There is more excuse, however, for an occasional lapse from duty on the part of a Chinaman than there is for a native American. The Chinaman knows little of family life. Ah Gee and Shin Gam may work cheerfully together in their little laundry day after day and night after night, dreaming of the time when they will be able to return to Canton and the household gods they have so long been separated from; but of the true solace of domesticity they have no experience in the days of their exile. The Exclusion Law prevents John from having a wife over from China; so he jogs along, making the best of male society, and never seems discontented. Sometimes Chinamen in America marry white women; and although these unions are only with women of a very low class, they are said to be happy, for John has an amiable disposition, and is invariably kind to women and children.

In the Chinatown of San Francisco there is the largest congregation of Chinese of any city in the Republic. New York comes next. The former has some twenty thousand Celestials, the latter ten thousand. It is in these places that the real Chinese life, with its strange lights and shadows, virtues and vices, is to be seen. Much of it is repulsive, some of it interesting, and not a little

of it amazing. I paid many visits to the Chinese Theatre in San Francisco, and was always admitted to the 'behind scenes' realities, making the acquaintance of some of the actors, and being permitted to stand at the side of the stage in full view of the audience while the performance was in progress. These things have been described so often, however, that it is needless for me to go into details now. I may say, however, that the sensation of standing in such a position while the actors are discoursing in an unknown language, with little action or gesticulation, and a few performers are sitting on their haunches in the background playing a low accompaniment of shrill and squealy instruments, is strange. Stranger still is it to look across the footlights into the auditorium and see the two galleries full of bare-headed women and the pit full of pig-tailed men, staring with eager intentness upon the stage. The women-folk, by the way, are a much stronger element in San Francisco's Chinatown than in that of New York. How many nights a play had been running, and how many more it would take to reach the *dénouement*, are things that one is told but does not remember. A visit to the dormitories below-stairs where the actors lodge afforded a glimpse of the Chinese craze for economising space. The whole company seemed to be able to get sleeping accommodation, with the luxury of a separate shelf for each member, in a space about as large as a berth for two on an ocean steamer. Still, this was something exceptional; the occupants were men of fame (Chinese brand), receiving substantial salaries. As, later on, one walked through the narrow alleys, holes, corners, and courts, and saw the yellow-faced Mongolians creeping in and out of the stuffy spaces, the idea of how they would be huddled together, in comparison with their superiors of the theatre, suggested thoughts far too unpleasant to dwell upon.

Chinatown is, on the whole, rather depressing to an Englishman. The Chinese themselves do not seem over lively, and an uncomfortable silence pervades their restaurants, joss-houses, and opium-dens. Dull odours, as of anæsthetics, abound, and the sight of horrible grinning figures in wood and pottery in the shops does not improve matters. In one of the restaurants I sometimes visited, the decorations were so heavy and over-elaborated, the attendants so heavily attired, and the smell of strange and wonderful viands so stupefying that it was difficult to keep awake. What the consequence would have been had I departed from my usual custom of having a cup of tea, and dived into the mysteries of Chinese soups, which the ordinary visitors swallowed with such evident relish, cannot be told. The only incident of a lively nature that I can recall at this restaurant was a quarrel of words between the proprietor and one of his guests. It was about a woman, of course, and the vociferation was so outlandish that it reminded me of a pair of parrots retorting upon each other. They did not swear, I was given to understand, but rated each other in such phrases as in English would amount to 'son of a dog,' 'unearthly pig,' 'son of a sow,' 'pig's flesh,' 'filthy rat,' and so on, and which of them had the last word I did not wait to hear.

Of opium-smoking there is much to be seen wherever Chinamen gather together. Some of them indulge in the habit privately, but the enjoyment is usually reserved for their leisure hours and the opium-den. Many sad, dazed, haggard victims are to be seen up and down Chinatown, telling of complete subjection to the drug, and the opium-den itself offers a pitiably sad spectacle. It is only fair to add, however, that the bulk of the Chinese laundrymen are not addicted to the habit to any serious extent, and most of them avoid it altogether. Both in San Francisco and New York the opium 'joints' are mostly below ground, with bunks arranged in tiers, upon which the customers lie in different degrees of drowsiness, some just puffing their way to the first stage of dreamland, some well advanced in forgetfulness, and others beyond all cognisance of human things. The silence is awful. Occasionally a dusky reclining figure will utter a low sound, between a moan and a command, and the attendant will glide forward with tray and smoking implements, and a hand will be stretched out towards them. There will be nothing heard more than that. And the whole atmosphere is so impregnated with the sickening odour of opium that one almost fears asphyxia. The relief of the open air after a dive down into one of these dens is indescribably gladdening.

There is another vice that the Chinaman in America gives way to, and that is gambling. Fan-tan is the game that he courts fortune with, and it has the advantage of being extremely simple. Bret Harte's Ah Sin was an expert at card games, it will be remembered; but cards are too scientific for the ordinary Chinaman; he can get all the excitement he requires out of fan-tan. The game is played by placing a number of coins, taken from a bag or box, upon a table. These the banker apportions among the players in lots of four, and the result depends upon the number of coins left after the dealing out of the last four. Simple as it is, sometimes John loses all he has, and more, before he gives it up. But gambling is no more a Chinese than an American vice, so there is nothing at all exceptional about fan-tan.

What is really exceptional in Chinese life in America is the joss-house. Here we find an odd conglomeration of emblems of faith and superstition: fearful figures of gods and deities, and one huge chief idol which, being assailed by the beating of a gong, is supposed to respond to the appeals of the faithful. The attendant manipulates joss-sticks, and as they fall on the floor interprets their fateful indications as the revelations of the god. Visitors are expected to 'tip' freely for these displays. As for the Chinaman himself, ancestral worship has the strongest hold upon him, and he has more reverence for these than for the joss-house gods,

to whom he prays only for tangible aid. The sentimental side of his religion is reserved for the bones of his ancestors. If a Chinaman dies in America he is buried with a good deal of show. Paper slips containing Chinese inscriptions are scattered all along the route, to pay the corpse's way, and after the body has been buried the grave is covered with meats and other eatables in profusion, the superstition being that the dead is permitted to wake up and feast upon them before finally passing to eternity. At the Chinese cemetery in San Francisco I was told that the meats certainly disappeared in the night-time; 'but then,' added my informant, 'there are a good many big dogs around here.' The bones of the dead are ultimately collected and shipped to China to be laid in the family burying-ground. The Six Companies who bring the Celestials from China pledge themselves to convey their bones back to the home-land in case of death, and the item of bone-shipments cuts something of a figure in the books of the organisation. About two thousand deaths of Chinamen occur every year in the United States.

Taking the Chinese of America as a whole, they are a credit to the community. They have their faults, but their virtues far exceed them. In habits of frugality and industry they are a pattern to the world.

As for the small number of Japanese who make the United States a temporary home, they stand in a different relation to the current of the time. They are Europeanised, and only take part in the life of America, as they do in that of England, as students of education or industry. They are not among the men of menial employments, and are in no sense a problem to the American Government.

The Colour-Problem of the United States is mainly one of the Black Man and the Red, and with these there are still many difficulties to be overcome.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

AUTOMATIC LAMP-LIGHTING.

THE electric light which now illuminates so many of our public thoroughfares is to some extent automatic in its action, for it does not require the services of a perambulating lamp-lighter; but, all the same, there must be at headquarters a hand to switch on the necessary current. As long ago as the year 1890 Mr Shelford Bidwell showed to the London Physical Society a device, which was applicable to either gas or electricity, by which lamps could be made to light spontaneously so soon as daylight waned, the active agent being selenium, which, as is well known, varies its resistance to the passage of an electric current with the amount of light to which it is subjected. The idea is now revived by Dr Alfred Gradenwitz, who contributes to the *Scientific American* an article which fully explains the improved system which he has adopted. As far as we can judge, the expense of supplying each lamp with the apparatus would be a serious bar to the general adoption of the system, and, as we have seen, in the case of electrical illumination there would be nothing to gain by the innovation.

CANAL TRAFFIC.

Much attention is now being directed to the question of increased utilisation of the canal system which forms such a complete network of waterways through the greater part of the kingdom; and any improvement of boats or locks which makes for increased speed of conveyance is of importance. A new method of transferring vessels from one level to another without the aid of the ordinary lock has been established at Foxton, Leicestershire, with complete success, and it presents such advantages over the old system that it is likely to be adopted in other places. In this part of the Grand Junction Canal there is a difference of level of no less than seventy-five feet, and the difficulty was surmounted in the old days by the provision of ten locks. A journey up or down that weary stairway meant a delay for each boat of eighty minutes. These locks have now been abolished, and in their stead is an inclined plane from one level to the other, bearing rails upon which travel huge tanks of water, each tank being capable of holding a boat. As one tank slides up the incline, another comes down, the one balancing the other, and at the end of the journey they are each locked in, and for a time form part of the canal. Hydraulic rams are operated to open gates at the ends of the tanks, and the vessels float out and proceed on their way. The time occupied in transferring a canal-boat from one level to the other is twelve minutes, and the saving of water as compared with the old locking system is about 90 per cent.

BIRD SLAUGHTER.

Bird Notes and News is a modest little publication which is issued periodically by the Society for the Protection of Birds. The most recent issue contains a list of the plume-birds which are in most request for the adornment of ladies' headgear, and which are being so ruthlessly destroyed by the agents of the dealers that many of them are becoming extinct. 'Each year,' writes the editor of *Bird Notes*, 'our earth grows the poorer and sadder for loss of her living jewels. They are being sought out from the whole world, wantonly and uselessly slaughtered, "knocked down" in city auction-rooms for a few shillings or a few pence apiece, manufactured by

the plumassier into something from which all the grace and loveliness and brilliance of the living birds have gone, and this for no better purpose than to provide a season's trimmings for women's hats.' If people generally would realise that by wearing these adornments, or permitting them to be worn by those over whom they have control, they are participating in a most cruel traffic, this wanton waste of bird-life would quickly cease.

TROUT-FARMING.

There are now so many angling clubs scattered over the country that some fish, notably the trout, would have become almost extinct had not the secret of rearing them artificially been mastered. Trout-farming is now a recognised industry, and fish reared in tanks are much better off than those of more natural growth; for the free trout has so many enemies that only about 3 per cent. of the two or three thousand eggs deposited by the parent fish every season come to maturity. But in the tanks of the trout-farms both eggs and young are so carefully tended and defended against outside enemies that losses are few, and the farms are able to count with certainty upon so many 'yearlings' for the stocking of waters. A lucid account of 'A Day on a Trout-Farm' recently appeared in the *Liverpool Daily Post*, and it was there stated incidentally that for use in these farms dried flies are imported in sacks from Mexico, where fly-catching is a recognised business. Formerly horse-beef in very small pieces was used as food for the trout; but it was found that much of it sank to the bottom of the ponds, and the fish therefore became bottom-feeders and lost their instinct of rising to the fly. Hence their value to anglers was greatly reduced. The fish, it seems, take readily to the dried flies, and follow the keeper of the farm round the pond as soon as he appears with his fly-bag. The younger trout, after being accustomed to the sight of some of the attendants, will gain enough confidence to feed from their hands, although they will quickly dart away on the approach of a stranger.

MAGNETIC ATTRACTION.

It is curious how the scientific realities of to-day often bring back to one's mind the memory of some half-forgotten fairy tale. We can most of us call to mind the story of the ship which approached too near the enchanted island, with the result that the lodestone rocks drew from the vessel's timbers all the nails and bolts, and it became a total wreck. A terribly real story of a wreck was that of the Danish steamer *Norge*, which in June last strayed from its reckoning and struck on the island of Rockall, with a loss of six hundred lives. Dr Krogh, writing to *Nature*, asks the question, 'Can the compasses of modern ships be influenced by magnetic disturbances to such a degree as to imperil navigation?' and he assumes that the *Norge* should have been quite twenty-five miles to the south of Rockall when she struck. He believes that the difference in position must have been due to some deviation of the compass brought about by a local cause, and he cites the depositions made by two captains of other vessels in corroboration of that view. In one case, when in the neighbourhood of Rockall, the ship's compasses acquired a hitherto unknown easterly deviation of ten to eleven degrees. In the other case the compass of the ship —also in proximity to Rockall—deviated nine degrees, and while the captain was steering to pass twenty miles north of the island, he found that the actual path covered was forty-five miles north of it.

MAL DE MER.

Many are the remedies and nostrums which have been suggested for the alleviation of the distressing sickness from which so many travellers suffer at sea; but there does not seem to be any method known by which people can guarantee immunity from the evil. And that sea-sickness is, in spite of the heartless jokes which are made at the victim's expense, a real evil may be judged by the fact that from time to time ships have been designed of special construction to cope with it. We often find that the simplest remedy is the best, and a correspondent is good enough to forward us the results of some experiments which he has made on shipboard with a view to the relief of travellers from the pains of *mal de mer*. After giving up medicinal treatment as being hopeless, he tried the effect of lying in various positions, and found after a time that lying on the right side had the desired effect. The adoption of this position seems to act both as a preventive and a cure; and our correspondent has not only tested the treatment himself, but has urged his friends to do so also, which they have done with perfect success. The plan is so simple that there is no difficulty in adopting it; and although it may not in all cases prove effectual, it cannot possibly do any harm.

CHARTREUSE.

The expulsion of the religious orders from France has caused lamentations among the drinkers of that renowned liqueur known as chartreuse, for it has always been understood that the good monks who alone made the delicacy held secret recipes for its compounding, which they took away with them when they were forced to leave the monastery. It is now asserted that chemists who have been busy at the Fourvoiries distillery since the departure of the monks, have by patient analysis discovered the chartreuse secret, and that they are able now to make a liqueur which cannot be distinguished in any way from the old product of the monastery. They had to discover the merchants who supplied the alcohol to the monks, and they had to trace the various aromatic plants, said to number about a hundred, used in fabricating the precious liqueur. In this they were helped by the inhabitants of the district, who brought the chemists the various plants which they had been in the habit of collecting for the monks. It is said that if the chartreuse is to

retain its wonted flavour the plants employed must be obtained on the spot.

CORELESS APPLES.

A wonderful new fruit is said to have been successfully raised in the nurseries of the United States and Canada, specimens of which will presently reach the British market. It is a coreless apple, which will be valued by the schoolboy and the housewife alike, as well as by the growers. For the new tree is said to be a hardy one, not liable to the attack of spring frosts, while the absence of the seeds makes the fruit immune from the depredations of worms. It has been difficult of late years, for some reason which fruit-growers can probably explain, to procure the old-fashioned kinds of apples which were so extensively grown in this country, and we have been more or less dependent upon foreign supplies. Possibly the introduction of the new trees will give renewed life to apple-growing here, with the probable result that the cider industry will benefit at the same time.

EYE-MASSAGE.

A new method of remedying those alterations of form in the eye which are generally corrected by the use of spectacles is being practised by Dr Smith of the Battersea Park Hospital, London, with, it is said, most encouraging success. The new treatment was first practised in Paris, and the London experiments have proved its efficacy. It consists of gently manipulating the eyeball, through the closed lid, for a few minutes daily, and the occasional application of pieces of india-rubber specially shaped to meet individual peculiarities. The treatment is quite painless, and the cases in which it has failed have been few. It is applicable to all patients under fifty years of age; but with persons older than that the results are not satisfactory.

THE FUTURE OF LIBERIA.

Sir Harry Johnston, who has recently returned to England on the conclusion of a journey to Liberia, during which he visited the whole of the coast-line, and made several expeditions into the interior, is very hopeful as to the future of that country, which has made great progress since last he saw it about twenty years back. The Liberian Government have so encouraged the use of English among the natives that there is scarcely any important tribe or chief that has not several individuals able to speak intelligible English, and therefore act as interpreters. The natives are well disposed towards the white man, and consequently travellers have no difficulty in dealing with them. The country is one great rubber-producing forest. Coffee grows there wild, and it is also being extensively cultivated by the Americo-Liberians. The forests also contain many valuable timbers, dye-woods, and drugs, while the oil-palm is exceedingly abundant. In the interior of the country ivory is plentiful, for there are many elephants. Cacao is being increasingly planted, and, like cotton, thrives remarkably well. There are indications of the presence of gold in the country, and a ten-carat diamond is alleged to have been discovered there. The existence of hæmatite iron ore in much of the country along the seaboard is undoubted, and the natives work it to a considerable extent. The climate of Liberia is much pleasanter than that of the regions north and south of it; it is much healthier, and there is a remarkable absence of insect pests.

WINTER EGGS.

A methed by which hens can be induced to furnish eggs in autumn and winter is described in a pamphlet which we have received from 'Olive,' whose address is 101 Paynes Road, Southampton. The system adopted is called the 'dual system,' and consists in keeping the hens in couples in coops of a certain area with a small run attached to each. Much attention is paid to the nature of the soil and to food and cleanliness. 'Olive' has kept fowls under these conditions for several years, and the yield of eggs has averaged for the past five years one hundred and fourteen for each fowl. The system advocated involves neither radical changes nor expense, and is worthy of a trial by all who keep fowls.

ELECTRICAL TRAMWAY 'POINTS.'

Mr Thomas Miller, of 15 Partick Hill Road, Glasgow, has patented a method by which the driver of an electrical tram-car can operate the 'points' which he is approaching, thus dispensing with the ordinary pointsman and the long levers which in crowded thoroughfares are both a hindrance and a danger to traffic. From the provisional specification we gather that the movement of the rail is brought about by electro-magnets, the current to excite which is controlled by means of a switch by the driver of the car. It would be impossible to explain how this is brought about without diagrams; but the method seems perfectly feasible, although it is not quite clear how it could be applied to tramways on the conduit system, where electrical connection is underground. Electrical engineers will no doubt put the invention to practical test, by which its value will be at once determined.

COLD STORAGE OF FRUIT.

The fruit-harvest of 1904 will long be remembered as one of the most abundant known in this country. Apples and plums were in September being sold in Lincolnshire at the low price of twopence per stone, and from other districts came the report of fruit being left on the trees, as it would not pay for plucking. The grower, therefore, is far worse off than if his crops had been of moderate extent. Mr T. F. Walker, of Bath, has, through the columns of the *Times*, suggested a remedy for this unfortunate state of things, which is worthy of careful consideration. His plan is that which has been largely adopted in America—namely, the storage of surplus fruit in

cold chambers, so that it can be sent to market as required. If fruit be kept at a temperature just above the freezing-point of water, decay is arrested, and it can be thus stored long enough to keep the glut off the market. There are, however, Mr Walker states, certain precautions which must be observed if success would be secured. The fruit must be just ripe, and it must not be handled much or bruised. Fruit must not be stored with other produce, nor must the air from the fruit-store, especially if apples be in question, be allowed to enter any other store. There are plenty of cold stores throughout the country where the experiment might be tried, and the expense would be paid over and over again by the higher market price of the fruit. That fruit can be so kept in good condition is abundantly proved by the quantity of sea-borne fruit which comes to us from distant lands.

INOCULATING THE GROUND.

In the *Century* for October 1904 there is an article describing the remarkable results from 'inoculating the ground' due to the researches of Dr George T. Moore of the United States Department of Agriculture. It was matter of common observation that peas, beans, alfalfa, and clover put back into the earth what corn and wheat removed. When examined, the roots of a healthy bean or clover plant show a number of rounded bulbs called nodules or tubercles. These when more closely looked into are found to be packed with bacteria, which had been absorbing free nitrogen from the air and converting it into a form suitable for the digestion of the plant. Each tubercle acts as a feeder to the plant; the more numerous these are the better the plant flourishes. The writer defines the tubercle as a little factory where millions of tireless infinitesimal workers are separating the nitrogen in the air, and converting it into a plant-food. Profiting by the experiments of the German Professor Nobbe, Dr Moore cultivated a type of bacteria in his laboratory, which when legumes were inoculated with it developed great tubercles. The American Department of Agriculture sends out this inoculating material to applicants. 'The package can be carried in your pocket, and yet does more work than several cartloads of fertiliser.' Cotton after an inoculated crop of red clover gave an increased yield of 40 per cent.; potatoes, 50 per cent.; wheat, 46 per cent.; and oats, 300 per cent.

THE MISSAL OF LIFE.

Behold thy lesson-book of life, O Soul!
The page turned daily by a heavenly hand;
As thou each task dost learn, the course is planned
For thy small efforts still to reach the goal.
'The book is dull,' sayest thou? Thy purblind eyes
Are filled with hasty tears; thou canst not see
One-half the beauty and the mystery
Contained in that great book to make thee wise.

Nor dost thou know that each hard duty done
Gilds the fair page and paints a colour bright;
Each lesson learned marks some new beauty won
That rainbow-coloured glows with life and light;
Till in the end thy book a missal prove
To give to Him who set thy task in love.

Francis Annesley.

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EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

CONTENTS.

THE UNTOLD TALE.	By A. L. Holland.	Page 1
SIX SEAMEN AND A MENAGERIE.	By John Arthur Barry	" 16
THE FAVOURITES OF THE REGENT.	By Katharine S. MacQuoid	" 23
THE STORY OF A SOVEREIGN.	By Arthur O. Cooke	" 31
TARNABY'S BARGE.	By Thomas St E. Hake	" 37
CHRISTMAS DAY.	By Sarah Wilson	" 48

CHRISTMAS 1904.

THE UNTOLD TALE.

By A. L. HOLLAND.

CHAPTER I.

AS I rode into the strath that morning in the beginning of July 1746, it seemed to me an enchanted valley lying under a spell of silence. There was no sound to be heard beyond that of my horse's hoofs and the pewits that cried shrilly across the bleak fields. Riding by stages from Edinburgh, I had passed many traces of the late Rebellion; but here it seemed as if the stir of it had never penetrated at all. So my eyes told me, but I knew otherwise; for although my people were quiet subjects of the King, and I supposed there was no more irreproachable Whig household in Perthshire than my grand-uncle's house of Pitlandie, whither I was bound, yet I knew this to be a notoriously Jacobite county, and that many in the sleeping strath had had at least treasonable dreams.

I knew the neighbourhood well. I had often stayed, as a boy, with Uncle Adam; and when a rather unexpected and pressing invitation had come from my cousin Cosmo, I was very glad to accept it. The district had a peculiar charm all its own, though that was of a gray and sombre sort. I think life in the hollow of a great strath is often so; it is as narrow as the outlook.

The gentry were poor and untravelled. The common people, half-starved like their cattle, plodded in a soul-destroying round of toil; their world was a few miles square; their pleasures were almost savage, and moved one to pity. Those forsaken rural parishes in the low-lying land were rife with wild tales of lawlessness and sinister superstitions; and as I passed the smithy, a few miles from Pitlandie, I recalled one of these, a terror of my childish days. Of this lonely place it was said that, whoever might be smith by day, some one else (who wore horse's shoes) wrought there with roaring bellows in the hours of night, and had unenviable customers of his own, who had no choice but to visit him, and did that but the once.

'If ye're wicked,' I had been told, 'ye'll end some night at the Smiddy o' Outwyle;' and my question of 'What for?' received the dark answer: 'To get shod—and *sent on your road.*'

From that hour I passed all my local friends in secret review, to divine if any of them were likely to need the smith's services; but there was only one of the family for whom I feared—although no one else seemed to do so. I shall not easily forget the sensation I caused when, once discussing this eerily attractive subject with the gardener, I asked, 'Do you not think, John, that Mr James will have to go there?'

And so we come to that remarkable man. It was a curious household at Pitlandie: a kingdom under a regent; and that regent was Uncle Adam's younger brother, Mr James. There is no doubt that Mr James should have been the head of the house; I mean that he should have been born so. I will go further, and say that he might have been more. In other times, and in a higher walk of life, he might have been one of those nobles of Scottish history who ruled the kingdom and the King as well; being fitted for

the place, and somehow finding their way there. This he had done on a very humble scale. My uncle Adam, though nominally head of the house, had never been in possession of his wits in my remembrance. Well known in his youth as a man of fashion, with a reputation for gambling and general extravagance, he was seized in his thirtieth year with a brain-fever, and recovered only to be the poor, childish creature I had always known. His father, a shrewd, miserly man, had left him rich for these days and his position; but my uncle not only spent the bulk of these savings but sold part of the property in his short reign. I have always heard that this illness really averted his ruin.

From that day his brother took charge of affairs. Mr James, like many younger sons, had inherited the brains of the family, and they had been cultivated, for his father had prudently bred him as a lawyer, assuming that he must earn a living. He was, indeed, singularly well educated, and had studied at Utrecht; whereas Uncle Adam was above such things, and went no further than to wear the King's uniform, for a few years, to admiration. The old man is reported to have said, 'Jamie has to mak' saut to his kail, but Adam has prospects.' Any wise act of Uncle Adam's was traceable to the advice of his brother, but they were not numerous. It was Mr James who advised him to marry the heiress whose money saved Pitlandie at a crisis; although, as a commentary on Mr James's character, it may be observed that the estate, and not the lady's happiness, seemed to have been chiefly considered. But it was Mr James who saw to the upbringing of her son when she died in the course of a few years; and, to do him justice, he was devoted to Cosmo, although I do not know if it was so much from kinship as that he was the future head of the house. It was he, now, who 'had prospects,' and it would be difficult to explain what those prospects appeared in the eyes of the household, as they had so great an idea of the family importance. The old name and estate, in fact, were gods to Mr James, and how he served them is to be told. I could hardly understand this in one so clever, who had seen something of the world; for the estate was only of moderate size, and not one of our race had ever risen to distinction. Nor would Cosmo break the rule. He was just a pleasant, careless young man, of whom no one could say worse than that he seldom took the trouble to think for himself. It must have been a trial to his uncle to think how poor a figure he had cut at school, and that he had never opened a book since he left it; but then, he 'had prospects;' and if he did not share his uncle's brains, at least he had his canny love of approbation and reverence for the name, and was unlikely to bring discredit upon it. He was now thirty years of age; but although he took his father's place in local affairs, and gave his consent to business transactions, it was all under the guidance of his uncle, and what he would have done without him it is impossible to say.

Mr James was a widower. I had never seen his wife, and knew nothing about her beyond that she was a French lady whom he met on the Continent in the year of Uncle Adam's marriage. She was much younger than he, of good family, had a small fortune, and, it was said, had been induced by her relatives to marry him because he was heir to a Scottish estate; which indeed he then was, but Cosmo was born at the end of the same year. For the next seven years Mr James lived and practised as a writer in Edinburgh. There his daughter was born, and his wife died at the same time. Uncle Adam's illness followed soon after, and Mr James, migrating to Pitlandie, had lived there ever since.

The house of Pitlandie lay low, embowered in trees, which only disclosed it at the last moment. It was an irregular building, with a steep roof, white harled walls, and deep-set little windows: one of those houses which, as the children say, 'have a face;' and as I rode down the avenue it eyed me with a sphinx-like gaze, as if to say, 'We know each other, but I shall not commit myself by acknowledging it.' Its expression always reminded me of Mr James. As if I had invoked him with the thought, he appeared that instant, with his nephew, at the open door.

Mr James was then about sixty years old, and might, I suppose, have been described (by an admirer) as a fine-looking man. He was tall and thin, with a meagre fringe of reddish-gray hair round his bald head, and a long, clean-shaven, eminently Scottish face, the remarkable feature of which were his eyes, small, deep-set, rather close together, and of the palest gray I ever saw in the head of any man. Those eyes, his silent ways, and his expression, which is best described by the word 'moroungeous,' formed a barrier to familiarity which I, for one, never broke down. He was as much my grand-uncle as his brother; yet they were always 'Uncle Adam' and 'Mr James.' I could not have pictured him bestowing or receiving any demonstrations of affection or even kinship, and, to be quite honest, I never wished to bestow anything of the kind on him. I never could forget our first meeting. I was a small child, and had been accidentally left alone in the room with him: a horrid ordeal, although why it was so I should have had difficulty in explaining. I only know that after a few minutes of it I fled from the room in a tempest of hysterical tears, although he had not so much as spoken to me.

Absurd as it may seem, a shadow of the old feeling came over me as I greeted him. 'Ay, Adam?' he said. 'Weel, we 're glad to see ye.'

The salutation was, for him, unusually cordial, and I smiled afterwards to think that I took it as a tribute to my years, because when last we

met I was a lad at school. But this social effort over, he turned to his nephew.

'I'd better leave ye to yoursel's,' he said, and thereupon withdrew into his study.

Cosmo looked round with a sort of embarrassment, I thought, as if seeking some kind of help from the one or two grotesque portraits that looked down on him. If their itinerant painters were to be trusted, Cosmo unspeakably excelled his ancestors in looks; but even the old lady in the red shawl had more firmness of character in her face than he.

'Shall we go ben into the parlour?' he asked.

I had the impression as I followed him that the proposal had had the sanction of Mr James, and that he was charged with some duty which he wished well over.

And so it proved. He had visible difficulty in beginning.

'It was very good of you to come, Adam,' he said. 'You—you are doing us a favour.'

I am afraid I only increased his embarrassment with a hearty laugh.

'We were not so given to compliments,' I said, 'when we were at school. What may this mean?'

He smiled uneasily.

'Ah,' he said, 'wait. It's no such laughing matter. Adam, man, I'll tell you what it means.' He lowered his voice. 'We're obliged to house a—a Jacobite quietly till his friends can get him out of the country; and we are safer to ha'e a real guest to show—if need be. You are to be that guest: we knew we could lippen to you. It's all we ask: that you stay here till he's gone.'

I started up.

'Cosmo, you're joking.'

'I wish I were,' he said. 'Sit down; I'll tell you all about it. They say there's really nae danger, if we take care; and it's no' so difficult as ye might think. He has been here a week to-day.'

I shall condense the story with which he astonished me.

Mr James, much as he longed to better the family, had had, up till now, nothing in his power beyond wise management of the estate, economy, and so forth; but with Prince Charles Edward's landing in Scotland the summer before, a startling opportunity presented itself. When the Prince was in Perth the family were secretly pressed to help him. It is true that at first Mr James, believing that the affair could never succeed, refused to have anything to do with it; but when the Jacobites were marching on Derby and London he repented, and privately sent a large sum of money to the Prince, with a written offer of further help if it should be needed. Surely there was hidden in Mr James a trace of the gambling instincts of his brother, up till then concealed. The Prince replied with effusive thanks, and (oh, Mr James!) the promise of a title when he came to his own. But the tide had already turned. When he wrote he was already in retreat from England, and Mr James, for once, had made a false move. Nothing was suspected, and the Prince made no further claim, for which the intriguers had every reason to be thankful; but where were the prospects of the family? They had only lost a round sum of money (the amount of which I never learned), and had been engaged in a most dangerous affair. Nor, as they soon learned, was the affair over yet. They were just beginning to breathe more freely when the results of that rash letter became manifest. Several weeks before, a letter had come to Pitlandie, cautiously directed to 'The Master of this House;' and if its coming was mysterious, its contents were plain. Cosmo showed it to me. Without giving date, place of writing, or any names, it reminded him to whom it was written of his promise to a certain personage, and demanded that he should redeem it by housing a Jacobite fugitive for a short time. He was in danger where he now lay. He carried papers which, if they were taken, would incriminate many. Suspicion was most unlikely to attach to Pitlandie, a Whig house, and plans should be quickly devised by the fugitive's friends for his escape abroad. He himself would explain all other details. All they had to do was to unlock the little door in the garden wall and a side-door in the house on a certain night, and to receive him who should enter before dawn.

So much for the letter. The house was well adapted for the purpose, for it contained a small secret-room; and although its 'secret' was an open one, perhaps it was all the better, as no one would think of our hiding anything there; and, besides, what could so exemplary a family have to conceal? This room was reached through the chief guest-chamber, a gloomy place, known from the colour of its woodwork and plenishing as the 'Black Bedroom;' and Mr James's plan was that a real guest should occupy the one which held the key to the other. The 'Black Bedroom' had a powder-closet, which in turn had a door opening into the parlour, so that food could easily be conveyed to the unseen guest. Duff, the one man-servant, a relic of Uncle Adam's extravagant reign, and a devoted creature, waited on him; and fortunately the 'hidie-hole,' as it was called, was never entered by the maids, owing to some vague, ancient tale of a bogle. This man Duff, Mr James's daughter, and myself were the only others, therefore, in the secret.

My uncle knew nothing. His poor wits were incapable of suspecting the truth, even if he had seen or heard too much; and he spent the greater part of the day in his own room. When Cosmo's confidences were ended he took me to see his father. Warm summer day though it was, my uncle sat in his arm-chair beside a fire;

whilst before him, on a little inlaid card-table, were spread out several packs of cards, with which he played (as a child might) almost unwearyingly. He received me with great politeness, although he did not know who I was, and his son, from experience, made no attempt to explain. On the wall near him hung a wicker cage with a starling, which eyed us with, oh! so much more intelligence than its master, and on hearing our voices, made haste to display its accomplishments by shrieking 'Jamie! Jamie!' over and over again. This treasonable appeal to the 'king over the water' was Uncle Adam's delight. He broke off in the middle of a speech to me to smile and shake his head at the bird, and then turned to me again to see if I comprehended the joke. Measuring other people's wits by his own, he always showed surprise at people's intelligence.

'My certie!' he said, 'that 's the only Jacobite ye 'll find in Pitlandie,' and thereupon resumed his cards. I confess, as I left the room with Cosmo, I wished that it were only true; and later, as I wandered in the garden, I would have given much to be released from the unpleasant task of helping in Mr James's schemes.

The garden of Pitlandie was said to date from monkish times; and as I basked there in the afternoon sunshine, soothed by the droning note of the bees, and breathing the indescribable atmosphere of an old garden, I could well believe the tradition concerning it. It was said that the founder of our house, a certain Sir Adam, having long envied the estate, which was then Church property, took advantage of troublous times to take possession of it by an act of black treachery, in which he slew a defenceless priest. The couplet,

> Pitlandie ne'er sall win a pardon
> For how he won the priest's garden,

was the only known record, but it certainly suggested a crime.

It crossed my mind now that in Mr James one might trace, in a small degree, something of the unenviable craft and ambition of the original head of the house. The more I thought of Mr James's traffickings the less I liked them. They had shocked and surprised me; but I was more surprised that he had consented to receive this man when it could bring nothing but danger. He had given a promise, indeed; but I felt that he must have had a stronger reason still, and now I began to think it was to be found in the letter. If the papers carried by the man included a certain letter dated from Pitlandie, then his safety was the safety of us all: a most disquieting idea. But there were plenty of them. Another was the influence which Mr James had over his nephew; for Cosmo seemed to have placed his conscience as well as his affairs in the keeping of this old man. Nor was there much hope of his freeing himself. On the contrary, he was about to establish his uncle's reign; for, among his other news, he had told me he was newly betrothed to his cousin Anne, Mr James's daughter. He had assuredly been born to be the puppet of Mr James. Not only did he seem to have had no idea of making an original choice of a wife, but his talk showed that he was infatuated with the girl. I had not yet seen her, but I was sorry for him; and, angrily switching off the head of an unoffending rose, I asked myself was there no woman worth seeking in all Scotland but Mr James's daughter? Some one laughed behind me, and I turned with a start. In that moment I answered my own question—in an unexpected way. I have never asked it since. For here stood my cousin Anne; I knew somehow that it was she, but it was not from any resemblance to Mr James. She was tall and slim; her face had the pale, spiritual delicacy of an old miniature, which was enhanced by the sombre mass of her black hair. She had the grace and indefinable air of a great lady, as she stood in her white gown under the old chestnut-tree, which spread forth its leaves like hands in a gesture of benediction; her wonderful dark, violet-blue eyes were alight with a kindly smile that absolutely dazzled me. She was hauntingly beautiful, beyond any poor telling of mine. She held out her hand, and all the green lights that moved upon her under the tree seemed to culminate in the great emerald ring which she wore: an heirloom of Pitlandie, 'Sir Adam's jewel,' which Cosmo had given her. A passing cloud suddenly darkened the garden, and a chill air stirred the silken leaves of the beech hedge, but just for a second or two.

'Cousin Adam,' she said, 'I am come to make my humble apologies for being out when you arrived. Will you forgive me?'

At that moment I blessed the inventor of the ceremony of kissing hands, which so well conceals confusion of face and temporary loss of speech. As we returned together to the house, I found that, all at once, my share in Mr James's schemes had taken on a different aspect: the aspect of a duty, and perhaps somewhat of a pleasure too.

CHAPTER II.

NEXT morning I was introduced to our guest. He was a man of about forty years of age, so far as I could judge; and, whatever their exact number might be, he had not idled them away, and some, I fancied, had been cruel ones. He was below middle height, thin and delicate-looking, and his face had nothing to redeem it from the commonplace except the steadfast regard of his black eyes, which had that watchful, fascinating quality which we sometimes meet

with in a portrait by a master-hand. It had never struck me till then that Cosmo, with all his good looks, had such an unpolished, provincial air. This man had a tone and manner scarcely known to me. I wondered how much he knew of us and of the circumstances which brought him to Pitlandie: whether he knew his entertainers to be what they were, or if he took us for a Jacobite family who only hid their politics the better to serve the luckless cause. He was presented to me as 'Mr France.' 'For I must take, for the present, the name of my adopted mother,' he said with his foreign accent and his singularly pleasant voice.

After all, how like an ordinary guest he seemed! It was surprising how, at the sight of him, the startling idea of it all diminished. After my introduction I had a very brief interview with Mr James in his study.

'There is just the ae thing,' he said grimly, his white eyes searching my face: 'nae clashing and clavering, even among yoursel's. If ye only do as ye are bidden, and leave the rest to me, there 's nae danger.'

Of course we took every precaution. Mr France was visited sparingly, and usually by one person at a time. We went about the country, and people were invited to meet the ostensible guest. There was a meeting of zealous Whig worthies in the study the second week of Mr France's stay. As the gardener and his assistant lived a mile away, and left every evening at six, we so contrived that now and then our guest, in a well-known hat and gray coat of Cosmo's, could take a walk in the garden with one of us after dark.

I was generally his companion, and I think I soon knew him better than the others did; for, although he spoke of his private affairs to Mr James and Cosmo only, yet I fancied that he remained on a more business footing with them. Cosmo found him but dull company, for he knew little of horses, dogs, or sport; and Anne, although she pitied him and, if I read her aright, was distressed with fears for his safety, did not find him interesting. In some respects he was perplexingly different from other men whom I knew: one was his blindness and indifference to Anne's beauty; which annoyed and at the same time relieved me. He could tell me little or nothing about himself lest he should betray the secrets of his friends; but he was none the less interesting for that. He was evidently of Scottish or English parentage, and I took him to be a secretary in the Chevalier's employ. I have likened him to a portrait: it was one of those which peep out of an obscure background, the light falling only on a grave face, a delicate hand, the glitter of some jewel peeping from beneath a cloak. His religion (he was of the Roman faith) was in that jewel, which on rare occasions caught the light for a moment and dazzled me.

It may seem strange that he had been no time with us before I began anxiously to look forward to his going; but it was my very liking for him that caused this. I was sure that he could never be safe till he was out of Scotland, and that the stroke must be nicely calculated and not too long delayed, lest his enemies should trace him. The thought filled me with restless eagerness that he should be put beyond their reach, and this increased as the days went past. It was in the night that I suffered from it most, when I was seized with terrible ideas of what might happen: the coming of the military to the district, suspicion, a search of the house. In the chill of the dawn, when everything is strange and melancholy, I have pictured our guest in dire straits, a bewildered and helpless fugitive or an unresisting prisoner. But these fears I could not tell to any one; and, indeed, when morning came I laughed at them myself and was ashamed of my cowardly imagination. And although they returned, and that sometimes in waking hours and with an unpleasant insistence, I told myself I could do nothing, and called to mind the soothing, sensible words of Mr James. In this way things went on for three weeks after my arrival: we ate and drank, entertained, and went 'to kirk and market.' The flood, however, was on its way.

Just about that time I had occasion to ride to the nearest town, and I came back with really alarming news. The little place was buzzing with the intelligence that a troop of dragoons had arrived at a village six miles from us; that they were to be quartered there, to watch (it was whispered) two of our neighbours; and that the chief object of their visit was an important fugitive believed to be hiding in the strath. A sort of sick fear caught me by the throat when I learned this. My dreams, even as dreams, had frightened me; but they were real now. I rode home in a fever of impatient anxiety and suspense; and it was all the worse because it had to be hidden. But I must speak of it when I reached Pitlandie—that was something; I would go straight to Mr James. That ride seemed unending, but at last I was knocking on the study door. Mr James was alone, writing, and looked up without a word, in his disconcerting way; but I was beyond that. I told him as briefly as possible what I had heard, adding only that I had spoken of it to no one else.

When I had finished he regarded me for a second or two as if to ascertain that I was done, mechanically dipping his pen in the ink at the same time. Then, placing one slim and elegant hand on the paper before him to steady it, he described with the other, which held the pen, a preliminary flourish, as if practising the next word in the air; and then, bending his whole attention on it, he slowly and delicately committed it to paper. Mr James was famous for his handwriting, and his leases and other docu-

ments were works of art. A sort of fascinated attention made me watch him complete a long sentence in this way.

Then he looked up.

'And is this all?' he inquired.

I was silent a moment, in astonishment. 'Yes, sir; but—I thought it alarming enough.'

Mr James bent over the paper and dipped his pen once more. He spoke and looked as if he read something that was written before him.

'Ay, so it seems,' he said. 'It's easy seen; and in spite of what I telled ye. I'm no' accustomed, Adam, to ha'e to say a thing twice.'

And he resumed his writing without so much as another glance in my direction. So he dismissed me, and I felt small indeed as I left the room; but, odious as his manner of doing it was, he had reassured me, for it was evident that he knew of all that was on foot, and was prepared. I soon found that this was the case. And as the days went past I developed a sort of blind trust in the man; although perhaps it was only the trust of the traveller who descends a dangerous hill behind a runaway team, knowing that to jump for it is the greatest danger of all. Soon after the soldiers came to the district Cosmo rode over to pay his respects to the officer in command, and to bid him to dinner. We were all tolerably good actors by that time, and the entertainment was quite a success. Mr France was of course ignorant that the military were so near, and did not know who it was that dined with us. A hint would have been inhuman. He was as reliant upon us as a child in its nurse's arms; and what a trust was this of ours! Sometimes, in spite of having been so reassured, I trembled at the thought, and I cannot deny that as the time slipped past I did think of it, and my fears mustered their forces again. They could scarcely do otherwise so long as he was with us. He had now been more than a month at Pitlandie, without any apparent stirring of his friends on his behalf; and I could not help seeing that, for some time to come, any attempt to move him would be the most imprudent thing possible. I was compelled to admit the disquieting truth—which once would have driven me to sheer panic—that this game was a waiting one. And so, even in this weary employment, the days wore on. After all, there were other things to think of. For me there was one subject which was capable of excluding our poor prisoner from my mind. I had stayed no time at Pitlandie before I saw that Anne's betrothal to her cousin was an affair of convenience (as the French say) so far as it concerned her. Cosmo was devoted to her; but I knew from various sources that the marriage had been laid before her by her father without alternative, and that she had no choice but submission.

In two years she should receive her mother's fortune, and Mr James had destined it for the estate; I had seen the coveted piece of land for which her money—and what else?—was to be exchanged. Mr James was not the man to be disobeyed or won over, and I think his daughter had silently yielded to fate. No doubt it might have been a much worse one. Cosmo, left to himself, was a kind, honest fellow; and, not being the most discerning of mortals, he appeared quite satisfied with her gracious, kindly toleration—I cannot call it more. I am certain that he never thought of her money; but she was proud, and it was most unfortunate for him that his affections happened to suit his uncle's schemes, so as to make him seem a partner in them. The marriage was to take place in November.

In that house of secrets, I too had come to have one; and although what I longed for was, as matters stood, impossible, yet I wished, contradictory as it sounds, that it had been even more impossible still. I was six years older than Anne, and I was also independent, having lately inherited a small property from one of my English kindred. To me, this cousin of mine was the fairy princess of romance; if only I could have delivered her from the clutches of a certain silent ogre! Alas, how differently things fall out! I had perforce to dwell quietly in the ogre's house, and speak unmoved of the marriage; to ride with her, take a hand at cards, and generally (she was pleased to say) to amuse her, many a time with desperate bitterness in my heart. I could not leave Pitlandie until my mission was ended, and when should that be?

Our guest had now been with us eight weeks, and so far as I could see there was no chance of any immediate change. Just at this time a very welcome diversion was caused in our quiet household by an approaching ball given by our neighbours at Baldune, a house some nine miles away. It was given chiefly in honour of the English officers quartered in the district, and was expected to be a brilliant affair. On the morning of the day, as it happened, the packman visited Pitlandie—always an event of great importance to the women folk. In quiet places it is curious how, when things happen, they happen by twos and threes, so that what might have furnished entertainment for a week is crowded into a single day. The sight of any stranger now filled me with hopes that he might be the bearer of a message from Mr France's friends; and when I observed that the packman brought some books for Mr James these hopes revived, although during those long weeks I had had many grievous disappointments of the same sort. But the evening's entertainment was engrossing every one's thoughts; and it so fell out that Anne wanted roses of a certain colour to match her gown, which were supposed to be unattainable, although I thought differently, and I must needs hurry to a place six miles away, where I had seen them in a garden. When I came back triumphant her surprise and pleasure

put all thoughts of the packman out of my mind for the time; and although I found that Cosmo had spent most of the day in his uncle's study (which some weeks ago would have given me a fine foundation for building upon), I did not think anything of that, as there was so often estate business on hand. I spent the rest of the afternoon playing cards with our guest to make up for my absence at night; and the sight of him quickly dispelled any vague hopes that might have remained about a message, for he was like the people of his adopted country: he could not easily hide his feelings, and I saw that he certainly had heard nothing new. I had been fortunate in getting the roses for Anne, and had begged beforehand for the honour of some dances; but it turned out that fortune had still another gift in store. For when the great Flanders coach, one of the monuments of Uncle Adam's past splendour, drew up at the door, with Duff in attendance (uneasily attired as footman for the occasion), Cosmo appeared at the last moment from the study, in ordinary dress, very pale, pleading a violent headache, and saying that he could not possibly accompany us.

Thus it came about that I had to play sole escort to my cousin, a thing which the Edinburgh assemblies would never have countenanced, but which was allowable among friends. Yet that long drive in the darkening summer evening was a worse ordeal than even the house of the ogre. I laughed and talked, and realised that I should never probably so sit beside her again; and every landmark we passed was a hopeless wish left behind me. We were about two-thirds on our way when, in answer to a shout, the coach was brought to an abrupt standstill. Before I could look out, a man in uniform was at the window; and I am not ashamed to say that my heart for a moment seemed to stand still. The officer opened the door.

'I beg a thousand pardons,' he said. 'I believe, sir, that you are guests on your way to Baldune; but I have strict orders to examine all wayfarers and vehicles crossing the parish bounds.' And this he and his men proceeded to do. The examination over, he handed Anne to her seat with great politeness, and gave the order to go on. We put some distance between us and them before speaking. It was Anne who spoke first.

'Is it so near a thing as that?' she said, with a sort of gasp. 'Oh Adam, I dinna like it! Oh, how will it all end?'

I did not dare tell her that she only voiced my own thoughts.

'I know,' I said, 'it does seem terribly near; but—but we must just rely on your father and Cosmo. They must know best. Look how calm they are.'

She leaned forward with a white, anxious face. 'You say they are calm,' she said; and then, with a sudden piteous note, 'Oh! I hope they are. I wish I thought so!'

I was startled into an exclamation.

'Why?' she echoed. 'Because I am sure that they got bad news to-day. I know we werena to speak of these things, but I must. I was in the room next the study for a minute, and I know their voices so well. My father said something, very low, and Cosmo cried out, "Oh, my God!" and my father cried "Whisht!"'

I would not for anything have admitted how she alarmed me. She had unconsciously acted the scene, and, with her, I felt that these two had spoken of something dreadful. And what was that? Her words were still in my ears when I entered the ballroom, with anything but dancing in my mind.

The ball was, I believe, a great success, to which my cousin largely contributed. For the time she seemed to cast off care; though whether it was so, or merely the capacity for acting which is in every woman, I could not tell. Little, I thought, did her red-coated partners dream what she could have told them. I was honoured with her hand for many dances, insomuch that I heard I was taken, by strangers, for the cousin to whom she was betrothed.

Yet to me that was an absolutely wretched night. I could not see the merriment here for picturing the secret fears and suspense yonder; and I did so, too, against my will, for everything said, 'Enjoy yourself while you can.' The very music, at the height of its merriment, had to my excited fancy a wild and hurrying terror, and the reels, in their plaintive, dying fall, a fatal, recurrent note, as if of death itself.

As we drove out of the gates of Baldune in the small hours of the morning, Anne's gaiety seemed to fall from her like a cloak, and we performed the homeward journey in silence.

It was very near sunrise. The white mist lay in swathes along the valley. Everything was gray with dew, and the starlings clicked and piped on the steep roof of Pitlandie as we entered the still house.

'Walk cannily. They're a' asleep. Ye're terrible late,' Anne's waiting-woman adjured us as we tiptoed across the hall.

But were they all sleeping? They should have been, but as I dropped into a doze, to the delicate fluting of a blackbird, there was talking and stirring in Mr James's study through the wall.

CHAPTER III.

HURRIED into the parlour next morning, to find that Mr James and Cosmo had risen early, as Cosmo had an errand to the market-town; so that Anne and I were left to breakfast by ourselves. She was already at table, and I had not bidden her good-morning before I saw that she wore an unusually excited air. To my greeting she

replied only with the question, 'Is the door shut?' and then, in a lower tone, 'Guess what news I have for you. You will never guess,' she added encouragingly.

On the spur of the moment, as people will, I hazarded the most unlikely answer that I could think of: 'Mr France has left us!'

It was the true word spoken in jest, as I saw immediately by her face.

'How did you hit on it? Did—did you know?' she cried.

I answered her with another question still: 'But is it true? Anne, are you in earnest?'

'Indeed I am. My father told me to tell you Mr France left last night. I canna believe it yet.'

I stood staring at her, unable to reply. Before I had found words, the door opened noiselessly, and Mr James entered, looking from one to the other of us.

'Ay,' he said, 'weel,' turning to me, 'our—er—Mr France has got awa' at last, ye see.'

'I am very glad to hear it, sir,' I said, for his light eyes, fixed on mine, seemed to demand an answer. 'But it is so sudden. I never thought that it could have been contrived just now. Why, I never bade him farewell!'

Although there was no change discernible in that grim countenance, I had a sudden feeling that I had angered him.

'Folk in straits,' he said coldly, 'have nae time to daidle. We got word suddenly. A' depended on his going at once. He 's awa', and the thing 's by with. I tell ye this (which I needna have done), that there may be nae speiring about it. And henceforth, mind ye, there 's to be nae mention of a certain affair.'

With these gracious words he left the room.

Anne leaned across the table, apology in her eyes.

'I think he has been more worried than ever we dreamed of,' she said. 'He has had all the dirdom, and we could not know the half. Oh! it has been a weary time; and we should thank God he is safely awa'. The last word about it all should surely be that.'

'Surely,' I said. 'But is it safe—how can it be? I cannot think how they did it at such a time—the very worst, as it seems to me.'

Her face clouded.

'I know no more than you do,' she said. 'I only asked my father, as you did, "Was it safe?" and he said, "As safe as man could make it."'

'Well,' said I, sitting down to table, 'I suppose that is all we need to know, although I would give a deal to learn how they did it. At any rate, the affair is over, and'——

The words died on my lips.

Casually looking out of the window, I laid down the knife and fork I had just taken up, and started to my feet.

Anne's eyes followed the direction of mine, and then we breathlessly looked at each other. A troop of dragoons was riding down the avenue.

With a simultaneous impulse we both made for the hall without a word. We were just emerging from the long, dark passage which led to it when a thundering summons upon the front door echoed through the house. Anne, who was a pace in front, started back at the sound, turning to me, and I saw that she had become deadly white and trembled violently.

'Adam, Adam,' she cried, 'this is terrible!'

Now that the real danger was past, her nerve had given way. My self-control left me at the sight. I told myself afterwards that if I had not caught her in my arms she would have fallen.

'Hush, hush!' I said in a voice that I hardly recognised for my own. 'All 's well. They cannot harm you or any one here. I cannot bear to see you look like this. My dear, God knows I would not have brought this upon you—no, not for a kingdom.'

At the violent knocking which immediately followed my words she started again, and, pushing me from her, shrank farther back into the dark passage just as Duff hurried to the door.

I drew back also, and saw from there what I had seen before in dreams: the arrival of the search-party, for it was that indeed. When I turned next instant to look at my companion, I was just in time to see the skirt of her gown disappearing as she noiselessly slipped away. I saw the scene that followed with a divided mind. But one thing was very clear: this was what Mr James had been warned of, and not an hour too soon; and here was the reason of our guest's abrupt departure. The officer made many apologies. It was most unpleasant, said he, to search the house where he had been entertained; but he had his orders. The man for whom they were looking had been traced to within the parish bounds, and a command had been issued to search every house in it, whatever the reputed politics of the owners might be. But if the duty were unpleasant he did not shirk it. Every place was sternly searched, including the 'hidie-hole;' and this I know, that if our poor guest had not left Pitlandie before, he would have left it then, a prisoner. Mr James showed the officer every hole and corner with the grimmest politeness, and ushered him to the door with the stiffest of bows.

'In the name of my brother, who fortunately canna appreciate the insult offered to his house, I have much pleasure in bidding ye good-day,' said he. 'Any apology, sir, we can only accept from your superiors. We shall await it.'

As the last of the troop clattered up the road the sound of a closing door behind me announced the exit of the chief actor in the piece. It was almost in my heart at that moment to give him a reluctant tribute of applause. For the rest of that day I could settle to nothing. I had always thought that when our guest left

us all anxiety would be at an end; but now I realised that I could not be at ease until I knew that he was beyond the reach of his pursuers. No, it was still suspense; and the knowledge, coming at such a time, was almost unbearable. Cosmo had not yet returned, and Anne was busy indoors; so I set out for a walk, but I found that I could not outstrip the thought of Mr France and the marvel of his escape. The parish was small; the country bare, and closely watched. It had been a moonlight night. I saw grave difficulties at every turn; and while the one minute I felt a fierce anger at that old man whose greedy and dishonourable scheming had dragged us into such danger, the next I was full of thankfulness at his skill, which I could not but admire. Surely it was not altogether idle curiosity which made me eager to learn the exact means of Mr France's escape; under the circumstances I had a right to know. But no one knew all, I imagined, save Mr James and his nephew; for, now I came to think of it, Duff, too, had spent the night at Baldune. How conveniently the ball had disposed of us! I could not conceive that Mr James had willed his neighbours to give an entertainment when they did without laying a charge of wizardry to that remarkable man; but he had used an accident to splendid account.

As I returned homewards, thinking it all over, and wondering what Duff thought of the affair, I overtook that worthy himself coming back from an errand to the village. He protested at first against my suggestion that we should return together, saying that he 'wouldna presume to walk wi' the quality; but,' he added craftily, 'ye might say that he wasna just in his offeecial capawcity at the time, like; and he might gi'e me a convoy the length o' the gate.' The road at this place was bare; there was no possibility of eavesdroppers, and after a preliminary cough he began: 'Ay, Mr Adam, we'll sleep weel the nicht! Oh, he's clever, Mr James! When he telled me I couldna' win ower it. For, d'ye ken, I've haen sair misgivin's this whilie syne; and yet, looksee, how he did it is no' for us to speir, but I'se uphaud it's weel dune. There's a wheen folk doesna like him: ay, Mr Adam, I'm doubtin' you're ane. He's maybe (I'll no deny) what the Scripture ca's an austere man, reapin' whaur he hasna sowed; but ye dinna ken what's in him. Aweel, the body's taen the road, and we maun claver nae mair about it; but I'm right glad. I've nae conceit o' thae foreigners; but I was wae to see the creature sittin', ye may say, in a press, in that grand weather: ane made in the eemage o' his Maker ha'in' to carry on like a moudiewort, a peetifu' sight. Thon Chevalier's no' worth it. Ay, Mr James is a wonderfu' man.'

I entered Pitlandie in a much easier state of mind. No one but myself, it seemed, was inclined to worry any longer over Mr France. When I joined the household at supper they appeared to have cast care aside, and I resolved to do so too. Cosmo talked and laughed, although he still looked pale; and Anne, in one of her gayest moods, was another being from the one I had so lately seen, to whom, I told myself, I had betrayed my trust. I met her eyes with a secret tremor; but if I had offended her she gave no sign. It looked as if she had, in the excitement of the moment, only half-heard or comprehended my words, and I could only hope it was so. As for Mr James, he was almost merry—a thing so uncommon that it sat but ill upon him. He addressed several remarks to me, and was altogether so agreeable (for him) that I was quite at a loss to account for it. No doubt he was vastly relieved that our guest had been safely conveyed away; but that he should display this relief was the last thing I should have expected from him—a man who never showed his feelings like other men. All things considered, I ought to have been well disposed and grateful to him that night; and yet I confess I began to cast about in my uncharitable mind the question, to whom his cheerfulness was directed, and to what end it was thus displayed. I could not think. When the servants had left the room, and Anne was about to leave us to our wine, he paused in the act of drawing the claret towards him, saying, 'Wait a wee. I think we might as weel drink a bit toast the night.' With these words he poured out some for himself into an old silver cup, refilled his brother's glass, and passed the wine to us.

'Fill up your glasses,' he said; 'fill them up.' As we obeyed, two of us at least in a little surprise, he sat fingering the embossed pattern on the foot of the cup with something almost akin to nervousness.

Uncle Adam's eyes brightened, and he leaned forward, looking expectantly at his brother, for his poor wits were capable of divining so much of this ceremony—a toast to be drunk. Mr James, regarding him blandly with the look one bestows on a precocious child, cleared his throat, and obviously hesitated before speaking. He was going to propose a toast in connection with Mr France, it was evident, and he seemed to be seeking for some form of words that would seem an ordinary sentiment to this poor soul, whatever it conveyed to the rest of us.

'The toast I ha'e to propose to ye the night,' he said, raising his white eyes directly to mine, 'is: "Here—here's to him—that's awa'."'

He haggled over the words in a way unusual to him, ending abruptly, as if he was swallowing down an almost overmastering emotion; and I felt, all at once, a lump in my throat, and a sort of shame and anger at myself for my previous thoughts of the man who now, for all his grimness, could scarcely speak of that poor prisoner.

'With all my heart!' I cried, and was

about to pledge him, when a strange sound arrested me. It came from Uncle Adam, and was a broken, quavering cry, with which he clapped his glass upon the table so as to send the untasted wine leaping over the cloth. He rose from his chair so abruptly as to overturn it with a crash, and backed from the red stream which ran towards him, staring at it with a white, panic-stricken face and dilated eyes. 'Jamie, Jamie!' he cried in a high, trembling note, 'what ha'e ye done till't? That's no' claret: dinna touch it! Oh, dinna touch it!' And with a haste and vigour extraordinary for him, he stumbled wildly from the room. Instinctively I turned to look at Mr James, and, for the first time, I read an emotion clearly written on his face, although just for a second —no more. At the meeting of our eyes it was gone; but as he exchanged glances with his nephew the previous instant he had worn a look of such craven terror as I hope never to see in man again. Next moment he rose and hastily followed his brother. I turned to Cosmo with a question on my lips, but Anne was before me. She had risen, as we all had, and now leaned across the table, looking at him with startled eyes.

'Cosmo, what ails them? What is the matter?' she asked.

A splash of wine had lighted on his cravat, and he wiped it with an unsteady hand. He looked from her to me, and back again, his lips moving, and then, 'How can I tell?' he cried, with the angry impatience of one who has got a fright, and is ashamed of having been frightened.

She only reiterated, 'Cosmo, what is it? There is something the matter.' He fidgeted under her eyes, which steadily entreated him; or did they demand?

'Nothing is the matter,' he said dourly. 'It is some cantrip of my father's; you know fine he's not like other folk. The least thing gars him take the gee.'

A change came over Anne's face, which I should not have liked to cause; and she made no answer, but remained looking at him. I felt all at once like some eavesdropper, and it came to me that I looked on at a scene from the future in that joint-life of theirs which Mr James had so calmly planned. I could hardly trust myself to look at her; and as for Cosmo, I had never seen him to such disadvantage.

'It is just some cantrip of my father's,' he repeated. 'He seems to have ta'en a sudden dislike to the claret.' The silence was hateful, and I felt I must speak, to abandon the part of listener.

'He said it was not claret,' I blurted out. Cosmo turned savagely on me, and with a great oath bade me hold my interfering tongue. His looks were so fierce and out of all proportion to the scene that it suddenly crossed my mind he had been drinking. I drew back with angry contempt.

'It is usual, sir,' I said, 'for a gentleman to do so, as regards oaths, in the presence of a lady. Cousin Anne, if you will allow me, I think you 'd be better elsewhere.' In a suppressed white-heat of rage I ceremoniously escorted her into the hall. There she caught me by the sleeve.

'Don't quarrel with him,' she said quickly, in a low voice. 'He has a hot temper—like us all. He will be contrite to-morrow. Oh, how angry you are!'

'I will do anything you bid me,' I said impulsively. 'Good-night, cousin; I only wish, for your sake, that you dwelt in a happier house.'

I was used to see her gay and high-spirited. I had once seen her alarmed; but I had never seen her, as I did now, with her eyes full of sudden tears. It was a sight I could not endure. I hurriedly stooped, kissed her hand, and retreated again into the parlour, where Cosmo stood as we had left him. At my entrance, rapidly crossing the room, he passed me without a glance, and stepped into the hall, calling Anne's name. There was no reply, save the distant closing of a door. I looked at the supper-table. There stood our glasses, four untasted, one spilled: thus we had honoured the toast of Mr France. The sight recalled my uncle's words. 'That's no' claret!' he had cried; but what could he have imagined it to be, to produce such an effect on him, and such a shocking inflection of voice? Suddenly I imitated Uncle Adam, and retreated from the red-stained cloth until I stood near the door. On the wall there hung a little, old picture which had often arrested me as a child, and now I paused before it from mere force of habit. It represented a knight on horseback, in a gloomy wood, surrounded by a leering, mowing crowd of shapes, fantastic, devilish, and threatening, crowding upon him innumerable. It seemed to me that this was myself, menaced suddenly by a multitude of sinister thoughts, which, even to myself, I did not dare to name.

That was the first night after our guest had left us, and it should have been a peaceful one; but, in spite of Duff's prophecy, I did not sleep well in the Black Bedroom.

CHAPTER IV.

THE next morning I proposed to the household that I should take my leave in the course of a few days. My work was done, and the events of the past night had also helped me to my decision. But, to my surprise, they would not hear of it. Cosmo in particular pressed me to stay. There had been little pleasure for me as yet, he said, and much care. Now, he hoped,

things would be different; and surely (we had always been such friends) I would stay till the wedding? There was so plainly a covert apology in his words that, little as I liked such a way of making amends, I could scarcely do otherwise than accept it; especially as Mr James supported his nephew, and that in his most civil manner. Such a reprieve, after all, was only too tempting; and I agreed to stay for a little longer at any rate.

The week that followed brought no further explanation of my uncle's extraordinary behaviour; and I began to think that it had indeed been merely what was known in the household as 'one of his bad days' which had chanced to play havoc with our unstrung nerves. For some time after he was certainly more wandering in his wits and freakish; one development of which was a new and unaccountable dislike to Mr James, new to him and secretly diverting to me. He had hitherto received me daily as a total stranger, but now he called me in whenever I passed his door.

'Sit ye down on yon creepie,' he would say. 'I dinna ken your name, but you're a weel-faured birkie, and a young face is aye lightsome. My jo, I have been sair annoyed by an ugly black man who says he is my brother. But you will bide aside me.' Mr James, as often as not, was in the room during these pleasing references to himself, and sometimes tried to combat them, saying, 'Hout, tout, Adam! ye ken me fine.' But the old man could not be got to agree to this, and would remain, blinking, the very picture of incredulity, in a silence that might have been the other's. I looked back now with humiliation at the fright which Uncle Adam had given me, and hoped it had passed unseen. This new whim of his was unaccountable, as I have said, because ever since the episode of the toast Mr James had remained in his most agreeable mood. Most of us know what it is to feel that some one wishes us to think well of him. That is what I felt with Mr James, although I could not, for the life of me, respond to it. All the same, I had almost entirely shaken off those terrible suspicions which had assailed me that night, and warningly told myself, as I sat with Uncle Adam, 'This is your kinsman; you too (with encouragement) may come to this.'

One thing would have banished them for good and all: news of Mr France's safety. But that could not be expected for some time yet, even if he were fortunate enough to get out of the country without delay; and, in the meanwhile, it was evident that 'no news was good news,' for if he had been arrested all the countryside must have known of it. Helped by these arguments, I suffered just then a violent reaction of selfishness—an eager, hungry desire to make the most of what happiness I had so long as I had it. This was my last respite, and the time passed very quickly now. I looked back on my stay at Pitlandie, and saw, with, oh, what regret! how much time I had spent in forebodings and anxiety for this man, whose fate, after all, had never lain with me; and how it had all been in vain. How often thoughts of him had come between me and Anne! I remembered, in particular, that ball, and how, blind fool that I was! I had been a prey to black, unreasoning melancholy even when I had held Anne's hands high in mine and all the riotous merriment of the 'Haymakers' trooped below; and I cried to myself feverishly that I would think no more of Mr France. This happiness that was within my reach was pathetically little, at the best: a chance ride with Anne, five minutes' idle talk, or some little act by which I was, perhaps, able to please her or draw a kind glance from her eyes. I could expect nothing more. And there was always the remembrance that, such as it was, it too would soon be taken from me. It was already the middle of October. The birds had got their autumn note, there was a smell of frost in the air, leaves silently fluttering down in the morning sun, clear green skies at twilight, and the nights were swiftly creeping in. All things were moving to their appointed end.

Nevertheless, in spite of my determination to renounce all care for Mr France, I did not succeed in doing this for very long, and as the time passed, every now and then I found myself involuntarily thinking about him. Sometimes—trudging home at twilight alone, when the mist was spreading across the strath, the darkness settling upon the fields, and no sound to be heard but the echoing bark of a distant sheep-dog or the *skirr* of some partridges far away—the thought came like a reproach: where was that poor guest of ours, and had he a roof to cover him? Perhaps all this time he had never been able to leave the country; perhaps, while I took my ease, he had passed these weeks in an agony of suspense, cooped up in some other house of fear. Somehow, at these moments, I did not picture him safe. It was strange, but ever since he had left us we had been ill at ease. Uncle Adam was still poorly, and persisted in his delusion about Mr James, imploring me, with a claw-like hand laid detainingly on my sleeve, to 'Sit down aside me, and keep awa' that man, for he gars me grue.' Nor could Mr James reassure him.

'It's just me, Adam,' he said, 'your brother James;' at which my uncle nodded and blinked nervously. But when Mr James left the room the old man eagerly watched the door close, and then quavered forth, 'Thon 's no' Jamie. Oh, no! Thon 's a terrible man!'

I confess I began to find my worthy uncle to be the same; the creature had the gift of imparting his sensations, none of which seemed to be pleasant ones, and he really played upon me as on an instrument. I was mean enough to avoid frequenting his room.

And what of the others? Although Cosmo

had made his peace with me, with Anne, I fancied, he had not been so successful. He seemed to me to be always furtively trying to conciliate her; whilst she, on her part, avoided his company except in public. And if, then, she laughed and jested with him carelessly enough, I had accidentally seen her more than once when she fancied herself unseen, and had been struck by her look of unhappiness. Perhaps she was anxious about Mr France.

It was about this time that I was forced to admit that, even allowing for much delay, he had had ample time to get abroad and send us a message; and from what I knew of him I never doubted that he would find some means of thanking us and putting us at ease. The question was, had it come? His name had never again been spoken between Anne and me. I was sure that Cosmo, whatever he knew, was not allowed to trust her, and I would not humiliate her by a question. I was intensely unwilling to ask the others. I knew well what manner of reply Mr James would vouchsafe, and to ask Cosmo was only to ask his uncle at second hand. In a fit of angry pride I vowed that they should keep their knowledge, whatever it might be, and that I would ask them nothing. But in that case I had no further excuse for remaining at Pitlandie, and I had better go as soon as might be.

I decided this with a heavy heart late one afternoon. Cosmo was indoors, Anne had ridden over to Baldune, and I loitered alone in the garden, where everything recalled our poor guest. It was a depressing evening; the air was moist and unnaturally mild, and the midges jigged here and there in a monotonous dance. There was not a breath of wind, and everything was strung with raindrops, which came, at a touch, showering down. The sun, which had never been visible that day, was setting behind a bank of dark and ragged cloud, which steadily advanced across the sky like something evil, and brought eerily to my mind the remembrance that this was Hallowe'en, when our forefathers believed dread powers to be loosed abroad and within call of men.

At this moment I saw Anne approaching. As she came near she drew a paper from her pocket and held it out to me. It was a local news-sheet much the worse of the wear.

'What do you make of this?' she asked. 'I got it at Baldune.'

I looked where she pointed, and read: 'Great interest is felt in military circles over the Rebel Fugitive who is still being searched for in ——, Perthshire. It is no Secret that he was Traced, some time ago, to within the Bounds of the parish of —— These Bounds have been scrupulously Watch'd ever Since, and all Houses within them examin'd, but without Success; and yet no one answering to his description has left the District. The Authorities are almost certain on this Point, and therefore believe that he is still there, cleverly Hid, and hoping to weary his Pursuers.' An excellent description of Mr France followed, ending with the words, 'He is Believ'd to be a Priest, carrying important Papers.'

'A priest!' I exclaimed. I looked up and met her eyes.

'How *did* they manage it?' she asked.

I shook my head and returned the paper. It was indeed puzzling.

'I cannot keep him out of my thoughts to-day,' Anne said almost plaintively. 'And then I came across this, and I thought I must show it to you.'

'And it was very kind of you,' I said. I saw that I had been right, and I tried to pass over the matter as if I had not noticed what it implied.

'It is strange,' I continued hurriedly, 'but I have been walking about here thinking of him too; and why I don't know, for, faith! it 's an unprofitable business. I know, as you do, that they got him away, but what puzzles me is how they did it. I would give a great deal to have news of him.'

She sighed and moved restlessly. I knew the feeling so well!

'So would I,' she said. 'I may as well be honest, Adam; I am sure you are already aware that I know no more than you do of this business. He is out of our care, and that is some relief; but, oh, how I have wearied to hear that he is safe! And I doubt I 'll weary longer. I wish, oh, how I wish—— Adam, Adam! *What 's yon?*'

There was a man standing on the path before us, in the gathering dusk, not ten yards away, although we had not seen or heard him come. There was no mistaking who that man was, and with a wildly hammering heart I realised, too, whence he had come. His profile was sharply defined against a dark mass of trees as he stood there in his gray coat, his pale face turned towards the house which he had entered as an honoured guest. As I looked he stretched out his thin hands towards it. The next instant a wild gust of wind, the first of the coming storm, traversed the garden from end to end; a hail of great icy drops pattered on the paths like unseen feet; every growing thing bent and waved violently in the blast in a general confused movement, and—the path was empty again. I had long cried for information; now I knew, at last, as much as any man could gather of that untold tale. I cannot describe the certainty of it that was in my mind. I found a sudden use for every strange thing I had heard and seen; and, all together, they made up but the one dark story. History repeats itself. Pitlandie had been gained, at the first, by the death of a holy man; something told me that it was for Mr James and his nephew alone to say how it had been kept. These things passed through my brain in a moment, but I was assured of them. I turned to Anne; her white face looked into mine, and she caught my arm, but for a moment or two we were both incapable of speech.

'Oh Adam, did you see him?' she cried, in

the mouse-like whisper in which those in a nightmare try to scream. 'It was Mr France!' Put in words, it was infinitely more dreadful.

'Oh, hush! Yes,' I cried.

'Then he never left Pitlandie!' she exclaimed, echoing my own thoughts. 'Now I know—now I know'——

She broke off and looked at me, as I saw even in the gathering darkness, with a terrible comprehension in her eyes. Then she put out her hands with a frightened gesture and drew back, as if from her own thoughts.

'He never left this house!' she repeated. 'Oh Adam, what a house this is! Listen: you must go; have nothing more to do with them. You must leave Pitlandie.'

She stepped back a pace or two and dropped upon a stone bench, shrinking back against it and covering her face with her hand. When I approached her she warded me off.

'Promise me you will go away,' she said with almost desperate entreaty, 'and be no more mixed up with this—affair. If they should bring you to harm! You must go!'

The thought was never farther from me. I dropped on my knees beside her. All obligation to Cosmo fell from me then; I poured out my words in a stream. I told her that Pitlandie was no house for her; that these two had set her free; that I should give her devotion such as she had never known, and (please God) happiness, if it was within my power; while as for me, it would be happiness such as I had never thought to attain. As I spoke she dropped her hands, and seemed to be staring before her in a kind of startled way; but she remained silent, only breathing very rapidly.

'No, no!' she cried at last.

I called her by name, as one who invokes a saint. 'I cannot leave you here,' I cried. 'Marry me even for this only; let me but help you so much. I ask nothing; I am not so selfish as you think. I cannot suppose you care for me; but I would give you freedom and everything else that I have!' Doubtless it was a crazy appeal. I caught her hand, but she drew it quickly out of mine, breaking into a storm of tears; and, before I was aware of her intent, she rose and fled through the shrubbery into the house.

CHAPTER V.

MY first instinct was to follow her; my next brought me to a stand. I think I stood there for some time, like one in a dream; and I felt, indeed, as if I had dreamt the occurrences of the last half-hour. Would that I really had! Like a man in some fairy tale, I had had two wishes, and in that half-hour they had both been granted me: knowledge of how it fared with our guest, and freedom and opportunity to speak to Anne. Had I not been infinitely better (although I did not know it) before? I had little known what the first wish meant, and now I had got it I had learned what I could never forget; I had taken on a dark companion to all my travels till life should end. At that hour and place I resolutely put the thought from me; I really dared not dwell on it, or look at the details of what I had vaguely seen. But the other was not a much more pleasant theme. I could hardly yet realise what it all meant, beyond that I could do nothing to help Anne; and all my visions of knight-errantry had been dispersed. I had cried that I could not leave her here; but it was humiliatingly plain that, as she refused to go, I had no other choice. I could scarcely believe it possible that after what she had learned she would keep her promise to Cosmo. If she did, what an unspeakable life for her! And if she did not, I could hardly imagine her remaining in the house, for if she asked to be released she must give the reason. But there was little use in wondering what she should do; for it was not for me to help her. I had had my chance, and heard her reply. With a grim humour I reflected that Fortune, after all, had not favoured me with perhaps the most happy moment for a declaration of love. This black, eerie garden, with the wind soughing in its half-stripped and shivering trees, had more in common with—something else; and I thought suddenly, with a pang, that it was little less than monstrous that I could have spoken as I did, after what we had both just learned. And she must have thought so too; she had cried no, and begged me to leave her; finally, she had fled from my entreaties in tears. My face burned.

I do not know how long I stayed in that gloomy place, filled with conflicting and most unhappy thoughts—the sum of which, however, always remained the same: that nothing was left for me but to take Anne's advice and go—the sooner the better. I hesitated a while before I could bring myself to enter the house, but at last I went in.

My delay had done me this service: that supper—one dreaded ordeal—was over. The family, Anne excepted, were in the parlour, Uncle Adam (who gave forth an odour of singeing) in front of a great fire with his cards, Cosmo snuffing the candles, and Mr James reading his favourite *Pitscottie*. But these practical realities of daily life, as we call them, did not impress me as they would at one time have done; they seemed more unreal than the others now. Those two actors never played, little as they knew it, to a more unappreciative audience.

I broached the subject of my going at once, saying that I found I must really leave next day, and that, if it caused them no inconvenience, I should prefer to start in the morning. To my great relief, after the first exclamations

at my haste, they said no more, seeing, I suppose, that I was bent on it. Soon after, I gladly escaped from the room on the pretext of packing, and thus I kept thought for a little at arm's-length. But not for long. That was an unending night. The wind had steadily risen, and buffeted the house, roaring like the sea in the distant trees of the park. The candles, which I burned singly as long as I could eke them out, flamed and dwindled alternately, and cast all manner of shadows where least one expected. Some, falling upon the door, gave it at times the appearance of being stealthily opened, a trifling circumstance in daylight, but not in this house, on the Eve of All Souls, seeing what I knew. I avoided the sight of the dim mirror over the mantelpiece; it seemed in the wavering light to be an empty frame, which might at any moment contain a face. I wished ardently that the Black Bedroom had contained some holy emblem, a crucifix or some such token; and my eyes sought the sampler on the opposite wall, where some woman of our family had embroidered with an infinity of labour the Holy Name of God. I think it was in the effort to keep my eyes on it that at last I fell asleep, and awoke to find the sun shining.

I went in to breakfast with the feeling that however awkward my meeting with Anne might be—it could not well be otherwise—and however distasteful the breaking of bread with these other two, they must somehow be got over, and could not be very prolonged. But one of them was to be spared me, for breakfast passed without Anne's appearance. The less said of the meal the better. Mr James, fortunately, was busy, and with the muttered remark that 'the lassie has o'erslept hersel', I doubt,' retired at once to his study, while I made for the door to take a farewell stroll, Cosmo (little as I wanted him) at my heels. It is difficult to adjust the balance of our minds when we know one thing and see another, and as I crossed the hall I felt as if I were in the wrong, the ungrateful, treacherous guest, whose thoughts would amaze his host if they could be revealed. I had opened the front door, and Cosmo was a pace or two behind me, when Anne's waiting-woman stopped him with a low-spoken message which made him cry 'Eh?'

I did not hear her answer, but his echo of it, 'To Baldune, did ye say, so early?' made me turn; he was so amazed. He had a little packet in his hand which I had seen in the girl's a minute ago, and as I turned he tore it so clumsily open that something dropped from it, rebounding with a tinkle on the stone-flagged floor, and finally coming to rest in a bar of sunshine at my feet, a spot of living green.

One look was enough. I slipped out, closing the door silently behind me, leaving Cosmo to read the letter that I had seen in his shaking hand. I had never imagined that the sight of Sir Adam's jewel could give me pleasure, but it would be hard to find a word for all it gave me then. Perhaps I had but little cause for happiness—that remained to be seen; yet Anne's betrothal was at an end, and could never be patched up again, for to break it she must have hinted at what she knew, and these two had no longer any power over her. As I stood there, looking across the fields that lay almost breathlessly silent under the wizardry of the first white, sparkling frost of winter, the sleeping valley suddenly was filled for me with enchanting dreams. I remembered a fragment she had spoken the night before: 'If you should come to harm!'

When I re-entered the house Mr James had no terrors for me. There was no one visible, only a murmur of voices from the study, and I betook myself upstairs to bid farewell to Uncle Adam, the one creature of my kindred there whom I was sorry to leave. He had just finished breakfast, and was sitting up, a scarlet pirnie on his head, peering out of the shadows of the box-bed like some shrivelled little warlock. He shook my hand very warmly, and realising that here was some one going somewhere, quavered forth wishes for a pleasant journey, breaking off in the midst, however, to nod to the starling, who, waking up at the sound of voices, opened a filmy eye, cried out perfunctorily, 'Jamie! Jamie!' (as if he advocated a hopeless cause), and immediately composed himself again to sleep. Uncle Adam, less conscientiously, omitted to finish his speech at all. I left the one poor innocent regarding the other, and went down to find that my horse was at the door.

No one being in sight, I crossed the hall and boldly invoked Mr James by knocking at the door of his room. There was a momentary stirring within, and the next instant he and his nephew stood before me, and I knew what their policy was to be. It was Mr James's old one of silence, which had already served him so well. I might have known it before. If I knew what they feared, they dared not quarrel with me, and they could not ask me anything concerning Anne lest I asked them one question in return. Their state of mind must have been that of wild creatures caged and menaced by a whip which forbade them even to show their teeth; and Cosmo was at least honest: he looked the sullen hatred which I am sure he felt. He did not utter a word. Mr James was as he had always been, except that his usually healthy colour had deserted him, and that he was perhaps a little briefer of speech than usual.

'Ay,' he said, advancing, 'you're for the road? Weel, weel.'

If he could not control Cosmo's looks, he had at least prevailed on him to be silent, and he was now calmly facing me down.

I felt something in me cry out all at once not to resemble him, to be silent no longer.

'Well, sir,' I said, 'I doubt I have taxed your hospitality as it is. They say, "You should not outstay your welcome," and I think it is a wise saying. There are some guests who come to a house never to leave it; but that's a bad business for the household.'

I felt it a virtue to strike the creature as he stood there, and that the blow told there was no mistaking. Once again I saw an expression in those pale eyes, and for one minute Mr James was afraid of me: a triumph, perhaps, but an ugly one, on which I did not care to dwell.

I had difficulty in taking the hand which he silently held out, and he saw it. An impulse of shame seized me then, and I took it, stammering out some words of thanks for his hospitality. There was one reason why I should never lift a finger against him, although he might never quite realise or believe it, and punish himself with useless distrust and fear. I think he did.

Half-way up the avenue I turned, and, looking back, saw uncle and nephew standing upon the threshold of Pitlandie, that empty house; and there rose to my mind the thought of another house, empty, swept, and garnished, made ready to receive dreadful guests, seven in number. I was still thinking on these things when I passed the Smiddy of Outwyle. The black door was open as if at the very idea of Mr James, and the bellows purred like some great drowsy beast passing the time in pleasurable anticipation. Surely it was justified, for, after all, those who are destined to come thither must one day come by whatsoever devious paths of respectability they may travel.

But the road to Baldune turned my thoughts as well as my steps aside, and all things were banished from my mind then but the one. Nor when I rode out of the strath some hours later could I think of anything but the great happiness I had found there. We are but selfish creatures, and I can only crave forgiveness that for the time I had forgotten at whose hands I had got my happiness, and that I could never thank him for what he had given me.

I never saw Mr James or his nephew again. Cosmo took his disappointment very deeply to heart, and doubtless it was little consolation to him that he had the sympathy of the countryside, who all joined in condemning Anne and me. There prevailed, I believe, a general astonishment that a daughter of Mr James could have behaved in so deceitful a way, and every one admired the proud and dignified silence in which he bore the blow. He never mentioned her name again, and only once signified that he was aware of our existence when later on he was under the necessity of communicating with us (through a man of business) in order to hand over Anne's fortune.

It was observed that throughout this most distressing family quarrel he conducted himself in the most just, upright, and gentlemanly manner. Mr James repeatedly urged Cosmo to marry, but for long to no purpose. He was busy arranging a very ambitious match for his nephew when all these schemes were brought to nothing by the horrid accident in which Cosmo lost his life in the hunting-field, a tragedy which occurred almost at the door of Pitlandie. Uncle Adam survived his son several years.

Thus, at length, Mr James became the veritable head of the house, and entered into possession, not only of the estate and the money he had thriftily laid by for his nephew, but (soon afterwards) of a title. For he presently received the honour of knighthood at the hands of the Government, partly, I heard, on account of some trifling service he had rendered, and partly to atone for an insult once offered to the family, on which he judiciously harped. Sir James lived to a great age, probably owing (as people said) to the tranquil, uneventful life he had led in that quiet place. He died, the last of the name, making no mention of his daughter in his will—which, by the way, was a work of art drawn up by his own hand. In it he left Pitlandie and all he possessed to a distant cousin with whom he had never had any dealings, and who, honest man, was at once overwhelmed by his good fortune and terrified lest we should contest the will.

But this, to the surprise of our friends, we did not attempt to do, and the new owner of Pitlandie esteemed us accordingly, and timidly assured my wife that his house, whenever she chose to honour it with a visit, was at her disposal. It was not long his, as it turned out, for the next news that we heard of him was that he had sold it, and he seemed unwilling to give his reason for doing so, and very reticent about the whole affair. But when it changed hands again in the course of a few years, and that for a surprisingly small sum, it had the reputation of being haunted; and indeed it has an indifferent name still, and many affirm to have seen the man in gray who walks in the garden.

Since I have grown old a hundred incidents of the Rebellion of 1745 have become common property, and will, no doubt, be handed down. Yet it is probably within the truth to say that there must be as many, perhaps more, and possibly even more interesting, which have never been made public, and already have no one left to tell them. When shall the tale of 'Mr France' be fully told?

Not until that day when earth and sea give up their hidden things, and Pitlandie must yield its guest also.

SIX SEAMEN AND A MENAGERIE.

BY JOHN ARTHUR BARRY,

AUTHOR OF 'STEVE BROWN'S BUNYIP' AND 'IN THE GREAT DEEP.'

OME of us had been working along the Overland Telegraph Line, others of us prospecting for gold about the Northern Territory. Then the six of us forgathered at old Jack Hanley's boarding-house in Port Adelaide, and talked over what we 'd do next. A couple were for going up to try our luck on the Echunga diggings; but that notion was overruled by a majority. Lots of schemes were mooted. At last Tommy Cubitt said, 'Well, boys, what d' ye say to another trip on the briny? We 're all sailors; we 're all mates; all strapping, able-bodied hearties, and fit for any chance. I 've had two years o' damper and mutton, blacks, Barcoo rot, and the rest of the general cussedness of the Australian Bush, and I think three or four months of salt sea-breeze won't harm me, or any of us, for that matter.'

'Second the motion!' said Jimmy Lascelles laconically.

'Third it!' said Jack Meredith, who was Lascelles' particular chum, a big, loose-limbed giant of a man, whose style and speech, in common with some of the rest, smacked unmistakably of English public school and London Clubland.

'Fourth and fifth it!' said the brothers Reggie and Alf Sheldon, as they hummed the first verse of the latest popular ditty heard at the 'White Horse Cellars' the night before.

'Carried *nem. con.*,' concluded the reader's very humble servant, the writer. 'And what part of the world would your Royal Highnesses of the sea be pleased to choose for this pleasure-trip?'

'As it happens,' said Cubitt, 'it 's Hobson's choice. There 's only one vessel in port wanting hands. She 's a barque of about eight hundred tons, named the *Atlanta*, bound for 'Frisco. She wants six A.B.s. I saw a German chap out of the house here had just signed on board.'

'She 's a Yank, then,' remarked Lascelles. 'But what 's the odds?—Well, boys, shall we see what fortune 's got in store for us on the banks of the Sacramento?'

'Jack—Jack Hanley—you black-a-vised old Shylock!' roared Cubitt, as the proposal was unanimously assented to, 'bring a bottle of beer for each of us, and one over to drink yourself thirsty again in wishing us luck and a long passage. Come now, step out! No advance-notes in this crowd, you know.'

'No,' said Hanley, a dark, burly Irishman and ex-sailor, as he came in laden with bottles; 'an', begorra! afore ye 've done wid the *Atylanta* ye 'll be sorry ye didn't shtop wid ould Jack and trusht him to git ye a dacent ship.'

'Why, how now, you bow-bellied and bewhiskered prophet of evil!' exclaimed Meredith, 'what 's the matter with the packet? Have you been trying to Shanghai some greenhorns aboard, eh, and got rousted by the Yankee skipper?'

'Not me, captain'—lots of people got brevet rank at Jack's as long as their money lasted—'but I know what them Yanks is, wid their knuckle-dusters an' revolvers an' belayin'-pins, an' what-not. You must remimber I 'm an ould packet-rat meself. Sure, I was wid Bully Barton three toimes acrosht the Western Ocean in the Black Ball Line. An', anyhow, the *Atylanta 's* got a bad name. Dreckly she brings up at the semaphore her crew, ivery man-Jack on 'em, swims ashore an' up the Bush for their mortial lives.' And as he finished speaking Hanley grinned in sympathy with us; for well we knew that if he so wished he could put his hands on them, and that probably as soon as the barque sailed the missing men would be gathered under his wing.

'Wall,' said Meredith, 'I 'd like to see 'Frisco again. I haven't been there since the sixties. Had a good time there, too. Know lots of people up and down the coast, from San Diego to Vancouver. What do you say, boys: shall we go across to the semaphore and aboard this man-eating ship of old Jack's, and see what we can do with her?'

'Yes,' replied Captain John H. Snaggs to Meredith's question anent wanting hands. 'I kin do with a half-dozen. But they must be rale grit. Loafers ain't no account on board o' the *Atlanta*.'

'Well, sir, I think we all know our work,' said Lascelles, 'and therefore ought to be able to worry through anywhere. So, if you 're agreeable, captain, we 'd better sign on.'

'All right,' replied the captain, leading the way into the saloon. 'Only, mind, if you ain't all A1 you 'll find I 'm a bit of a horse myself; an' as for the mate, he 's a reg'lar tiger; second 's got a lot o' the alligator about him; "Sails" an' "Chips," too, are fair cautions; in fact, the whole of the afterguard can bite.'

'Yes, yes,' remarked Cubitt blandly, with his natural drawl intensified, 'we understand, captain; quite a menagerie, so to speak, and with all due respect.'

At this the skipper looked black, but only gave a grunt that might have meant anything.

As we left to get our traps a boatload of men came on board, and the skipper, looking over

the rail, sang out to them, 'Now then, there! hop along quick an' lively, ef you wants to keep a clean skin. Man the windlass an' heave short on the stabboard chain!'

'Doesn't look very promising for a quiet life that hooker,' remarked Reggie Sheldon, laughing, 'what with a tiger, an alligator, a horse, and a couple of unclassed specimens warranted to bite.'

'Oh, that's only Yankee blow,' replied Cubitt. 'I've heard that sort of thing before. All the same, there may be some fun, and it's just as well, perhaps, that we should all bring along our "guns," as Captain Snaggs 'd call 'em.'

It was sundown ere we returned to the *Atlanta*, getting the rough side of the skipper's tongue as we dragged our dunnage for'ard, and, in obedience to orders, proceeded to heave up our anchors, we six manning the port brakes of the old-fashioned windlass. Our shipmates appeared to be all foreigners—Germans, Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes. Presently one of us struck up a chanty; but a tall, lanky, hatchet-faced man, with a long curved nose and watery eyes, who turned out to be the mate, shouted out, 'Naow then, drop that! Keep your wind to cool yer soup. Yer'll want it all afore we're done with yer.'

'That's the tiger,' whispered Meredith.

'A blue-nosed one, by his growl,' replied Cubitt, alluding to the Nova Scotian twang in the mate's speech.

Another hour, and under all plain sail we were dropping down St Vincent's Gulf. And at eight bells we mustered aft to be drafted into watches. By an exceptional piece of luck the whole six of us got into the same watch—the mate's. Man for man, the foreigners were a bigger lot than we were; and the second-mate, who had been ashore and was more than slightly muddled, chose them all.

We of the port watch got the first four hours on deck, and as I went to the wheel I heard the second-mate, who had just come from rounding up his crowd and getting their names, complaining to the mate. 'Blarmed,' said he, 'ef I don't think I've picked all the dashed Dagoes in the ship. Say, Mr Hanks, will ye swap dogs? Ef there's one thing I do hate, it's a Dutchman; an' so fur's I kin make out, every one o' my crowd'll say *yah* sooner'n yes.'

'No, I won't swap, Mr Maggett,' replied the mate, 'although I don't doubt your lot's as good's mine, which is all bullock-drivers instid o' sailor-men. A nice contract I'll have to lick 'em into shape, I reckon. I'll just be about makin' use of 'em by the time we get to 'Frisco. But I allow to be able for the job, eh, Maggett?'

'None better, sir,' replied the latter obsequiously. 'There ain't many atween here an' Cape Cod knows more'n Hiram Hanks how to roust a loafer up to the mark. Bet your life on that!'

The pair were standing near the wheel, and evidently talking at me. None of the three figureheads of the *Atlanta's* executive were in any way prepossessing. But that of this man Maggett was positively hideous, so covered was his face with a mat of vivid red hair, out of which peered, either side of a snub bulb of a nose, two cold, blue slits of eyes. He was a type of a certain class—the Irish-American—and I pitied his watch.

Presently he went below, and the captain coming on deck, he and the mate stood talking to the pilot. I noticed that the carpenter was keeping watch with us. Probably the sail-maker would do the same by the starboard one. Both these men were sullen and sulky Down-Easters from about Martha's Vineyard or Salem, and could be thoroughly depended upon to back up captain and mates through thick and thin.

At twelve o'clock the second-mate, without giving the watch below a chance to appear, went into the fo'c'sle, and we could hear him raging and storming at the foreigners to an accompaniment of kicks and thumps that showed Mr Maggett was losing no time. Our side of the topgallant-fo'c'sle was separated from theirs by a bulkhead, and when I got below I found Meredith and the others overhauling their chests for cartridges and seeing that their pistols were clean and ready for action.

'Just in case of need, you know,' Cubitt remarked. 'I see that all our friends aft carry a "gun;" and although there's no necessity for us to let them discover that we do the same, still it's as well to be prepared for accidents. I was going to sell mine to Jack Hanley. Glad I didn't now. You chaps all got one?'

We had—some of us a pair, and plenty of ammunition to boot.

Very evidently we had fallen in with a real bad ship, and it behoved us to walk warily, just as much so, indeed, as if we were being shadowed by Blacks on 'The Overland,' or tramping through 'snake-country' by night. Perhaps some of us had been bullock-driving; but we also knew our work as seamen too well to allow ourselves to be worried by tiger, alligator, or horse. Our spells of Bush-life had given us broader, wider views of men's obligations with regard to each other, a portion, certainly, of which was to put up with no such nonsense as our shipmates were evidently resigned to.

'The chap who relieved me at the wheel,' remarked the younger Sheldon, 'was only half-dressed, and his nose was bleeding from a smack of the alligator's fist. I gave him the course—sou'-sou'-west. But he was too scared to speak; so the skipper walked over and pulled what was left of his nose till he squealed again. A nice packet this is! I wonder what the pilot thinks of it all?'

But whatever may have been Mr Jones's thoughts, he kept them strictly to himself, and stepped into his cutter next day with as hearty a farewell as if the *Atlanta* had been one

of his favourite Orient clippers instead of the 'hell afloat' she was so unmistakably to become. Cubitt, who knew the pilot slightly, shook hands with him as he was going over the side, and said, 'Tell old Jack Hanley that we've got into a regular blooming menagerie here, but that we think we can hold our own till we get to 'Frisco.'

Mr Jones grinned, nodded, and winked, conveying fully that he quite understood the position of affairs, and wished us all sorts of luck.

'Now then, you there!' suddenly shouted the skipper, 'can't you find anythin' better to do than yarn on the quarterdeck? You're too far aft, my man.—Mr Hanks, you'll have your watch gittin' a top-dog if you don't mind, sir.'

'Very sorry, captain,' replied Cubitt, who was a powerful, athletic fellow, grim-visaged from the slash of a Peruvian cutlass received whilst serving as a lieutenant in the Chilian navy; 'but, you see, I'm not used to big ship style.'

'Well,' returned the skipper, somewhat mollified by the compliment to his old tub—for she was little better—'I guess me an' Mr Hanks 'll take ye in hand an' larn ye sea-politeness. As a rule, we can't abide greenhorns; but in your case we 'll make an exception;' and he stroked his goatee and chuckled at his own wit, yet not without a sharp glance of suspicion at its object. Nor was he unjustified in his doubt; for Cubitt had been chief mate of ships that would have almost taken the square-sterned, bluff-bowed *Atlanta* for a long-boat. Indeed, the whole six of us were 'passed men,' holding either masters' or mates' certificates in the British merchant service. Not that we gave ourselves airs on that account; we had all been before the mast as well as on the quarterdeck ere this when necessity —or, in at least the case of two amongst us, sheer caprice—pressed. But, on the other hand, we were determined to put up with no nonsense in the matter of being knocked about by Messrs Snaggs, Hanks, and Maggett.

On the second day out we cleared the land; and that evening, with Cape Borda light like a little star astern, it came on to blow so heavily that all hands had to be called to snug the *Atlanta* down. And now the two mates, for no reason that I could see except that the captain encouraged and approved, condescending once or twice even to take part in the performance, began to cut capers amongst the starboard watch to a tune none of us had ever heard before. How the men stood it puzzled us. But they did, and, chewing stolidly on their quids, pulled and hauled to the accompaniment of kicks from the mate's heavy sea-boots or punchings from the almost as heavy fists of the second.

I went up with one of the sufferers to furl the foretop-gallants'l; and as we lay out on the yard I said, noticing that his eye was swelling, 'A pretty rough sort of hooker this we've got into, mate.'

'Yah,' replied Hans, tenderly feeling the damaged optic, 'dot segond-mate hit like von kig vrom a 'orse—mit not?'

'Don't know,' I replied, 'and don't mean to let him try. We're not going to allow any of them to play with us as they're doing with you. Englishmen don't like getting black eyes and bloody noses for nothing. Apparently you people don't mind it so much, eh?'

'Dese Yanks all de same,' replied he. 'Often I schwear I never go in anoder von of dem. *Ach Gott, nein!* Bresently, by-und-by, it goms your durn. You see!'

'Not much,' I answered, laughing, 'or there 'll be wigs on the green!'

But Hans, or Wilhelm, or Carl, or whatever his name was, only grinned, and soon, as we afterwards discovered, went straight to the mate and told him what I had said, in a vain attempt to curry favour with his persecutors.

Presently, though he never lifted his hand to us, Mr Hanks began to work us up in great style, stopping our afternoon watch below, and giving us all the dirty, disagreeable jobs he could think of, whilst the skipper looked on and grinned approvingly; and the sail-maker and carpenter lazied about, ever on the watch to report any growling to their superiors. However, wanting no rows, we stood it all quietly enough. The food was good and plentiful of its kind, so on that score we had nothing to complain of. And one day Mr Hanks, seeing us submissive and quiet, and thinking, perhaps, that the foreigners had for the time received their share of hard knocks, in an ill-advised moment made the mistake of rapping Meredith sharply over the knuckles with a belaying-pin to hasten him in some job he was at, treating him at the same time to a choice assortment of the best Bowery. Without a moment's hesitation Meredith hit out from the shoulder, and sent the mate sprawling along the deck. Rising, Hanks made a rush at him, only to receive another and a heavier dose of the same medicine. Waiting for him to rise again, Cubitt, intently watching, saw the mate's hand sneaking round to his hip-pocket. A warning shout to Meredith, and the latter in a second had his knee on the prostrate man and the half-drawn revolver flying overboard. Slowly Hanks got to his feet, wiped the blood from his face, and glared at Meredith. Then he made a sudden run aft, but Meredith stopped him.

'Wait a bit,' said he; 'don't be in such a hurry. You know, Mr Hanks, you mustn't break English knuckles like you do those made in Germany. The English article won't stand such usage even by a "reg'lar tiger." There 's six of us here, Mr Hanks; and if you play tricks on one of the six you've got to reckon with the half-dozen. Remember that, Mr Hanks, and go and tell the skipper all about it if you like.—Have I put the matter straight, lads?'

'Quite right, old man!' he answered, as, with eyes darting murder at us in every glance, Hanks

walked slowly aft, whither the sail-maker and the carpenter had already run and roused out the captain and the second-mate. A minute later the whole gang were in deep consultation upon the poop.

By this time each one of us had secured our pistols, ready for the shooting-match that we felt was almost inevitable. Indeed, so certain was the starboard watch that presently bullets would be flying that they had drawn off in a body and taken shelter in the fo'c'sle.

But, to our intense astonishment, there was no row. To us this quietude, knowing the men with whom we had to deal, seemed unnatural. It scared us much worse than a volley would have done. However, we went on with our work, albeit keeping a remarkably sharp eye lifting aft. But nothing remarkable happened. Certainly, the skipper and the second-mate made a rush amongst the cowering foreigners and kicked and punched them on deck again. But that was a mere everyday incident. The second-mate—Mr Hanks had gone below to repair damages—walked about amongst us scowling vindictively but saying nothing.

'Now, what *is* their little game?' exclaimed Meredith as eight bells struck and we went below for the first dog-watch.

'Can't understand it at all,' replied Cubitt; 'but you may bet your life there 's something not too brilliant a-brewing. Why, in a well-ordered packet the decks fore and aft ought an hour ago to have been full of corpses. But, oh, Jack! those were two lovely smacks. The tiger won't be able to see a hole through a ladder for a blue moon.'

'By Jove!' chimed in Lascelles enthusiastically, 'what a sweet and happy accident it is that we can sport a "gun" each! Shouldn't wonder if there 's wild work on this hooker before the trip 's over.'

'Wish it would come,' said young Sheldon. 'I hate waiting for the expected. I 'd like to see the five of 'em show up and have it out with us straight away.'

'That they never will, now, I 'm convinced,' remarked his brother. 'But look out for tricks, boys. Nothing 'll be too nasty for the after-guard after this evening. The whole menagerie 'll bite and scratch, but strictly on the sly. We must keep our pistols on us, and always handy for a pull.'

'True for you, Reggie,' said Lascelles. '*Semper paratus* must be our little motto from this out, or some of us 'll be losing the number of their mess. It ain't pleasant. But what can we do?'

That point was soon to be decided; for that night in the middle-watch, a stiff head-breeze blowing, and the *Atlanta* foaming along full and by, she suddenly, with a great flapping and slatting of canvas, came up in the wind, whilst to our ears, as we lay snatching forty winks in sheltered nooks about the deck, came the sharp report of a pistol-shot from the poop.

Cubitt should have been at the wheel; but, rushing aft, we found him and the second-mate—who was keeping the first's watch for him by reason of the latter's sore head—rolling over and over across the gratings in front of the wheel. Seeing at a glance that our man wanted no assistance, for he was uppermost, and knocking Maggett's head in a steady, business-like way first against the skylight, and then against the sharp curved tails of the big brazen dolphins that supported the binnacle, I put the wheel hard over, bringing the ship to the wind, and picking up as I did so a revolver lying close to the spokes.

'The beggar drew and fired point-blank at me,' said Cubitt, rising and leaving the alligator quietly lying there. 'Look here,' he continued, taking off his sou'wester and showing us a hole through the crown, into which he stuck his finger. 'We had a few words about the row yesterday, and then, without a moment's warning, he pulled on me. But I guess his head 'll ache worse than mine, close call as it was for my brains.'

'I 'm just wondering,' remarked Lascelles as he dragged the second-mate to his legs and seated him against the skylight, 'whether the very best thing we can do isn't to take charge of this old dugout before she gets too hot for us altogether.'

'Waal,' drawled a voice behind us, 'is that so? Naw, I guess you 've got this chicken to reckon with fust. Stand clear, for I 'm agoin' to kick!'

It was the skipper in his drawers, and with in each hand a heavy 'navy' presented at our group.

'Kick away, old horse!' exclaimed Meredith, suddenly whipping out his own pistol and putting it to the captain's head. 'Do you think no one 's got a gun but you? You 're the Horse, ain't you? Well, Mr Horse, kick away. The Tiger and the Alligator have had a turn. It 's yours now. If you and the rest of your cursed menagerie let us alone we 'll do our duty as sailor-men should. But if you interfere again with one of the port watch, by the Lord! we 'll fill you all as full of lead as a first-class swell coffin.'

It was a clear night, with a young moon peeping over the leech of the main topsail, and shedding a mild light on the patch of deck just right aft where we stood; and by this it was easy to see the dazed stare of baffled fury mixed with astonishment that came into the skipper's eyes as, involuntarily lowering his arms, he glared around, meeting everywhere the levelled muzzle of a revolver. In the silence you could hear the passionate grating of his teeth as he tried to control the fury of resentment that raged within him. Close to sat the second-mate, conscious now, but very sick, with his head resting on his hands, and red drops dripping from nose and mouth on to the white paint of the skylight.

'It 's mutiny—rank mutiny!' exclaimed the captain at last in a hoarse whisper, as, shifting

his pistols into one hand, he with the back of the other wiped some flakes of foam off his long goatee. 'A put-up job!' he continued. 'And, by the livin' Jehoshaphat, if ever you live to git to 'Frisco you 'll swing!'

'See where that murdering animal put a bullet, skipper,' said Cubitt, showing his hat. 'And don't talk rubbish about mutiny. D'ye think that men like us are going to be made targets and chopping-blocks of like those Dagoes yonder? Not much, we ain't! You and your lot behave yourselves, and you 'll find us the whitest crowd you ever sailed with. But if you keep on hanky-panky, why, then you 'll have to suffer accordingly. Peace or war, captain?' But the latter's passion was too great for words. For years his reign of terror had probably been so undisputed that he at last had thought himself a sort of sea-omnipotence. The shock of this rude awakening nearly killed him, and all he could do was to wave his arm for'ard as a signal to us to clear. But as he stood there, his thin, sallow face working and twitching wickedly in little pulses, and a line of white foam showing between his parted lips, he looked such a dangerous customer that, when surrendering the wheel to Cubitt again, I took the lee side, each of us keeping one hand on a pistol whilst steering with the other. It was, I saw, very close on eight-bells, and presently, striking it, a German came yawning, and surprised to find two men at the wheel. 'Vat is de madder'—— he was beginning, when Cubitt stopped him with 'Full and by—as she goes!' and we walked for'ard, keeping a wary eye on the skipper and the second-mate, who were muttering together at the break of the poop, Mr Maggett carrying a bandage on his head the size of a turban.

'Well,' remarked Meredith as we sat on our chests discussing the situation, 'things are developing, boys. I really think Lascelles' notion that we should take charge altogether and sail the *Atlanta* to 'Frisco on our own hook not half a bad one.'

'If we don't do something of the sort,' said Cubitt, 'we 'll go to leeward flying, for the old man and his lot 'll never rest easy till they 've squared yards with us. Couldn't you see it in his face to-night? Still, you chaps know there 's precious little law for a sailor in 'Frisco—or, rather, there 's plenty of law but very little justice. And, in any case, it 's rather a serious thing this seizing a ship at sea. Our words won't count a straw against the afterguards'. And remember, lads, that every sneaking Dutchman in the starboard watch 'll back the brutes up through thick and thin.'

'I 'm not sure of that matter of sailor law, at least in our case,' said Meredith. 'If we had always been plain A.B.s and nothing more I wouldn't give a fig for our chances. Ten years hard 'd be the least I should expect. But you 've all got your papers to show. Besides, although I don't want to brag, I really have some influence in 'Frisco, especially amongst the large merchants, also with the better class of journalists. I don't particularly want it known that I 've been masquerading before the mast in the *Atlanta*, and should prefer to get quietly away; but if the worst comes to the worst, why, really, I believe I can pull the six of us out of a pretty bad scrape, and perhaps cook the skipper's goose and that of his mates so effectually as to prevent them from ever getting another ship.'

Now, this seemed pretty tall talk to us. Of all our crowd, Meredith and his chum Lascelles were the only ones who were at all reticent as to their past. The rest of us talked and yarned of our homes, our people, and our lives unreservedly enough. But with the other two there were limitations which no one cared to try and get over; and, all through, it seemed to us that the pair were not quite like ourselves, adventurers of necessity. They had met the four of us at Alice Springs, whither they had come from Port Darwin with an overlanding party in search of new country. The Sheldons, myself, and Cubitt had been prospecting in the Macdonnell Ranges. Meredith and his friend seemingly took a fancy to our company, and left their own for it. We were together some weeks. Then they left, promising to look us up again in Adelaide, and form an expedition of any kind anywhere. And a pretty little expedition it promised to become, so far as, at present, I could see!

However, Meredith's promises, unsupported as they were by more than his bare word, cheered us somewhat. There was a distinct and powerful personality about the big man that made one feel he never spoke without ample security; and although nobody asked any questions, I think we all felt that here was a sort of background providence that would see us safely through our troubles.

That day the *Atlanta* was very quiet; the decks were redolent of friars' balsam; and the sight of the two mates, one with thickly bandaged head, the other peering out of black-and-blue lumps of flesh where his eyes should have been, made even the stolid foreigners grin secretly. The skipper paced the poop, apparently deep in thought, and I noticed that, in place of smoking his cigar, he was viciously chewing it. This I took to portend squalls. We of the port watch went about our work as usual, only with glancing, restless eyes, and hands ever ready to the butts of our pistols. Altogether it was a curious turn-out; also an unpleasant one.

A week passed in comparative quiet, varied only by little, mean attempts at assassination, such as letting go braces o' dark nights whilst some of us were aloft on the higher yards; and once Lascelles and myself, furling the main-topgallant-s'l in a heavy squall, and being nearly jerked overboard by such a trick, drew our pistols, and by common consent fired towards

the spot where the braces led. Next morning we noticed that the sail-maker carried his arm in a sling. But we made no inquiry; nor, curiously enough, did any one aft ask what strange impulse had seized upon us to practise shooting in the dark and from aloft. Henceforward we were less troubled in respect of such treacherous contrivings. Of all these little incidents, however, Meredith kept a faithful log, omitting nothing. But the state of continual tension was beginning to tell upon our nerves badly. Below, we moved in constant watchful dread of some cunning trap being baited for us; aloft, ere lying out on a yard, it behoved us to look well to seizings of lifts and foot-ropes, and to keep our grip tenacious as fish-hooks lest the stay we trusted to should suddenly play us false. Only once had we actually disobeyed orders, and that was when they told us to get over the side on stages and scrape paintwork. The vessel was going a full eight knots, and we absolutely declined to commit suicide in any such stupid fashion. However, they did not persist in the attempt; but we saw the skipper grin, well satisfied, as he retired to add another to the doubtless already numerous entries in the log-book dealing with our crimes.

'All the belaying-pins in the *Atlanta* couldn't have held those stage-ropes from slipping if we 'd gone,' remarked Meredith; and we knew that he was perfectly correct in his judgment.

It is hard to say how matters would have ended, or how the general flare-up we were prepared for would have come to pass, as, after all, it arose out of a business that we need not have meddled with, and certainly got no thanks for doing so.

Truly, if our lines were at this time cast in troubled waters, surely were those of our next-door neighbours—the starboard watch—in raging seas. What the people aft failed to inflict upon us they took out of these unfortunates. But at last it appeared that, submissive and long-suffering as they had thoroughly proved themselves, still there was an unguessed-at limit, crossing which meant danger. And one day, the watch being a few minutes late in showing up, the second-mate thought fit to do as he had often done before, and, entering the fo'c'sle, proceeded to perform upon them tooth and nail in his character of alligator. This time, however, whether it was that Maggett exceeded, in their opinion, all fair bounds, or that the psychological moment had arrived, he, after a minute or two, was cast out upon the deck bleeding from half-a-dozen knife-stabs. Rising, he had just strength left to stagger aft and tell a story which sent the skipper, mate, sail-maker, and carpenter racing for'ard, where presently some very murderous work began on that side of the fo'c'sle. For a while we stood listening to the groans, curses, and pistol-shots. Then said Meredith, 'Why, they 're slaughtering those fellows like so many pigs. I think we 'd better take a deal. I fancy I see a way by which this may be made to lead straight into our hands. Come along!' So in we dashed. The four from aft had got the foreigners penned up in and under bunks, and were serving it out to the faint hearts in great style with belaying-pins. Evidently the watch had at first shown fight, for a couple with knives in their hands lay dead on the floor, which was slippery with blood. The remainder, seeing us with firearms, took courage and rallied, whilst the afterguard, caught between the two parties, fought like fiends. Luckily for us, the smoke and the inherent gloom of the place spoiled any attempt at aim, but for all that Cubitt got a bullet through his arm, young Sheldon was shot through both cheeks, and there were some minor wounds. Lascelles—who was at the wheel, and who, on hearing the fray, had made the Chinese cook take his place, and presently joined us in the rush which finished the business—was also unlucky enough to be stabbed by the carpenter, but it was little more than a flesh-wound, and as we bound our prisoners we saw that they had not by any means escaped scathless. The skipper had a bullet in his shoulder, besides a couple of broken ribs. One of the mate's arms was hanging loose at his side, and Chip's face had been battered by a German till it looked like pulp. In addition to the two dead men on the floor, we found another mortally wounded, lying in his bunk as he had been shot. Taken all round, it had turned out a very bloody little fight; and it struck me once or twice that we had done wrong by interfering. However, it was too late now to say anything. Fortunately the elder Sheldon was rather more than a botch of a surgeon, and by Meredith's orders—for he took charge at once, and quite naturally—we brought all the wounded into the saloon for Sheldon to attend to.

'Thank the good God,' said the skipper piously, as Sheldon, after some rather spiteful probing with a pair of carpenter's calipers, at last discovered the bullet—'thank the good God the whole posse of ye 'll most undoubtedly swing *now!* Why, ye 'll be lucky if you ain't lynched!'

After their wounds were dressed we locked our prisoners into their berths, and with Meredith as skipper, Lascelles first-mate, and myself second, made a fresh start, so short-handed that even the wounded had to steer and take a look-out. Of these the second-mate's case was the only critical one; his carving had been done with a will. Naturally we were apprehensive regarding the outcome of all this business. At least four of us were. As to Meredith and Lascelles, they seemed quite unconcerned, and scouted utterly a proposal made by us that we should presently leave the ship and make for some of the islands of the Hawaiian group, passed nearly a week ago.

'It would be madness, nothing less!' protested Meredith. 'Just as we are beginning to

get along so nicely, too! Why, it would amount to a full confession of guilt, and we'd be hunted down with a price on our heads! Can't you see, we're on top now—have got a good grip of the situation. Besides, look at the novelty of the thing! In place of doing what you fellows suggest—exactly what your average crew would think of—we carefully sail the ship to her destination, and call the law in to decide between us.'

'And against us, most likely,' put in Cubitt. 'I've heard that owners and underwriters in most of the States can get any verdict they wish recorded against the fo'c'sle seamen.'

'Well, yes, at one time,' admitted Meredith, 'but it's rather different now. The press is only too glad to get hold of such a story as I'm preparing, ready for the first reporter who steps on board. Now, you fellows had better trust to me. It's a stiffer contract than I bargained for, but I can pull you through. And Lascelles 'll help me.—Won't you, Jimmy?'

'Why, of course, old man. What d'ye take me for?' replied his chum. 'But I think you 'll be able to state a very good case single-handed.'

So we gave in to these two, but not without some inward qualms when we thought of what sort of a reception might await us at that destination now approaching very close.

Next morning we buried the three foreigners. Meredith, attired in the uniform of a lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve, read the burial service in a most impressive manner, whilst Lascelles and myself, dressed up in serge suits with anchor buttons in honour of our new ranks, stood by. Also, Meredith had the wounded prisoners, with the exception of the second-mate, who was not fit to be moved, brought on deck to witness the ceremony.

The skipper and the mate, as they were assisted to seats close to the gangway, whispered together and looked curiously about them. The pair seemed rather broken up, and were very quiet and subdued. The carpenter, with his bandaged face, was at the wheel; the sail-maker we had also made turn-to. It really appeared as if we had reduced the menagerie to subjection.

It was a beautiful day, bright with sunshine; a gentle breeze rippled the water musically against the barque's bluff bows as she lay nearly stationary, with her fore-topsail aback and the Stars-and-stripes at half-mast. The ship was very quiet, and Meredith's voice sounded loud and clear as he read the solemn words of the service. As the grating tilted, and its threefold burden plunged heavily into the sea, I looked at Snaggs' face; but, save a sneering grin, it showed no sign of emotion. But when, presently, the carpenter left the wheel, and Snaggs asked the course and found it still NE. by E., I heard him swear, and noticed a puzzled expression come over his face. He was doubtless surprised to find her still heading for 'Frisco, after making certain that we had intended to run away with her and try to sell or wreck her. I saw him, too, staring suspiciously at Meredith's uniform as he was taken below again. And, for that matter, we also were surprised at our skipper's turn-out; knowing, however, that he was the last man to wear anything to which he had no right. Nor did any of us think fit to ask questions. Only our confidence in our captain seemed increased by the incident. The following day we sighted a steamer, which proved to be a big tramp bound from Samoa to the same port as ourselves, which she would reach a week at least before us. By her Meredith sent on a formidable heap of letters and a copy of his private log duly attested by all hands, which writings doubtless had much to do with our reception when at last we brought up inside the Golden Gate.

The first man to step on board was the editor of one of the big 'Frisco dailies, who shook Meredith warmly by the hand, greeting him as an old acquaintance, at the same time picking up a paper from a pile he had placed on the skylight, and laughingly pointing to an article with headlines in such huge type that from where I stood I could easily read, 'Six Sailors and a Menagerie! How the Six Tamed the Wild Beasts of the *Atlanta*!! A Floating Hell Hailing from 'Frisco!!! The Shambles of the *Atlanta*!!!! Wild Work with Snaggs, Hanks, and Maggett!!!!' and then column after column of what proved to be in the very best style of lucidly descriptive Western journalism.

'It's all right, gentlemen,' said the editor as Meredith introduced us; 'you've got the voice of the city with you to a man. It's been a reg'lar snap for the *Herald*, too. And to make sure, I've engaged the very best counsel to be had for money. We're not taking any risks. No more,' he added significantly, 'are the owners. They mean fight. Got the police flag up, I see! That's right. You're all real grit every time. Ah! here they come.' He alluded to the police, who, with an inspector at their head, now took charge of the ship, which was surrounded by steam-launches and rowing-boats filled with curious people. But these, with the exception of many of the leading men in 'Frisco, who came to see Meredith and ask if they could be of use, the police kept at a respectable distance. As it was, when our prisoners were produced the *Atlanta's* saloon was crammed so full of reporters and eager busybodies that there was scarce room to move. Snaggs still wore his arm in a sling; but the others had made a quick recovery, especially Maggett, who for the last few days had been so violent as to compel us to put irons on him. Snaggs, of course, gave us in charge for mutiny on the high seas. But both he and the others were far from easy in their minds, if one could judge from their hang-dog looks. About the last thing they expected was to have the tables turned upon them in this curious fashion.

[*Christmas Number.*

Ashore, bail to any amount was offered for us by Meredith's friends, amongst whom we presently found ourselves billeted in most hospitable fashion. Meanwhile, in the matter of bail at any rate, the skipper and the mates' party had done as much for them, and they also were at large, but unable to show their faces on the streets for fear of violence, so high did public feeling run against them. On the other hand, we were mobbed enthusiastically, and made popular idols of—a process also not without its disadvantages.

At last we found ourselves in a police court. And I must say that although, with the rest of us, I was not very much surprised—the fact having of late become common property—to hear Meredith sworn as 'Sir John Meredith, a Baronet of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland,' yet I opened my eyes widely enough to hear his chum answer to the style of James Henry Churchill Lascelles, Baron Ulleswater, a Peer of the United Kingdom.'

The official mouthed out the titles with a democratic relish, and 'Jimmy' turned lobster-red as he replied in the affirmative to the indictment, whilst the crowd fairly gasped with delight as it suddenly realised the comical incongruity of the whole thing.

'The lawyers insisted on it, y' see,' said the editor of the *Herald*, who sat close to me. 'His lordship bucked like a young steer when he knew about it. No, Meredith didn't give him away, you bet. Some globe-trotting tenderfoot recognised him, and it came to Coke & Dixon's ears, and they played the thing off for all it was worth. And that's a Jew's eye, my boy. And they're right. See what a fight the other side made before Meredith and his friend had a say. Now, look at 'em! Why, sonny, if you'd ha' all been plain Jack-tars I wouldn't have given a rotten fig for your necks. Not much! But Sir John could ha' pulled you through. He's got a fine record amongst us here in 'Frisco. And when it comes to a British peer! Why, consider the menagerie euchred hands down.'

And so it proved; although the sentences, to our thinking, were ridiculously light. Snaggs got three years' imprisonment, and was fined one thousand dollars; Hanks two years, and five hundred dollars; Maggett eighteen months, and five hundred dollars; the sail-maker and carpenter twelve months each. And at the same time the judge administered to us such a sharp reprimand anent taking the law into our own hands, and seizing the ship *vi et armis*, all by reason of other people's misdemeanours and the punishment thereof by the properly constituted authorities—to wit, the captain and his officers—that I fully believed, before he had finished, everything that my friend the editor had told me, and that we really had need of all the influence that could be brought to bear for us. However, we won, very much to the disgust and surprise of other menageries whose masters, even at the present day, taking warning by Snaggs & Co., fight shy of the British sailor-man, fearing lest they may ship a party of 'blasted aristocrats' to turn the tables on them as we did on the afterguard of the *Atlanta*.

THE FAVOURITES OF THE REGENT.

BY KATHARINE S. MACQUOID,

AUTHOR OF 'HIS HEART'S DESIRE,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

'WHY do you speak of Concini? His very name angers us. We have not so much pleasure in life, De Luynes, that you should try to spoil happy moments when they come.'

The speaker was Louis the Thirteenth, King of France, a puny-looking boy of fifteen. He lay on a couch, keeping his dull eyes fixed on his tall, handsome confidant, Monsieur Charles Albert, some short while ago head of the King's falconry, now raised to the rank of Baron de Luynes.

De Luynes smiled down on the fretful young face.

'That is my argument, Sire; no man in France has so much right to enjoyment as your Majesty. Yet, till you married, your life was almost secluded.'

The King shrugged his shoulders and looked round his barely furnished chamber. There was some carved wood in the panelling, and there were hangings at the doors and windows; neither a picture nor a statue, not even a book, was to be seen. There was no indication that the King cared for art or letters.

'Faith!' said Louis, 'but for you, Charles, and the falcons, we should be badly off indeed.'

'Pardon, my liege. I meant more than that.'

'You mean we are of age; we have a right to

govern France. We do truly wish to govern something,' he went on slowly. 'As to France, she can be ruled for us. We want to be free, to belong to ourselves. Till now, we have always been ruled by some one else.'

He rose impatiently from his lounging posture, and going to a lattice, looked down into the courtyard of the Louvre. His apartments were on the side of the palace facing towards St Germain l'Auxerrois.

'You are right, Charles'—he spoke in a low voice—'we do long to be freed from the Italian's insolence. But yesterday we saw him down there, followed by a hundred men brilliantly equipped, while he himself glittered with diamonds and other jewels; yet to-day, when we ask for the price of a new horse we are told money cannot be spent on us.'

'I have heard, Sire, that Concini came over from Florence in the Regent's train, poor and deeply in debt.'

'That may be. We despise his assumption and his greed; yet, when we meet, his insolence cows us, and he—well, he thinks himself our master.'

'That is so, Sire; you have hit the nail full. Such a tyranny ought not to continue.'

'Ought not!' The King's face was yet more disturbed. 'We told you weeks ago, at Amboise, that the word "ought" was impossible to conjugate. We have power to fulfil the duties of our position.' For a moment, as he held himself erect, he looked like the son of Henri Quatre. 'Enough; it is no part of a king's duty to conspire against a subject. Come with us; we must send a message to the Queen. After that we will visit the falconry.'

De Luynes summoned an attendant. Louis was allowed a very small household beyond the ex-falconer and his two brothers; and when he had given the message for his Queen, the King led the way to the private staircase which communicated with the falconry.

Before they reached the gallery a sound of clanking spurs and jovial laughter broke into the silence of the place. In an instant there came from the farther end of the gallery a splendidly dressed courtier; his modish hat was decked with a superb plume of white feathers, while his dress and the hilt of his sword gleamed with jewels. This brilliant personage—tall, singularly pale, and of graceful bearing—was followed by a long train of gentlemen, all richly and showily garbed. They came along talking and laughing together, and seemed to ignore their nearness to the royal lodgings. Their leader advanced so rapidly that the King frowned and turned aside into a window-embrasure as though he feared to be jostled by the gay following.

At this the brilliant courtier—no other than Signor Concini, now styled Marshal d'Ancre—smiled and nodded.

'Give your Majesty good-day,' he said, without an attempt to remove his feathered hat, as he went by.

Some of the favourite's followers bent their heads as they passed the King; others turned away, affecting unconsciousness of the royal presence, and went on with clanking steps to the end of the gallery, where a turn hid them from sight.

De Luynes looked at his master with a questioning smile.

The King had become white; then he flushed red with anger, the anger of weakness; it rose to fury before he spoke.

'Go to the Queen's chamber and give the message,' he said sternly to the attendant who followed them, and had witnessed this public affront.—'Monsieur de Luynes, the peregrine is too much of a new-comer to be disturbed; we will not visit the hawks.'

He walked quickly back to his apartments, followed by De Luynes, who smiled as though he thoroughly enjoyed the Italian's behaviour to his King.

For some minutes Louis stood motionless in the midst of the low, square chamber; then he flung himself face downwards on the hard couch and sobbed like a heart-broken child.

De Luynes turned away to the window, so that his face was hidden from the King. For months he had plotted Concini's ruin; now it seemed possible to effect it.

At last Louis sat up on the couch; he angrily brushed away his tears with his fingers.

'*Mon Dieu!* is this to go on?' he moaned. 'We are declared of age to govern, we are crowned, we are married, yet we are treated before witnesses like a fool in our own palace.'

He writhed as he called up the insult; then, throwing out his arms, he cried passionately, 'Has no one heart and spirit enough to deliver us from this tyranny—no one?'

De Luynes quickly turned from the lattice; his sympathy was always ready.

'Your Majesty's pardon; there are plenty ready, Sire.'

'Ready for what?' The dull eyes brightened.

'The nation, Sire, yearns to see its King freed from this slavery; if your Majesty consents to say the word, the tyranny shall end, and with it the useless Regency over a capable Sovereign. The Regent'——

Louis stretched out his hand and interrupted.

'Stay! The Queen-Regent'—he removed his hat and bent his head—'is our mother; do not forget that, De Luynes. As to the Italian, you may do what you will, so long as you do not touch his life.'

The favourite shrugged his shoulders; a look of vexation crossed his face; but he answered in the low, insinuating voice in which he had hitherto spoken. It seemed impossible he could even suggest a severe measure.

'I fear, Sire, that no one will undertake his removal with that restriction. I know a man, brave, capable, and sure; we will say he approaches Concini with intent to arrest him. Your Majesty knows the Italian. Concini suspects every one, in itself a proof of guilt; he will fly at my agent's throat; it may be he will stab him before the man has a chance of doing your Majesty's bidding. What then?'

Louis shrugged his shoulders. He said with some contempt, 'Be reasonable, Charles. You so greatly dislike Concini that you excite yourself and exaggerate facts when you speak of him. What, for instance, do you mean by guilt?'

'Pardon me, Sire, but when I tried to acquaint you with that fact you refused to listen.'

Louis sat thinking.

At last he said gravely, 'We remember. That was some time ago; to-day we will listen to you. Go on.'

He crossed one thin leg over the other and sat erect.

'It is too true, Sire. If you resist the will of the favourites—for the Maréchale d'Ancre has even more power than her husband—you will before long find yourself deposed, perhaps exiled to the Ile Ste. Marguérite, or some such lonely retreat. Your brother the Duke of Orleans will be set in your place.' The King started. 'Your wife will be given to him,' De Luynes added slowly. 'I know that this scheme has been proposed by Concini. To my mind, his treatment of your Majesty is in keeping with such a design.'

Louis restlessly twisted his long, thin fingers together.

'Our mother would not consent to such treason. Gaston, too, is a child.' His eyes brightened. 'Besides, we have Her Majesty the Regent's promise that both Marshal d'Ancre and his wife will return at once to Florence. Then at last we shall be King of France.'

De Luynes felt desperate. Unless Louis signed a warrant for Concini's arrest, the favourite and his wife would escape with all their treasures to Florence. They possessed untold wealth, and De Luynes and his needy brothers coveted it; it had been said at Court that the two younger Alberts owned but one cloak between them.

He smiled and shook his head.

'Concini will not quit Paris, Sire; and if your Majesty hesitates, your ruin will be accomplished. Truly your brother, Sire, is a child; but he will therefore be a puppet in the Italians' hands. I have proof that Concini does not mean to quit France. He will send Leonora to Italy because she stands in his way; he will invent some tale against her. He means to take a new wife, no less a lady than Mademoiselle de Vendôme.'

Louis started up. 'Now, by'—— He checked himself and reddened: from childhood he had shrunk from his father Henri Quatre's free use of oaths. 'That—that insolence passes all limits,' he stammered. 'A daughter of France! Our half-sister! It is not to be believed. Surely Mademoiselle de Vendôme does not condescend to listen to such overtures?'

De Luynes was silent. He himself wished to marry Mademoiselle de Vendôme, who, with her brothers, had been legitimated by Henri Quatre.

Louis moved restlessly about the room; he presently went back to his seat.

'If things are as bad as that,' he said, 'I—I permit the arrest. I will sign a warrant for it; but there must be no bloodshed.' He shivered at the word. 'You understand, Charles, no blood.'

He repeated the command when De Luynes had placed the warrant on a table and presented him with a pen.

'May I not say, Sire, unless resistance be offered?'

Louis had bent over the warrant. In the act of signing he stopped.

'No, I do not like that, Charles.' He added thoughtfully, 'You know how I shrink from even the thought of—of bloodshed. There must be no blood. No—I cannot bear it.'

The ex-falconer bowed, but a doubtful smile crossed his handsome face.

'Then you will not sign the warrant, Sire?'

The King pushed out his lower lip, a trick he inherited from his mother. He could not believe the truth of this last accusation against Concini.

'I—I think this projected marriage is only a rumour; the Marshal's enemies so hate him that they are ready to invent all sorts of fables.'

'I have it from one, Sire, who read a letter written by the Marshal to Mademoiselle de Vendôme. I know, also, that for answer Concini has received permission to call on Her Royal Highness.'

The King's sickly face again reddened; then, as the colour changed to a deadly pallor, he pressed his lips firmly together.

'In that case he must be hindered,' he stammered.

Taking up the pen, he dipped it in the inkhorn and signed the warrant.

'Take it; but do not trouble me again on this matter. I will hunt to-morrow in the Bois de Vincennes.'

CHAPTER II.

THERE was a house not far from the Louvre, so near indeed that a covered bridge from its first-floor balcony communicated with the entresol containing the Regent's apartments in the Palace.

In a richly decorated chamber of this small house, Concini, Marshal d'Ancre, and his wife

Leonora Galigai, the foster-sister and favourite of Marie de' Medici, were quarrelling.

She was as dark-skinned as her husband, but not so singularly pale; her face was, however, far more remarkable from its distinction and its rare power of attraction. The large dark eyes were full of liquid light; the delicate features were well formed; there was sweetness as well as strange power in her expression. Her small, slender figure was well knit and full of grace as she crossed the luxurious chamber, rich in rarities from all parts of the world, and placed herself before her husband, who was seated at a table.

'Do not try to deceive me, Concini,' the musical voice said. 'I know everything. You are ungrateful enough to hate me. I ask you to do it honestly. If I obey your wish—leave all I love in this city, and return to Florence—will you follow me thither?' She added firmly, 'I know you will not do so.'

Concini was so angry that his face had become still paler; he rose and faced his wife.

'You ask me to be honest? *Dio mio!* you set a fine example with your sham candour. So long as you were reasonable, and we could work together, I had no thought of sending you away. You have changed; each day you show yourself more imbecile. You thwart my plans; you betray them. You seclude yourself from me on pretence that I have the evil eye and shall injure you.' With sudden fierceness he shook his fingers in her face. 'Cursed woman!' he cried, 'do I not know you and your treason? You avoid me that you may give yourself up to the company of your foster-sister, your benefactress the Regent. For what reason? Because with her you are sure to find your new idol, your virtuous young Bishop. Fool, to think he has eyes for you! You are to him but a step-ladder by which he obtains easy access to the Queen-Mother. *Diavolo!*' he yelled in his fury, 'it is not to be borne that you—you, sprung from the dregs of the people—should dare to put another in the place of your own husband.'

Leonora had drawn up her small figure; she stood watching him with a cynical smile. At last she spoke; the scorn in her voice irritated him beyond control.

'Listen, Concini. At the Grand-Ducal Court I was always paramount with Marie. When the Grand-Duke proposed to his niece to wed Henri Quatre I heard my Princess's answer. She said she would not accept the alliance unless I would accompany her to France. You were included in her escort at my suggestion; I was fool enough then to believe in your professed love for me. But, Concini, it is not because I am her foster-sister that my favour with the Regent is greater than your own; it is because, while you helped King Henry to deceive his Queen, I opened her eyes to his inconstancy, and Marie does not forget. Your own vanity, your own insolence, have injured you. I tell you plainly that Marie is weary of your pride and of your exactions. If she only knew what I do!'

'Silence, fool!' Once more he shook his hand in her face. He longed to strike her, but secretly he dreaded her power; the people of Paris said openly that the Galigai was a witch, and had bewitched the Regent by the magic spells she wove. Concini told himself she looked like a witch as she stood smiling at his fury.

'The Regent commands us to quit Paris,' he said fiercely. 'You shall journey to Florence, but I will proceed to my government of Normandy. My castle of Caen is strongly fortified; it can withstand a siege. Should my future plans fail, there are seaports near at hand whence I could sail to Italy by way of Flanders; I have friends there.'

At the mention of Caen, Leonora shivered; she had learned that at one time her husband had intended to shut her up as a mad woman in that strong castle, so that he might marry whom he chose.

'And if I decline your proposal and stay here?' she said quietly.

'*Diavolo!*'—his eyes glittered and he ground his teeth together—'then I will at once send your soft-spoken, almond-eyed prelate as ambassador to Rome. You will go to Florence then, madame; life here will be dull without Monseigneur de Richelieu.'

Small as she was, Leonora's attitude was full of dignity. She looked at him with compassion.

'Your jealousy is foolish. The Bishop's heart beats only for France. Would I had known such a man earlier! His talk raises me out of our sordid life; he is not bent on self-enrichment; he is not greedy of place and power; he is only Armand du Plessis de Richelieu, Bishop of Luçon. He serves the Queen-Mother faithfully, but always to the honour and glory of France. I could name a man'—her eyes at last flamed with anger—'for whom the Queen and France have done everything, yet he strives only to raise and enrich himself; he boasts that he means to rise as high as a man can rise in this world. *Dio!* he perchance hopes to be King of France!'

'Silence!' He hurried to the door behind him and looked out; the antechamber beyond was empty. He muttered, 'The accursed falconer has spies everywhere.' He heard a whistle. Leonora was standing by the door that led into the balcony. She turned eagerly to her husband.

'I would even now forgive you if you would be true. That was Marie's signal. We shall see what she thinks of your wish to banish me.'

He affected indifference.

'Go to her. Unless I am specially summoned I see no need to disturb my convenience.'

Leonora was already on the covered bridge.

[*Christmas Number.*

'He shuts his eyes to his own danger,' she murmured; 'and how selfish is his blindness! It dooms me and our boy. Only rapid flight could now save us; but I will not go alone.'

CHAPTER III.

THE Queen-Mother's Italian tiring-woman, Catarina Selvaggio, stood at the Louvre end of the covered bridge, screened by the folds of a heavy silk window-curtain.

'Your Excellency is waited for,' she said to Leonora.

'Is the Queen alone?' the Maréchale asked.

'Yes, Excellency. I have had twice to repeat the signal. If the signora had not obeyed this time, I had orders to summon both the Duchesse de Guise and Madame de Guercheville, and to say that Her Majesty did not require your Excellency's attendance.'

Leonora's face did not change.

'I thank you, Catarina *mia*. You are always loyal; you shall not find me ungrateful.'

Catarina smiled; she knew that the Galigai kept her promises, and that she loved an Italian as heartily as she detested a Frenchwoman.

The favourite slackened her pace as she approached the Regent's chamber. If she must quit the Court, she would do so when high in the Regent's favour.

She would not betray her husband. She knew most things, and had already received proof of his overtures to Mademoiselle de Vendôme; but she was aware of Marie's dislike to the children of Henri Quatre's mistresses. A disclosure of Concini's intentions would ruin him with the Queen. Catarina raised some tapestry, and scratched gently at the door behind it. She then ushered Leonora into the Regent's chamber.

The weather had been very cold for April; a brazier on gilded feet glowed with warmth near Marie's couch. She sat, half-lying back, among her cushions. The chamber was lighted from the domed ceiling; the walls were covered with splendid tapestry in which gold was the prevailing colour. The Queen-Mother's plump, comely face was flushed with vexation; her under-lip pouted ominously as she lay back among the green velvet cushions of her couch, her fair, frizzed hair slightly ruffled by contact with their gold lace and tassels.

Her first glance warned Leonora. She made a deep curtsy; then she silently approached the couch. Dropping on one knee, she kissed Marie's plump white hand. The Regent pettishly pulled her hand away, but the favourite sighed with deep content.

'Why do I ever quit this paradise? Here alone I find peace and joy; elsewhere are discord and suspicion.'

Marie raised herself on her elbow, looking sharply at her confidante.

'What do you mean? Seat yourself as usual, and listen.' Then, as the Galigai placed herself on a low stool beside the couch, Marie added in a vexed tone, '*I* do not suspect. I have learned a *fact;* the Bishop himself told it me.' She looked at her companion.

Leonora did not flinch. 'A fact which has lately been told your Majesty?'

'Yes. Concini, not content with the government of Normandy and the important fortress of Guillebœuf, means to retake Amiens. He well knows that we have given it to the Duc de Montbazon; yet your husband has been so insolent as to confer with our Ministers, and suggest that he should recapture Amiens by a *coup de main*, after having solemnly ceded it to us in exchange for more valuable posts.'

'Pardon me, madame; Concini could not have been in earnest.' There was anguish in the favourite's voice.

Marie gently patted the dark hair so near her hand.

'Poor deluded wife! But my Ministers assert'—— Her words were checked; there was a scratching at the door. 'There is the Bishop.' A slight flush rose on Marie's face.—'Admit him, Cara.'

Leonora obeyed.

As soon as the tall, elegant-looking prelate entered, the Queen gave him her hand to kiss. She pointed to a chair placed near her couch.

'You look troubled, monseigneur; you have not, I hope, discovered a fresh plot against the State?'

Richelieu bowed; he smiled at the Signora Concini, then he glanced back to the Regent.

'I have a few words to say to your Majesty which I may not speak before even the Maréchale d'Ancre, for they concern others.'

Marie's eyes brightened with pleasure. She had feared that the gifted Bishop found Leonora's talk more interesting than hers; his request raised her in her own estimation. Smiling graciously at her confidante, she said, 'Place the bell beside monseigneur. He will summon you when he has told his news.'

Leonora curtsied; she withdrew in dumb anger. For months past she had been almost beside herself with terror and jealousy. She was no longer blinded by self-confidence. She believed that she and her husband were on the brink of ruin. Sudden fits of anger or of nervous terror so completely mastered her that of late she had more than once upbraided her royal mistress, had called her unkind and ungrateful. Now, however, before she closed the door, her violent anger subsided. On the Bishop's last visit Marie had shown jealousy because he talked to Leonora about her boy.

'He has no secret to tell,' the favourite thought. 'This is merely his clever device. Ah, how

clever he is! He has to conciliate the Queen-Mother and appease her silly vanity.'

Leonora believed that *she* possessed the Bishop's true friendship. 'Why do I trust to a conviction,' she thought, 'when I can assure myself?'

She moved to a second door behind the golden-hued tapestry; as she softly opened it she overheard the word 'Concini.'

CHAPTER IV.

'THERE is no other way,' the Bishop's firm, gentle voice went on.

'How sure and steady it is!' the listener thought. 'How full of unerring wisdom will be the advice he offers to the foolish Queen, as quick to take offence as she is in giving it by her want of tact and of judgment.'

The unhappy favourite stood eagerly listening. Something warned her that it would have been better for her and for her mistress, far better for France, if they had never set foot on its shores.

The Regent was now speaking.

'You think because I promised the King I am bound to send the Italians back to Florence? How can I send them away, monseigneur, if they do not wish to leave France?'

There was a pause. Richelieu did not answer.

Leonora was reassured; he did not wish her to leave Paris.

'It seems to me, madame, that neither husband nor wife will disobey your Majesty's express command, backed by that of the King.'

The answer to this was spoken in so low a tone that Leonora could not distinctly hear it. The words, 'his insolence,' 'her temper,' reached her; but evidently the Regent feared listeners.

The Bishop answered also in a low tone, but his words were so clearly spoken that each one was audible.

'If you, madame, were freed from these persons you would be able to act in unison with the King, instead of having to watch His Majesty's actions and control the designs of his adviser. Believe me, madame, there are worse enemies within the Louvre than outside it. Your Majesty's present position is insecure.'

Marie laughed out, but with a touch of derision.

'You are not yourself this morning, my Bishop; your words echo Monsieur de Bassompierre. He was here a week ago, croaking like any raven. *Dio mio!* from you I expect original advice.' She said in a louder voice, 'You mistake me if you think I would admit that base-born falconer among my counsellors. You well know that I have more than once offered to resign the Regency; that I have asked the King to rule France. His Majesty declines to do this; he says he is young and his health is weak. I have therefore continued to act for him, though the burden has been heavy.' Her voice sounded very gracious as she added, 'No one knows better than Monsieur de Richelieu how much I owe to my Ministers.'

A long pause. Then the firm voice said very gravely, 'For the moment the country is quiet. Even the Huguenots have been less turbulent. Therefore, madame, my colleague, Monsieur Barbin, and I humbly ask your Majesty's leave to retire from the Council; it is impossible that we can any longer act in concert with Marshal d'Ancre.'

'No, no!' Marie cried out in angry terror. The listener leaned back, sick and faint, against the wall. The Bishop's last words could not be mistaken; her rapid perception saw his true meaning before the heavy-witted Queen had fully taken in his words.

'You are not in earnest,' cried Marie. 'I will not accept your resignation; you cannot desert me. How can I live without you, when for all these months I have every day had your help? What have I done to offend you? Ask what you will, and it shall be yours.'

Her tone was broken and impassioned. Leonora thought that her mistress was weeping.

'And yet, madame'—Richelieu spoke coldly, as if to restrain her agitation—'you will not follow the counsel I give you, a counsel as needful to your own safety as it is to the glory of France.'

'The glory of France!' she said angrily. 'Holy Saints! I am not a Frenchwoman, monseigneur. I am large-minded enough to think that the glory of other nations should also be considered.'

'In that case, your Majesty will do better without my advice. I share the opinion of Monsieur de Sully, and of his great master, your noble husband, madame. If the power of the ruler be justly and firmly asserted, France can and will become sovereign among the nations of Europe. I have already said that the kingdom is at this moment quieter than it has been; government is comparatively easy. I repeat, madame, that I must resign my position as Secretary of State.'

Another silence.

Then Marie burst out, 'In Heaven's name! wait a week, monseigneur, before you do anything decided. I promise to send the Concini away before the week expires. I shall then arrive at a better understanding with the King, who so dislikes them.'

'Much may happen in a week,' the Bishop said slowly. 'If I may venture to say so, your Majesty's friends will find themselves much safer in Florence than they are in Paris. I will obey your Majesty's commands, and await her pleasure for a week.'

The unhappy Leonora did not stay to be summoned. As soon as she heard the door close

on Richelieu she went noiselessly to her own sleeping-chamber, adjoining that of the Queen. She sent away her attendants and sat down to think. Sobs shook her slender body, but tears did not come; hope and energy had given place to despair; she had no longer power to resist the danger that threatened her. She had heard from his own lips that Richelieu cared nothing for her or her friendship; he wished to banish her from France; and she had fondly thought herself the one woman to whom he looked for solace, a refuge from his commonplace, wearisome interviews with the Regent. She flung up her arms in despair. What had she now to live for? Her husband wished her dead or banished; after all she had done to serve him with Marie he longed to be rid of her, so that he might wed another woman. 'High-reaching ambition has turned his head.'

With the thought, she remembered Richelieu's warning words. Well, what did it matter? She could do nothing; she must sit and wait till the blow fell. She had tried to weave a spell so as to discover, and if possible avert, the peril that menaced them. She had failed; no answer had been vouchsafed her.

While she sat lost in these bitter thoughts, all at once she remembered Concini's threat regarding the Bishop. It was earnest, then; and Richelieu's fine prescience having discovered the intention to supersede him, he had resolved to forsake Concini, and to throw in his lot with the King and De Luynes. This thought at last roused her. She would write to her husband and try to save him.

CHAPTER V.

CONCINI always ate sparingly; on this morning, three days after his quarrel with his wife, he could neither eat nor drink. Of late play had been his chief amusement; he had, last night, gambled recklessly, with heavy losses. This morning, as he drew a letter from his pocket, he put it down with an expression of disgust. He looked at his wife's fine handwriting, and was minded to fling the letter unread into the brazier. He had received it two days ago, but he had not opened it. Presently he took it up, and read his wife's entreaty that they should, without any delay, quit Paris; she said her scent of pressing danger increased every hour.

Concini hesitated; though he scoffed at Leonora's morbid fears and had tired of her, he was conscious of her marvellous penetration and rapid insight into the minds of others. Should he act on this warning? He sat paler than usual, pondering. Then he laughed scornfully and tossed the warning into the brazier.

'Fool, helpless fool! her only refuge is flight. Does she think for a moment of the reception the Grand Duke will offer to cast-off favourites of Queen Marie. *Dio!* that thankless woman's own downfall is perhaps not far off. Cowardly folly! In former years Leonora would have counselled daring—would have bade me worship the rising sun and climb the skies with him.' He started. 'By Heaven! I will do it; it is not too late.'

He got up from his chair and paced the chamber with long strides. 'The falconer may not be so gifted as the Bishop; but he is base-born, and till he too has reached the top of the ladder he will be humbler, less confident. I am not afraid of De Luynes,' his thoughts went on. 'I shall conquer him by flattery, and he will bid that child Louis trust me. I will see them both to-day. I will ask the King to send our soft-mannered Bishop to Rome. Leonora will then go quietly to Florence—and I? I shall wed mademoiselle.' He smiled with triumph.

Though Concini went daily to the Louvre, three days had passed since he had waited on the Regent; he was angry with her for wishing to dismiss him, and he was furious with Leonora.

His appearance had this morning been anxiously looked for from the windows that faced towards Saint Germain l'Auxerrois and commanded the chief entrance to the palace.

The King stationed himself at a lattice that overlooked the courtyard. A bright red spot burned on each of his sallow cheeks.

'He is not coming, Charles. I knew how it would be: one of your brothers has chattered, and our bird has flown.'

De Luynes smiled reassuringly. 'I hope not, Sire; it is still early.' He spoke submissively, and looked from the other lattice.

'He is coming. I see the great gates opening, Sire.'

'Yes, he is there,' the King answered.

Concini was coming through the gates with a large following of courtiers and of servitors in the favourite's showy livery of gold and black.

'What a train he has!' Louis exclaimed. 'See! there are armed soldiers behind; they wear his badge.'

'Never fear, Sire,' De Luynes answered. 'I answer for De Vitry.'

As he spoke, De Vitry, the captain of the guard, came out of the palace, below the window at which the King stood. The courtyard was now so full of people that De Vitry nearly passed by Concini without recognising him. Suddenly he saw him, stopped, and placed his hand on the Marshal's arm. De Vitry's back was towards the window, and what he said was not heard by the two eager gazers.

Concini at once put his hand to his sword; as quickly, at a sign from De Vitry, shots were fired by four of the nearest bystanders.

Concini staggered and then fell. He was dead, but he remained on his knees.

'By order of the King,' De Vitry's voice rang out loud and clear; he kicked the body, and it fell. '*Vive le Roi!*' he cried.

Louis shrank back, but De Luynes pushed him forward, flung open the lattice, and shouted, '*Vive le Roi!*'

The cry was caught up by the bystanders; prolonged and enthusiastic cheering followed both from within the walls of the courtyard and outside them. On all sides were shouts of '*Vive le Roi! Vive le Roi!*'

On this morning Leonora had not as yet presented herself to her royal mistress. She had passed these last days in an atmosphere of terror lest any hindrance should delay their flight to Florence; her conviction was irresistible that nothing else could save them from ruin.

She felt too weak to move, and sat idly watching her women, one sewing, another stowing linen in a chest, making ready for speedy departure.

Suddenly pistol-shots rang through the chamber.

Leonora clapped her hands to her ears. 'Hark! what is that?' she cried. 'Run, Louise; see what has happened. You, Jeanne, seek my boy; bring him hither.'

The women hurried away, eager to satisfy their curiosity as to the person who had dared to use firearms in the palace precincts.

Leonora stood listening to every sound; she heard cries of '*Vive le Roi!*' but no cry for the Regent. What could it all mean?

The women had left the outer door open. As she listened another sound made her tremble afresh. It was a measured tread, the tread of soldiers along the gallery leading to the Regent's apartments; now they were passing her own outer door. The Queen-Mother's guard was never relieved till midday.

She listened. Yes, the guard was being changed. What could it mean?

When the tramp of returning footsteps became indistinct, Leonora looked out into the gallery. The Regent's guard was gone; outside her door stood a guard of the King's Archers.

She went out into the gallery.

'By whose orders?' she said boldly.

The oldest of the soldiers stopped her further progress.

'Madame must keep her chamber, by order of the King.'

'What has happened?' cried the unhappy woman.

The soldier looked compassionate.

'I have bad news for madame. The Marshal is dead.'

She stood dumb, as though stunned, then cried out, '*Dio mio!* By the King's order? The King, then, has killed him?'

She wildly flung up her arms, and hastened back to her chamber. She did not weep or sob; she stood rocking herself backwards and forwards. 'I knew it would come; 'twas his mad pride. *Misera me!*' She covered her face with her thin hands.

In a few moments she looked calmly round her, and began to collect her papers and jewels, her money, everything she possessed of value, besides the large amount of treasure she wore sewn in her clothing. For years she had been possessed by the idea that one day she should be called on to purchase her freedom at a moment's notice. She now stuffed all she could collect into the straw paillasse of her bed, and partly undressing herself, she lay down on it, utterly exhausted.

De Vitry had meanwhile been summoned to the King's presence.

Kneeling before Louis, he said bluntly, 'Marshal d'Ancre offered resistance to my arrest, Sire. He is dead.'

Louis turned white; he trembled.

'We thank you, monsieur,' he said. 'As a reward for the service you have this day rendered to your country, we confer on you the dignity of Marshal of France.'

This signal honour amazed De Vitry; he bent yet lower in offering his acknowledgments, and De Luynes whispered some orders in his ear. De Vitry rose, saluted, and with a few soldiers, proceeded quickly to the Regent's gallery.

He entered Leonora's chamber without warning.

She shivered as if with ague. She remembered the dislike her husband had always felt for this man. Something warned her that he was Concini's murderer.

'By order of the King,' he said roughly, 'you have to rise and come with me.'

He then turned to his men and bade them search the chamber and its furniture. He himself searched the bed, while Leonora stood half-dressed and trembling. When the soldiers had rifled every chest and closet in the apartment, De Vitry turned to its miserable occupant.

'Give up all the treasures you have about you, or my men shall search your person.'

As he spoke he snatched at her hand and tore the rings from her fingers.

'Can you walk?' he said to the shivering woman. 'If not, my men shall carry you. I am taking you to the Bastille.'

Leonora no longer shivered; she looked steadily at De Vitry.

'I will walk,' she said loftily, and she followed the soldiers.

A crowd of bystanders had collected in the gallery; among them she recognised a Norman gentleman she had noted at Court.

She stopped before him.

'Sir, I am on my way to the Bastille. In God's name, promise me you will seek out my young son, the Conte di Pena, and bestow him in safety. They cannot imprison an innocent child.'

'Madame,' the brave Norman answered, 'I swear to you that your son shall be safely cared for.'

'I thank you, sir.' She crossed her hands meekly over her bosom, and, surrounded by the King's Archers, she followed De Vitry.

Catarina Selvaggio had brought tidings of the Marshal's murder to the Regent.

Marie burst into tears. 'I have reigned seven years,' she sobbed; 'now I must think of a crown in heaven.'

One of her ladies asked if the news of Concini's death should be told to his wife; incautiously the lady added, 'Perhaps her Majesty will herself tell the dreadful news to the signora?'

Marie, divided between anger and alarm, was walking up and down her chamber sobbing and crying. Suddenly she stopped, took her handkerchief from her eyes, and stared angrily at the speaker.

'What can you mean? I tell her! No! *Dio mio!* I have had vexation enough from those troublesome people; let me hear no more of them. They brought this on themselves; they should have gone back to Florence. You can tell the signora. I have too much sorrow of my own to trouble about others.' She turned to the Duchesse de Guise. 'Do not think, madame, that I am displeased with the King, my son, because His Majesty has seen fit to punish the insolence of Concini. I sorrow because the way in which it has been done shows want of confidence in the King's mother. But all will be well. I shall see to that.'

Ten days later Marie de' Medici, clad in deep mourning, attended by some members of her household, and followed by the Bishop of Luçon, quitted Paris for Blois, whither she had been exiled by the King and his Minister, now Duc de Luynes. Marie's Regency had come to an end, and so had her power over Louis Treize.

THE STORY OF A SOVEREIGN.

By ARTHUR O. COOKE.

OLD Sarah Plant's cottage—or, to speak precisely, the cottage which she rented from Eli Preedy, the small farmer and former roadman—stood in the lane which led from the turnpike-road to the hamlet. The few perches of garden ground were bounded on two sides by a field, and on the third by a path which led to the station, half a mile away across the meadows. For the first twenty yards from the lane the path was shut in by luxuriant hedges on either side, after which it passed through the open fields. Coming from the station after a summer thundershower or a day's heavy rain, you might perhaps cross the meadows fairly dry-shod, for the ground rose and was well drained; but, unless very slender indeed, you would not improbably be drenched from head to foot in that last twenty paces. For the path was naturally as narrow as the farmer who had planted the one hedge could legally make it, and Sarah's boundary, at any rate, rarely felt the shears. Bramble, honeysuckle, and convolvulus trailed their wandering sprays to intercept the passer-by.

The yearly rent paid by Sarah for her house and garden was three pounds five shillings, which may not sound excessive to those aware that an attic in Whitechapel costs several shillings a week. Eli Preedy, her landlord, had amassed a small fortune—a hamlet fortune—by contracting for and farming out the stone-breaking of the district. He was not exactly a popular person, and was frequently called a 'nurker' behind his back, but was nevertheless regarded with a certain respect. Even the vicar was polite and friendly; indeed, Eli rented the glebe, so that it was desirable to keep things pleasant.

In the lifetime of Job, Sarah's husband, who worked for his landlord, the rent had been three pounds. Job died at the age of fifty-five after a few days' illness, the result, some said, of drinking a mixture of sour ale and cider which Eli had doled out in the harvest-field. But Eli would probably have argued that none of the other five or six hands who assisted in the 'carrying' of his oats had died.

As soon as Job had been laid in that corner of the churchyard on which the shadow of the low tower fell about 'unhooking-time' of a summer's evening, Eli had an interview with the widow; he wanted to know what she was going to do 'by herself'—his 'by' having in that connection the meaning of the more usual 'with.'

Sarah was a little, brown-faced woman of lively manners. She had a snub nose, which seemed at some period to have been driven more deeply into her face than nature was likely to have placed it; a wide, smiling mouth; and a pair of expressive brown eyes. When kindly spoken to she smiled her broadest; when shaken by the hand—a rare occurrence—she retained

the friendly fingers in a tight grasp as long as possible.

Sarah stood much in awe of the shrewd, harsh-mannered man who had been her husband's master; and when, the morning after the funeral, he came suddenly round the corner of the cottage and found her outside the back-door wringing her few 'bits o' things' out of the wash-tub, her usual liveliness of word and movement increased to a trembling agitation—'all of a flusker I were' would have been her own description of her state. For she had but little doubt that she was to be turned out of the home where she had lived with her husband for over thirty years.

It was, had she but known it, the last thing she had to fear. Eli did not want the house. If he engaged a successor to Job, he meant him to 'live in;' but for the present he was trying how far it would be possible to induce his two other hands to share between them the work of the late 'odd man.' No other tenant would take the cottage at the present rent or without repairs. But Eli had heard rumours of Sarah's anxiety to remain in possession, and knew that he held the whip-hand.

'Well, Sarah,' said he, 'and what be ye going to do by yourself?'

The old woman had wrung the water from her hands, and now stood nervously drawing first one and then the other across her face to clear the condensed steam of the wash-tub from her eyes. She gave a sort of gasp at the fateful question, and was beginning to pour out a flood of words when Eli went on:

'Because, as ye'd know, I must have the rent for this 'ere house; and how be ye going to find it, eh?'

'Please, sir, Mr Preedy, sir, I can work. Mrs Frost up at the Grange 'ave promised I a day's work onst a week wi' the washing and such-like, and I do trusten to get a job 'ere and there wi' the stone-picken and that, and then wi' m' bit o' garden and the few apples and damsons—and maybe you'd let I keep two or three hens?'

This last suggestion was added with some doubt, for Eli's labourers were prohibited by his terms of engagement from keeping poultry, lest the temptation to pilfer corn should prove irresistible.

Eli considered, or appeared to do so. He saw at once that his rent was safe; knew Sarah to be one of the most honest, hard-working women in the parish; knew also that the promises of work she had received might be relied on. As he feigned indecision, his shifty, colourless eyes wandered past the old woman through the open kitchen door, and caught sight of a large picture-almanac, the Christmas gift to his customers of a grocer in the neighbouring town. The picture was a chromo 'after Landseer,' and below it and the grocer's name and address was the calendar—the twelve months compressed into a minimum of space in deference to the claims of art and business.

The sight of the almanac suggested something to Eli.

'Well, look ye here, Sarah, if I let ye bide on at the same rent when I could easy get more money, why, I must have more security. For if ye live here a month and then finds ye haven't got a blessed penny against the rent, why, I should look a fool, d'ye see?'

Job had paid his rent monthly, Eli prudently deducting the five shillings from his wages on the pay-day immediately before the first of each month.

'So I tell ye what: ye shall pay the rent once a week. There's four weeks in a month, ain't there? Fours into five shillin' is fifteenpence; that's one and threepence a week ye'll pay. D'ye see, Sarah?'

'Yes, sir, thank ye, Mr Preedy, sir,' came from Sarah with a jerk of relief.

'And there's another thing, Sarah,' continued her astute landlord. 'I don't want it known about as I'm letting you stay on at this rent—'tis a deal too little, as is well known; so don't say a word to a soul as y'ain't paying no more, for if ye does, out ye'll have to go.'

So Sarah submitted without a protest to this arrangement—saw, indeed, no cause for protest—and for fifteen years handed over her weekly fifteenpence without any idea of the increase. Even had she understood the matter, she was far too anxious to remain to have dreamed of murmuring. So strong is the love of home—even of a thatched hovel scarcely larger than a church-porch, with a cockloft overhead, reached by a broken-runged ladder.

Fifteen years made but little difference in Sarah's appearance. The head was a little more bent, but she was one of those small women whose backs arch little with age. The brown face was rather more heavily lined, and the smooth hair thinner and grayer; but she smiled as broadly and the grasp of her fingers on yours was as hearty as ever. If anything, she was perhaps more cheery and independent than before, for had she not paid her weekly rent to the day without one single failure or abatement, and without the intervention of charity?

But the sixteenth winter after Job's death was a memorable one, putting into requisition the memories of 'oldest inhabitants' to name its equal for arctic rigour; and in the late spring the Reaper was busy with many a sheaf. 'A green Yule makes a fat churchyard,' says the old saw; but a hard winter makes the snowdrops and crocuses flower on many a fresh mound that would have lain level with the turf but for the icy grip which freezes the life-blood in old veins. The slow stream thaws, it may be, and throbs gently for a few weeks or months after the 'cold snap' has passed; but the faltering life has

received a fatal check, and dies down as the days grow longer.

Sarah did not die; she did not even keep her bed through the winter. But rain and snow soaked through the mossy thatch and drifted under the broken eaves of her garret bedroom, and it was observed that she coughed with a hard, tight cough, and often put her hand to her side. And one Monday morning in March she did not appear as usual at the Grange, and the young servant, whom Mrs Frost sent across the fields to see what was the matter, reported that Sarah was 'very bad'—not even able to get downstairs and light her fire.

Through the six or seven weeks of illness that followed, Mrs Frost and Sarah's one or two other employers were kind to her with the never-failing kindness of the English farmer's wife. The vicar sent tickets for coal and bread, and the neighbours did their best. But it had been a 'cruel' winter for all; there were large families, with the father out of work and mothers with infants to care for, so that a solitary old woman whose face was seamed and grained with the soil of field and garden, and who had never worn picturesque caps or sat knitting in her doorway with a cat upon her knee, did not attract very much interest or attention. And when she first crept outside the door one April morning, strength and money were both at a very low ebb. The neighbour who looked in to 'do for her' while she lay helpless had forgotten to fasten the door of the hen-roost one evening after its occupants had pecked up their handful of damaged barley, and a sharp-set fox, naturally regarding this as a providential interference on his behalf, hastened to avail himself of it, carrying off two of the five hens and leaving a third dead in the garden.

There had been enough silver in an old stoneware tobacco-jar on the chimney-piece to pay the first three weeks' rent which fell due while Sarah lay ill, and for which her landlord had no scruple in calling; the old woman had been seized with a paroxysm of trembling and coughing when the friendly neighbour had wanted to appropriate some of the money for wine and jelly. But now she was four weeks behind; the next day but one was Saturday, and Eli had, on the occasion of his last unsuccessful call, spoken ominously of the workhouse. She could still get credit at the village shop for a few necessaries, and the baker would leave a loaf on trust when he passed down the lane twice a week; but Eli's patience, she felt, was at an end. She was too independent to care for borrowing from her employers, and they did not offer to lend, supposing, if they thought of the matter at all, that Sarah had a bit of money laid by, or that Eli, like other people, could wait for his rent. She saw eviction before her—though she would not have called it by that name—and her heart sank. That very morning, however, a few days after she had begun to move about, the vicar had called with five shillings from the poor-box. Her spirits rose; in a few days she would be well enough to get to work again.

It was on one of those April days of sun and shower, when the showers are long and frequent and the intervals of sunshine short, that a learned antiquary came out from the neighbouring cathedral city where he was visiting a friend who was both Honourable and Very Reverend, and left the train at the roadside station half a mile from the hamlet. He made some inquiries of the stationmaster, and then took the path through the fields, turning down the lane by Sarah's cottage, away from the village and in the direction of the river. At the deanery dinner-table on the previous evening the conversation had turned on Roman remains. The dean, newly presented from a West End living, had spoken of the supposed foundations of a Roman bridge some few miles up the river, and of the doubts cast on their genuineness by some authorities. The Professor, justly confident of his own ability to discern between truth and error in such a case, had expressed his intention of investigating the ruins, and had accordingly set out.

Sarah was at her gate, casting a watchful eye on one of her hens which, surrounded by a brood of week-old chickens, was scratching vigorously in the hedge-bottom. The Professor took in every detail of the little brown-faced woman who dropped him a curtsy as he passed—a salutation acknowledged in the tones he would have used to a duchess—did use, in fact, not seldom.

Some two hours later he came striding down the lane again with a beaming face and a dripping umbrella. He had thoroughly satisfied himself of the genuineness of the half-dozen cubic feet of masonry that jutted out from the tangled growth on the sloping river-bank. He was feeling considerable satisfaction as he strode along through the puddles, and it was only as the low, thatched cottage came into view at the bend of the lane that he realised that the rain which hammered down upon his umbrella was getting heavier every minute, and that if he crossed the half-mile of meadows which lay between him and the station he would be very unpleasantly wet. He looked at his watch; it wanted nearly an hour to the time of his return train. The garden gate stood open, and he went up the little path.

Sarah was in the outhouse at the back, but she heard the footsteps, and came into the kitchen as the Professor, standing on the square patch of 'kidney' stones, tapped lightly at the door.

'May I ask you,' he said, 'to allow me to shelter for a few minutes till the rain is less heavy?'

'Yes, sir, surely,' came with cordial brisk-

ness from Sarah. 'Do please to come in, sir, and dry yourself at the bit o' fire. It be gone low, but I 'll put some sticks on and stir 't up.'

'Thank you, thank you; but I fear my shoes will make sad work with your clean floor;' and he stepped within the door just out of range of the downpour.

'Oh, sir, don't ye speak of it. Wet's easy mopped up, sir. Do 'e please to come in.'

Thus entreated, he crossed the uneven quarries to the fire, where Sarah placed a chair for him. The old woman stood chatting brightly, till a paroxysm of coughing, due alike to the excitement and to her eager exertions, made her put a hand to her side and lean against the little round table for support.

'I am sorry to see you troubled with such a bad cough,' said the visitor kindly.

'Well, yes, sir; I've had this bit o' coughin' off and on now for a goodish bit,' answered Sarah when she could speak again. 'I'd a ter'ble bad turn just after Candlemas—upstairs there I was'—jerking her head in the direction of the garret—'nigh on two months; but I be gettin' ower it now.'

'Um!' said her visitor rather doubtfully. 'Do you live here alone?'

'Yes, sir; fifteen year I've lived here by myself sin' my poor man were took, and thirty-three afore that wi' him.'

'Have you had much sickness in the parish this hard winter?'

'Well, sir, there have been a *lot* o' folks down wi' one thing and another, and this here 'flenzy 've been most everywhere.'

'Ah, yes.' He was reading a great deal between the lines of what this old woman told him. He possessed more insight into general matters than he was always credited with, and could have supplied a pretty correct account of Sarah's life and means during the last fifteen years. An unobtrusive, independent woman, passed over in favour of more plausible candidates for assistance; a constitution shattered by hard work, exposure to all weathers, and insufficient food, now struggling feebly in the powerful grip of disease.

'Ah, yes; just so,' he repeated. Then, as a beam of slanting sunshine shone through the open door, he rose and added, 'Well, I think I may venture now; the shower is over. I am very much obliged to you for your hospitable shelter.'

He turned a little aside as Sarah preceded him to the door, and, taking two half-crowns from his purse, said gently, 'I know at these times there is often a little difficulty in making both ends meet—rent-day comes round rather too quickly, doesn't it? You must allow me the pleasure of being of a little use to you.'

He pressed the coins into her hand, and felt his fingers grasped convulsively in return; but Sarah's gasping thanks were almost inaudible. Then he turned up the footpath and went his way.

An hour later, when Sarah went out to feed her chickens, she saw something glittering on the wet earth by the garden gate. It was a sovereign. She picked it up, and stood pondering and troubled. The gentleman must have dropped it as he put the purse into his pocket again; she had seen him slip it back as he went through the gate.

What was she to do? He was gone from the station an hour ago; she had heard the whistle, and the slow, deep puff of the engine as the train moved on towards the city had been audible in the evening air, clear after the rain. But she could go to the station and ask where he came from, and if only from the town, he would perhaps miss the money and return for it.

So dusk found her hurrying across the fields. Yes, the gentleman who came out by the midday train had given up a ticket from H—— and had gone back. Sarah toiled heavily up over the fields, panting with weariness and excitement. It was almost dark as she crossed the last field, and the path between the double hedge was hardly visible. When she entered it she put her hand in her pocket, and, drawing out the key of the house-door, carried it on her finger. With some vague idea of finding the gentleman still at the station, or of his having discovered his loss and left some message about it, she had taken the sovereign with her, and in her confusion and hurry not finding her handkerchief—her usual purse—still held the coin tightly clutched in her hand. As she came to the end of the path something stretched across it caught her foot, and she fell heavily to the ground. Key and sovereign alike flew from her hand.

The path was soft and 'squishy' from the rain, and Sarah, after a few moments of stunned helplessness, rose unsteadily to her knees. Her hand soon found the key, which had lain where it fell; but no sovereign met her touch. She must get her lantern. Rising and turning round, she saw that the cause of her disaster was a tramp, whose head and shoulders were propped against the mound on one side, while his feet almost touched the other. The man, who was in a drunken sleep, had not moved when Sarah fell over him, and still lay breathing heavily.

Long after dark that night the old woman might have been seen, with her dim candle-lantern, groping and searching up and down the path, in the hedges and even across the lane; turning over the soft, fragrant earth in the hedge-bottoms, poking in each tuft of grass; but all to no purpose. Towards midnight she crept wearily and despairingly to her garret. The gentleman would surely come to-morrow; he would blame her carelessness, perhaps not believe her tale. The evidence in her favour of her visit to the

station it was beyond the grasp of Sarah's mind to consider, as was likewise the possibility of sovereigns, even with 'gentlefolks,' being so plentiful as to be dropped without being missed.

When the sun sent its first ray down the path next morning, the tramp awoke, drew his hands across his heavy eyes, and sat up. As he did so something glittered in the bank almost at his feet. He leaned forward and drew out the sovereign.

A moment later he was on his feet and slouching briskly along the road towards the distant line of Welsh hills.

In another half-hour Sarah too was up and renewing her search, with hope growing fainter every minute, since she saw that the tramp was gone; and she stopped at length, wearied and aching.

She could not let the gentleman think, when he returned to claim his money, that she had repaid his kindness with theft. No; she must get a sovereign somehow, and that at once. She would go to Mrs Frost at the Grange, and ask her to lend the money. She need only borrow ten shillings, for she had the gentleman's five and the five that the vicar had left her from the poor-box. She had never borrowed money before, and it went sorely against the grain now; but it must be done. She put on her faded sun-bonnet and set off.

Mrs Frost was quite willing to lend Sarah the half-sovereign, and did not press too curiously for the cause of her strait; knowing Eli Preedy, she set it down to pressure for rent. But she wondered a little at the old woman's anxiety to leave the ten shillings behind, and so receive the loan in one shining sovereign; and thought it a little troublesome, for it sent her upstairs to the oak bureau.

Once more at home, Sarah rolled the sovereign in a bit of paper and deposited it in her almost empty jar. Then she went about her work with a mind at ease. Now and again during that day and those that followed she renewed her search up and down the path and in the lane, but naturally without result.

But as the days passed and her friend did not appear to claim his money, Sarah again grew uneasy. The thought that he might have considered it useless to return, concluding that she would deny having found it, troubled her greatly. When Saturday came and she toiled painfully to the city with a few flowers and eggs, she carried the sovereign with her, and, going to the police station, told her story to the inspector on duty. But she was not brilliant at description, and could only say that her visitor was a 'tall-like gentleman.' The Spring Assizes had just been held, and many strangers had been in the town. Probably it was one of the barristers out for a stroll, the officer said, and if there were any inquiries about it he would let her know. But they had now all gone to the next town on circuit, and after a few days he thought she might honestly keep the money.

But Sarah went home dissatisfied; the gentleman had not meant her to have the money. However, if he were a lawyer and came down with ''sizes' he might come for it yet. With this hope she was fairly content. Meanwhile there was now four weeks' rent due and wholly unprovided for. Sarah was determined to borrow no more; as it was, it would take several days' work at the Grange to clear off Mrs Frost's advance, and she cast about in her mind for the means of raising the needed five shillings for her landlord.

She thought of her brood of chickens; there were twelve of them, strong and thriving, and nearly a fortnight old. Eli, she knew, had had bad luck with his sitting hens, and might be willing to take them. Of course it was a loss, for the chickens, pecking about the road, cost her but little for corn, and in three months' time would have been worth three or four shillings a couple. But she must let them go; she could set her other hen.

Eli, when the subject was broached to him, took care to make a serious favour of it, though in his heart he jumped at the chance. But he laughed at the notion of five shillings for the brood and half-a-crown for the hen. 'Six shillings the lot' was his offer; 'that squares up the rent and a shilling in your pocket.' So six shillings it was. The hen began to lay again within a fortnight of the bargain, and for another year was one of the best layers in his yard.

Through the spring and summer Sarah toiled patiently, working early and late, and faring with even more than usual frugality, that she might set her finances once more in order from the disasters of her illness and her loss. But with all her saving and pinching, it was early autumn before Mrs Frost's loan was repaid and the unwilling debtor felt herself once more free. Then, indeed, she looked and felt more than common 'sprack;' for her chickens—only seven of them, alas!—were almost ready to kill, and the damsons were blushing purple on the trees in the garden hedge.

So a Saturday in September found the old woman trudging cheerfully homewards from the town with a basket, empty and much stained with its morning contents of purple fruit, upon her arm, and quite a wealth of shillings tied in one corner of her handkerchief. The streets were gay with flags and bunting, and thronged with well-dressed strangers who looked curiously at the sturdy, jostling countryfolk; for the Festival opened on Monday, and the fine weather had brought an unusual number of visitors down to the old riverside city. Sarah had stared with simple admiration at the fine dresses of the ladies, quite unconscious that more than one frock-coated gentleman had taken perforce to the gutter in order to avoid colli-

sion with her market-basket. But now the four miles of dusty high-road were almost passed, and she could see the corner of her own lane.

But before she quite reached the turn the sound of carriage-wheels behind made her leave the middle of the road for the wide grass-border. As the pair of long-stepping bays passed she turned, ready to drop her curtsy to the occupants of the carriage; and there, on the front seat, and leaning forward to talk to the two ladies opposite, sat—The Gentleman!

The curtsy was never dropped, for the sight of her unexpected, and even then swiftly receding, opportunity drove propriety from Sarah's head. With a cry of 'Stop! stop!' she broke into a run to overtake the carriage, which had already passed her some twenty yards before she could collect her breath.

The ladies looked rather scared and the Professor slightly bewildered when she stood holding on to the door, breathless with excitement and only able to gasp out, 'Please, sir—your sovereign—I've got it—quite safe.'

The ladies gazed with increased surprise at the shabby figure, whose wrinkled brown face beamed upon the occupant of the front seat; the drab-coated servants on the box half-turned to get a view of this unexpected sensation, and for a moment the Professor himself shared in the general astonishment. Only for a moment, however, for he had a keen eye for faces, and soon recalled his hostess of six months before.

'I remember you very well,' he said kindly, at the same time opening the door and stepping out; 'but what is this about a sovereign? I do not understand.'

'The sovereign that you dropped, sir, in my garden,' said Sarah, much wondering that any further explanation should be necessary.

The Professor turned to the carriage.

'Don't let me keep you, Lady Mary,' he said, addressing the elder of the two ladies; 'this good woman lives close by, and I shall enjoy the stroll;' and he signed to the coachman to drive on.

When the carriage had rolled away he turned again to Sarah.

'And so I dropped a sovereign in your garden the afternoon you so kindly sheltered me,' he said, smiling; 'and you have been keeping it for me all these months?'

'Yes, sir, I've got it up at home, safe enough; shall I just step and fetch it, sir?'

'No, no. I will walk with you.' And together they turned up the lane. Arrived at the cottage, Sarah opened the door with her key, and forthwith mounting a chair, took from the high chimney-piece her tobacco-jar and produced the coin which it had cost her so dear to acquire. She held it out in triumph.

The Professor took it from her hand, glanced at it, and then looked at her curiously.

'I am much obliged to you for taking care of it so long,' he said. 'It was very careless of me to drop it. I hope you have not been troubling yourself about it at all.' And again he looked at her.

'Oh no, sir; 'twas no trouble,' said Sarah cheerfully. All her semi-starvation seemed a thing of no account now that the money was restored at last.

'I must not stay now, or Lady Mary and Sir Charles will be waiting dinner for me. But I am spending a few days at the Court, and should like to come again and hear how you have been getting on since I saw you last. May I?'

'Sure-*ly*, sir, if you 'll be so good,' said Sarah, highly delighted. It was quite clear that the gentleman had no doubts of her honest intentions.

Professor Maddison was very thoughtful as, through the dusk, he walked to Stanton Court by a footpath which Sarah had pointed out to him.

'Settled matters satisfactorily with your friend?' asked his hostess laughingly as he sipped his soup.

In reply he told the story of the spring shower, his sheltering at the cottage in the lane, and the strange sequel.

'But,' he added, 'there is a circumstance about it which I cannot quite understand. I have no doubt I did drop the sovereign as she says, though I never missed one. But this sovereign'—holding it up—'was not dropped by me. It so happened that on that particular morning I had no gold whatever in my purse; so I changed a ten-pound note at the bank, and the cashier gave me bright new sovereigns, all bearing the King's head. Now, this is one of the old Queen's reign.'

For, Mrs Frost's coin being also bright, this discrepancy had escaped the notice of Sarah, who seldom saw a sovereign near enough for close inspection.

'There is more in the matter than I have been told,' the Professor went on. 'I am inclined to think that the poor woman has had trouble through my carelessness and her honesty. I wish I could find out. Of course I did not like to question her.'

Sir Charles looked up from his plate.

'When do you say all this happened?' he said.

His guest reflected for a moment, and then mentioned the exact date.

'Is your friend an old woman who lives alone in a cottage by the path to the station?' pursued his host.

Mr Maddison nodded.

'Curious enough,' ejaculated Sir Charles, 'I remember now driving past there one night in April, and seeing a woman with a lantern apparently searching for something in the hedge. And, still more curious, a few days later at

Wibley petty sessions we had before us a tramp —drunk and disorderly. He had been painting the town red on a sovereign which he said had been given him for stopping a runaway horse; but his appearance was not heroic, and I never heard further news of that horse. I wonder if all this fits together, Maddison.'

'I rather think so.' And a couple of days later he paid his promised visit to the cottage and drew from the reluctant Sarah the true story of her disaster, gleaning at the same time a pretty correct idea of the straits to which it had reduced her. And Sarah thought herself overwhelmed with good fortune when he returned her the sovereign, of whose loss he had been so unconscious, together with another, which, he explained, was due for interest!

'What a chain of trouble we may weave for others by our own folly!' he said contritely that evening in the drawing-room, after sitting for some time in a brown study. 'I am shocked to think what that poor creature has suffered through my carelessness.'

'Really, Charles,' said Lady Mary playfully, 'what *can* we do to rouse poor Mr Maddison's drooping spirits? Shall we put his friend into the little lodge which has been shut up since old Thomas died? It's too small for a family; and though that drive is hardly ever used, it looks rather desolate to have it vacant.—Eh, Professor, do you think she would care for a tidy little house and—how much, Charles?'

'Oh, say five shillings a week,' said her husband; 'there's no work to be done there, but it's worth that to have the place neat and clean, and smoke coming from the chimney.—If she's the woman she seems, you're really quite welcome to the presentation to this sinecure,' he added, turning to his friend.

'And she can keep her hens, you know,' put in Lady Mary, 'and have a load of coal once or twice a year, and plenty of firewood.'

'You oblige me far beyond my deserts,' said the Professor, with a brightened countenance; 'it is too much. If you really have the house to spare, I would myself'——

'No, no,' interposed Sir Charles; 'there really ought to be some one there. It looks bad to have it vacant, and there is no one quite suitable on the estate. Say no more about it—the thing's settled.'

So with this news, after a call upon the vicar, did the Professor electrify Sarah the following day; and a few weeks later a column of blue smoke curled once more from the little lodge at the seldom-used north avenue at Stanton Court. Thither from the kitchen of the Court came frequent 'bounty baskets,' not to speak of a sovereign every Christmas in a registered letter from London.

But Eli Preedy sorrowed exceedingly for Sarah, his tenant. The increased appearance of desolation which the cottage bore when she had quitted it struck the sanitary inspector so forcibly that he made a report of its condition to his committee—a report which led to Eli's receiving a terrible notice, the gist of which was summed up in one direful word—'Condemned.'

TARNABY'S BARGE.

A Thames-side Story.

By THOMAS ST E. HAKE,

Author of 'The Shipbreakers,' Etc.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE WATCH.

'READY, Nell? I'm going aboard.'

The young lighterman who spoke was looking in at the door of a riverside house, and a gust of wintry wind came whistling in behind him. He raised his boat's lantern—for the room was dimly lighted by a fitful fire—and glanced round.

Beside the fire sat an elderly woman, her keen eyes turned upon a tall and comely girl who was standing by a kitchen table putting provisions into a basket, and upon whom the light of the lighterman's lantern was boldly cast.

'Why don't yer answer him, Nell?' said the woman.

'What for?' retorted the girl, adjusting the hood of her cloak coquettishly about her brown, wavy hair. 'Can't Derrick see I'm ready?'

Sam Derrick put his lantern on the table, and crossing towards the hearth, stood there with his broad back to the fire, his hands plunged into the pockets of his greatcoat. He was rather flashily dressed, with a red silken neckerchief bound tightly about his throat, and a dark-blue nautical cap stuck somewhat defiantly on one side of his head.

'She's too busy,' said he, with a mischievous twinkle in his restless dark eyes; 'too busy

a-packing Ted Cartwright's supper to notice the likes o' me.'

The girl cast a resentful look at him. 'What are you jeering at? Somebody must take Ted's supper across to the warehouse, mustn't they?'

'Can't *I*?' said Derrick, stepping forward and laying his hand upon the basket.

'What!' said Nell, laughing; 'a grand chap like you carry Ted's supper over to the wharf? Why, it'd spoil his appetite a-wondering what had come to Dandy Sam, as he calls you. You don't want to spoil Ted's appetite, do you?'

Derrick made no answer, but for an instant an angry light lit up his eyes which escaped the girl, though not her grandmother. The woman seemed to be shrewdly observant of Sam Derrick's every look and every word.

'Nell,' said she—and though her eyes were apparently bent upon the girl, her watchfulness of the lighterman was as steadfast as ever—'I was a-dreaming about Dandy Sam this a'ternoon.'

'What o' that?' said Derrick.

'I dreamt as he'd come into that fortun' what he's so given to fancying as he's a-coming into some day.'

'You're always a-dreaming, you are,' said Derrick, placing his hand upon the lantern.—'Aren't you ready, Nell?'

The old woman turned her eyes suddenly upon him. 'Ain't it like to prove true?'

'Like to prove true? Ay,' said he, 'it's the likeliest dream to prove true as *you* ever dreamt!'

Sam Derrick's words brought a sudden flash of interest into the girl's eyes, and she looked at her grandmother as if to observe the effect upon her.

'If you're a'ready a man o' fortun',' said Mrs Tarnaby, with a subtle touch of irony in her tone, 'you're not a-going to keep it a secret from *us*, be you, Sam?'

Derrick placed his hand upon the door.

'Look 'e here, Mrs Tarnaby,' said he, with a nervous jerk at the latch, 'don't you worrit about my fortun'. Nell and you'll be the first to hear o' it when the thing's all settled. Come! that supper o' Ted Cartwright's will be getting sp'iled;' and opening the door, he led the way down a flight of steps giving direct upon the Thames.

Handing the lantern to Nell Tarnaby as they stepped into a boat moored hard by, Derrick quickly shipped the sculls, and they were soon moving up the darkening river on the flood-tide.

'Nell,' said he, looking towards his companion, a mere shadow in the stern, 'I've been wanting a quiet word with you for many a day; and I'm a-going to have it while I've the chance.'

'What is it?' said Nell.

For a moment Derrick made no answer. He peered round him upon the darkly visible craft, with red lights at their mastheads, moored upon either bank. Then he peered into the girl's face; but that too was only darkly visible.

'Look 'e here,' said he at last. 'You heared what Mrs Tarnaby was a-talking about just now? I mean that fortun' what's been left me by an uncle in Australy.'

'Yes; I hear'd her.'

'It's a-coming home, that fortun' is,' said he. 'It's a-coming home—at last.'

'*Is* it?' said the girl.

'Don't yer believe it?' said Derrick, detecting doubt in her tone. 'Well, you will, I reckon, when I comes to show you the bags o' 'Stralian gold, won't you?'

'Yes, I might then,' said Nell thoughtfully; 'not afore.'

'No, o' course not,' said he. 'But when you *do*—when I holds out the gold in sight o' your very eyes—when I tells you as every suvrin's for you, and more besides—*then* will you have me?'

'No!'

'Not be Sam Derrick's wife *then*?' said Derrick. 'Not when he offers to share his fortun' alonger you—thousands o' pounds in 'Stralian gold?'

'No, not for millions—not me!'

'Why not?'

'Why? 'Cos I've given my word to another, o' course.'

'Ted Cartwright, *you* mean?'

'Yes, I've give my word I'd be his wife——some day. You know that, Sam, a'most as well as I do.'

Derrick glanced over his shoulder towards the point along the opposite bank where a big petroleum warehouse loomed darkly upon them, with a single light burning brightly in the window of an upper floor.

'Fancy a-choosing the night-watchman o' Barton's Wharf,' said he contemptuously, 'when you've the chance o' driving about in yer carriage like a real duchess along o' me?'

Nell Tarnaby made no reply.

'Look 'e here, Nell,' Derrick persisted, 'what if Ted Cartwright was to change his mind?'

'What do you mean?'

'What if he were suddenly to take it into his head to start for furrin parts?'

'He'd take me along with him,' said Nell.

'Would he?' rejoined Derrick significantly. 'What if he was to skedaddle one fine day without even a-bidding *you* good-bye?'

'He'd never do it,' cried Nell. 'Never!'

'Wouldn't he?'

'No, he never would.'

'Nell,' said Derrick, resting for a moment on his sculls and leaning forward to lay his hand upon hers, 'if Ted Cartwright was to go slick away—leave you without word or sign—*then* would you be my wife?'

'Yes,' said she laughingly, 'cos there's no more chance o' Ted Cartwright's ever a-doing that than—than there's a chance o' his ever being a man o' fortun'.'

'Then that 's all settled,' said Derrick, with a sudden dip of the sculls. 'And mind, Nell, you don't go from your word.'

'No fear!' said she, with another laugh.

Her retort, curt as it was, appeared to satisfy Derrick. No further word passed between them; and presently the boat dropped alongside a great barge moored directly under one of the lofty cranes that projected in the darkness up aloft from Barton's warehouse. Nell Tarnaby scrambled on board this barge, and then leant over the bulwark to take the supper-basket which Derrick handed up to her. Having made the boat fast, the lighterman quickly followed.

The girl's first action was to fasten the basket to a rope attached to the crane—a rope with an iron hook at the end, which was swinging within easy reach over the barge-deck. This rope hung down in front of the window up aloft—the window where the night-watchman's light was burning. Nell stood for an instant gazing up at this window; then turning to Derrick, she said, 'I 'm a-going below to bid grandfather good-night.'

Derrick raised the lantern to light her along the deck towards the aft-cabin. But the moment she disappeared down the companion-way he turned the light straight upon the basket dangling at the rope-end.

With a rapid movement he took from the basket a large black flask, the neck of which was sticking invitingly out; then kneeling down on the deck with the lantern placed in front of him, he hastily uncorked the bottle, and taking a small phial from his waistcoat-pocket, he poured the contents of it into the flask. Quickly recorking it, he placed the flask again in the basket. The action was swift and skilful, and all was done without a sound. Scarce was it achieved, however, than Nell Tarnaby reappeared.

'Grandfather 's fallen asleep in his bunk,' said she. 'He 's dead asleep. I tried to wake him and couldn't. What do it mean?'

'Mean? Why, the tide serves at four,' said Derrick, 'and we 're going down to Gravesend at daybreak on the ebb-tide. He 's resting while he 's got the chance, o' course.'

'That 's it, is it? I suppose,' said Nell, 'you 'd better turn in too, hadn't you? You 're a-going to sleep aboard to-night?'

'Not me! I 'm a-going to my lodgings yonder,' said he, 'when I 've rowed you home.'

'I—I 'm not a-going home,' said Nell; 'not yet. I 'm a-going to have a word with Cartwright afore I goes home to-night, if he 'll let me.'

'He won't. It 's ag'in' the rules.'

'Won't he? Well, we 'll see;' and she placed her forefinger upon her lips to blow a whistle, when Derrick caught her by the wrist with a savage clutch.

'Come!' said he. 'You can see Cartwright to-morrow.'

'I can't,' she retorted angrily. 'I wants to see him—speak to him—to-night.'

'What! speak to Barton's night-watchman when on duty? Come! Let Cartwright be. You 'll get him into trouble afore you 've done.'

'What 's that to you?'

'Nothing,' said Derrick sullenly; 'only it ain't fair. Get into the boat, I tell you, and let me row you back.'

'No. I ain't a-going to,' said Nell. 'Give me the lantern, though. I 'll need that. Now, let me be;' and before he could prevent it she again pressed her finger to her lips and gave a low, penetrative whistle.

Derrick turned, and springing off the barge on to a low side-wall, reached the roadway and disappeared. At this moment the head and shoulders of a man became dimly visible over the projecting ledge upon the top floor of the warehouse.

'That *you*, Nell?' came in a whisper from far above.

'Yes, Ted; it 's your supper-basket,' said the girl. 'Haul away.'

The head and shoulders disappeared; and then, after a moment's delay, the rope to which the basket was attached began to move slowly upwards.

Nell Tarnaby put the boat's lantern hastily down on deck; then, springing impulsively forward, she grasped the rope with both hands. Next moment she found herself lifted off her feet, passing up through the darkness towards the top floor.

The night-watchman on the top floor of Barton's warehouse worked at the windlass in leisurely fashion. He never dreamt while turning the handle that he was hauling up anything of more account than the supper-basket which Nell Tarnaby had attached to the rope. The carrying of this supper-basket to Barton's warehouse was an attention she had shown him nightly ever since he had been a lodger at Mrs Tarnaby's; and he had come to regard the attention as a matter of course. When, therefore, he stepped out upon the ledge to give the crane a twist round he uttered a sharp cry of surprise.

'Nell! Are you mad?'

'No—no! Quick, Ted, catch me! I 'm falling!'

He leapt forward. The girl was relaxing her grip upon the rope. It was a terrible moment; but Ted Cartwright's nerves were strong, and he rapidly swung her over the ledge and caught her dexterously in his stalwart arms.

He carried her into the warehouse and placed her on a coil of rope, with a pile of sacks to lean against while she recovered breath.

'What made you do it, Nell?' said he when she presently looked up, the colour in her cheeks

again, and her bright eyes no longer expressive of bewilderment and fright.

'It was the only way o' getting near you, Ted; unless,' said Nell—'unless I spoke to you from the barge-deck, down below, with Sam Derrick a-listening, maybe, to every word. I couldn't do that; and I couldn't wait till morning. So —I'——

'So you risked your life!' said Cartwright, looking uneasily into her face. 'Can you possibly have anything to tell me, Nell, so terrible serious and urgent as all that?'

'Yes, Ted! I couldn't ha' rested to-night,' said she, 'without a-seeing you.'

'That *do* sound serious,' said Cartwright. 'But you ought to ha' told me you was a-coming up. Didn't you now?'

He was standing some little distance from her, leaning his back against a petroleum barrel. He was a powerfully built young fellow, with a short brown beard; and he looked at her with a touch of reproach out of his keen gray eyes as he swung his watchman's lantern agitatedly to and fro.

'Ted,' said the girl, rising and placing her hands persuasively upon his shoulders, 'you ain't a-getting tired o' me already, be you?'

'Me!—tired o' you, Nell?'

'You ain't a-going to run away from me?' said she. 'You ain't a-going to leave me sudden-like, without so much as a-bidding me good-bye?'

'Run away! Why, Nell, whoever's put such a crazy thought into your head?'

'Sam Derrick,' said she.

'What!' said he, with an angry look in his eyes; 'talk to you like that—did he? How dared he do it?' And Ted Cartwright stepped towards the open warehouse doors—was stepping out upon the ledge—as if with the thought of descending to the barge-deck, when Nell Tarnaby put a restraining hand upon his arm.

'Don't take on like that, Ted. Listen to me,' said she. 'I've not told you all yet.'

Cartwright put down his lantern on the warehouse floor, sat down upon an oblong box, and stared sternly at the light, his head pressed between his hands.

'Well?' said he.

'Don't 'e never think,' urged the girl, 'that I believed you'd ever give me up. For I told him'——

'What, Nell?'

'I told Sam Derrick,' said she, 'as how if you was to play me false, I—I'd marry *him*.'

'Marry—Sam—Derrick?' said Cartwright, with a pause between each word, his look still fixed upon the lantern. 'You promised him *that?*'

'Yes, Ted. But only supposing what I've been a-telling you. Do you think as how if I doubted you that I'd ha' said such a thing as that? It was only done to quiet him. There ain't nothing in it, Ted. You're not angry with me? It don't mean nothing, 'cos you ain't a-going to run away. There! let's talk no more about it;' and lifting the basket from the hook where she had left it, Nell Tarnaby laid an empty jute-bag over the top of a 'petro' barrel, by way of tablecloth, and quickly spread upon it a neat repast.

'Me!—me run away from you, Nell?' Cartwright reiterated, his look still downcast. 'Me run away from *you!*'

'Your supper's ready, Ted,' said Nell, not heeding his words. 'Come! It's time I was a-getting home.'

Cartwright looked up suddenly into her face. 'Nell,' said he, 'don't Sam Derrick boast of how he's a-going to be a man o' fortun'?'

'Yes, o' course he do.'

'P'raps you'd like to be rich; would you, Nell?'

'Yes. Wouldn't you?'

Cartwright made no reply. He appeared lost in thought. He rose and peered round the dark warehouse and then into the still darker night without; and his eyes seemed to Nell Tarnaby to express a look of dread—dread of the very thought with which his brain had suddenly become possessed.

At last he said, 'You ain't a-going to let Sam Derrick row you back to-night, be you, Nell?'

'No! I told him he shouldn't,' said she, 'and he's gone home. Good-night.' And she placed her arms about his neck and embraced him fervently. Then once more grasping the rope with both hands, she signed to him to turn the windlass. 'Let her go,' said she. 'I ain't a bit scared now.'

Cartwright let the rope run slowly out. Presently a subdued whistle told him the girl's feet had touched the barge-deck below. He now left the windlass, and creeping out to the edge of the ledge, looked down. The girl was dimly visible by the light of her lantern as she stepped over the barge-side into her skiff, dimly visible as she settled down to the sculls, more dimly for a while down-stream, until the light of the boat's lantern, growing fainter and fainter, vanished across the water into the night beyond. Cartwright now rose to his feet, and taking up his lamp, placed it on his supper-table. He poured out into a mug half the contents of the black flask, and drank it off without a pause.

He now turned towards the windlass with the thought to haul up the rope before closing those big doors which should have been locked, barred, and double-locked an hour ago.

Just as he was placing his hand upon the windlass a strange sense of dizziness came over him. He fought against it—fought manfully; his one thought was to get nearer the open

warehouse doors, where the wind from the river might revive him, where this sense of stupefaction might be overcome. But as he stretched out his hands he swayed and fell, and then lay motionless upon the warehouse floor.

Presently the crane-rope became taut, and then two muscular hands that grasped it appeared above the ledge; and then a face looked in upon the prostrate figure. It was the face of the lighterman Sam Derrick.

CHAPTER II.

A DAY OF WAITING.

AS she put off in her boat from the barge-side no suspicion of what was passing at Barton's warehouse crossed Nell Tarnaby's mind; and so down the shadowy river against a heavy flood-tide she went, singing a waterman's song in a low voice, but in her blithest mood. She had fully convinced herself that Ted Cartwright's love for her was undiminished; and if she had experienced a moment's doubt of him—a doubt roused by the dark hints that Sam Derrick had let fall while on their way to the wharf—every sense of doubt had vanished now.

When she reached her riverside home she found her grandmother seated as she had left her, over the kitchen fire. But Mrs Tarnaby was not nodding to-night as was so often her wont: she had a look in her eyes of unusual wakefulness.

'Why, Nell,' said she, with a touch of the querulous in her tone, 'how long you seem to ha' been gone! Nothing amiss yon', be there?'

'No. What should there be amiss?' said the girl. 'I looked in on grandfather; but he didn't take no heed of me, for he was a-sleeping soundly.'

'Sleeping soundly, was he?' said the woman. 'That ain't like father. Did you speak to him?'

'Speak? Yes—shook him,' said the girl.

'And he didn't wake?'

'Wake? No—didn't so much as stir a finger. It's tiring work that barge-work for a man of grandfather's time o' life, ain't it?'

The woman nodded without lifting her eyes. But presently she looked up and said with startling abruptness, 'What does that chap Derrick want with you?'

'Want? Why, he wants me to be Mrs Sam Derrick o' course,' said the girl laughingly, 'and keep a carriage-and-pair, when—when—*that* happens.'

'When he drops into his fortun', you mean? *You* ain't so simple-minded,' said the woman, 'as to believe all Derrick tells you, I'll be bound.'

'Not me! But wait a bit,' said Nell, now busily occupied in laying the cloth. 'I'm too hungry to talk. I know you're a-dying to hear all about it. And so you shall a'ter supper. It's a long story.'

Supper over, and everything put tidy for the night, Nell related all that had passed: her serio-comic compact with Sam Derrick on their way to the wharf, and then her perilous ascent to the top floor of Barton's warehouse in a moment of impulse.

'Well, I never!' said Mrs Tarnaby when Nell had finished her recital. 'I've no patience with you. But you'll repent o' your flighty ways maybe sooner than you think.'

'Why, granny, what do you mean? I'——

'There! never mind what *I* mean. P'r'aps I don't rightly know myself—not yet. But I'm a-keeping an eye on Dandy Sam, with his boastful ways. He can't trick me!'

That night, when Nell had gone to bed, Mrs Tarnaby's wakefulness became even more marked. A resolute look was gathering force in her keen and fearless eyes. She seemed like one haunted by some dominant thought. More than once she rose from her chair and peered out of the window upon the dark wintry night, her face betraying keen anxiety, even a sense of dread. What was it? The hours went by, and found her as restless as ever, so restless that towards midnight she rose impulsively and took down from a peg Ben Tarnaby's great gray ulster, and put it on. Then she lit the boat's lantern, and looking in at the door of the little back room—Nell's room—she cast the light searchingly for an instant upon the girl's face. Satisfied that Nell was asleep, she turned and went noiselessly out into the night.

She reached the riverside, and detaching Nell's boat from its moorings, was soon out upon the stream, and, with a firm grasp upon the sculls, began to make headway against the tide. What possessed her? What was her motive for this lonely midnight journey? With the capacious collar of Tarnaby's cloak about her head, her long, lean figure bent resolutely to her work, she paused now and again in her rowing to glance over her shoulder, and then the glimmer from the lantern in the prow lit up her eager look. The light in that top-floor window of Barton's warehouse was burning steadily; and it was upon this light that her look was so keenly bent.

Barely had Nell Tarnaby settled down for the night into a sound sleep, as it seemed to her, than the touch of a hand upon her shoulder roused her. Springing up, as yet only half-awake, she saw the tall, angular figure of her grandmother standing at her bedside, the dim light of dawn looking in through the shabby white curtains.

'Nell, I've been a-sitting up all night,' said

the woman, 'waiting for *her* to pass. She 's a-passing now.'

'What! grandfather's barge?'

'Ay; with Derrick at the tiller,' was the answer. 'Quick! Come and see.'

The woman hurried out of the room while still speaking, and Nell, throwing her cloak over her, hastened to follow.

They went by a narrow stairway to the floor above—a garret with a large bay-window from which could be seen a wide reach of the Thames. The room had a truckle-bed under the sloping roof, an old deal-table and a couple of chairs, and an old jute-bag spread in front of the fireplace by way of rug. In one corner was a coil of rope, in another an oil-can and some half-dozen lanterns. It was Ted Cartwright's room, the night-watchman at Barton's Wharf.

'Look!' said Mrs Tarnaby, taking a tarnished field-glass from the lodger's mantelpiece, and directing it upon a heavy-laden barge that was passing down-stream with the ebb-tide. 'Look at that fellow Derrick's face now. Would he smile so artful-like if he knowed he was a-being observed? Not he! He 's a sight too deep for that—*he* is. But what do it mean? Look, Nell! What do it mean?'

Nell Tarnaby took the glass in both hands, and looked out eagerly towards the barge. Just as she focussed it the craft swirled round, and Derrick, who was handing the tiller now, had his back turned upon her. Another face—the face of her grandfather, however—became visible behind the brown sail. It was a gray-bearded, weather-beaten face; but his look expressed a concentrated watchfulness upon his young mate which seemed to suggest that he, no less than Mrs Tarnaby, had his suspicions. The girl kept a keen eye upon the barge until it passed out of sight; and then, turning to speak, she found herself alone.

She replaced the field-glass upon the shelf, and began to busy herself in tidying up Ted Cartwright's room. He would soon be coming in—his night-watch expired at daybreak—coming in to take his breakfast and his midday rest.

Nell had laid Cartwright's table, and was still occupied over his fire, when suddenly voices—strange, hushed voices—in the room below caught her ear, and she fancied that she heard a suppressed cry, a cry from her grandmother's lips. She had risen, a listening look in her eyes, when there came a light step on the stair, a step that was unknown to her; and then a stranger looked in at the door. It was a dark man with quick, searching eyes, who seemed to take everything in at a glance, including the girl.

'Cartwright 's not in?' said he.

'No, not yet. Did you wish to see him?'

'Oh no. Nothing partic'lar. I 'll call again. Good-morning;' and with another searching glance round the garret, the man went softly down, and, without exchanging another word with Mrs Tarnaby, as far as Nell could overhear, went out.

'Granny,' Nell called out from the top of the stairs, 'who 's that man?'

'A chap from Scotland Yard. It 's some mistake,' said the woman.

'Then whatever made you cry out? It was you, wasn't it?'

'I didn't see the man come in,' said the woman. 'I were just a-dozing off, and he startled me a bit. That 's all; so don't you worrit. Get on with your work. Have you lit Ted's fire yet?'

Nell presently rejoined her grandmother.

'It 's time he was a-coming now, ain't it, granny?' said the girl. 'It 's a-getting late.'

'What if it be?' said Mrs Tarnaby, with irritation in her tone. 'How you do worrit about that Cartwright, to be sure!'

'He 's never been so long a-coming,' the girl insisted. 'It 's an hour over his time—more.'

The morning went by, the day began to wane, and then the night closed in upon the river, and still there was no sign of Ted Cartwright's coming.

Never had Nell longed to see Cartwright as she longed to see him to-day. She recalled to mind again and again every word that had passed between them on the previous night, every look on his face, during their earnest talk together on that upper floor at Barton's warehouse. Could it be that her conduct—any expression she had let fall—had given him offence?

She could not think it possible. They had parted last night, as they had always parted, without a doubt of love on either side.

'Granny,' said she when the night had completely closed in, 'I 'm a-going over to Barton's now with Cartwright's supper. There ain't no harm in that, I s'pose?'

'Why, no, Nell. Why should there be?' said Mrs Tarnaby. 'But don't 'e be long. I 'm a-feeling a bit lonely myself to-night.'

'Be you? Well, I 'll make all the haste I can. Good-bye;' and placing her arm round her grandmother tenderly, Nell took up the supper-basket and hurried out into the night.

The moment she was gone a distracted look came over Mrs Tarnaby's face.

'What shall I do? I 've a mind to call her back,' she muttered. 'I 've a mind to tell her—*all*. No—no! She 'd never believe me. She 'd best hear all about it at Barton's, sure enough. Yes, I 'm a-doing right to let her go and hear it from them as she 's bound to believe. I 'm a-doing right.'

But still the distracted look did not leave her face; and then she sat beside the hearth, with no light save the light of the fire, muttering to herself, 'I 'm a-doing right,' again and again, her head pressed between her hands.

[*Christmas Number.*

But presently a creaking noise caught her ear, and she peered across the twilit room. The figure of a man, a white-bearded, weather-beaten mariner in a huge pilot coat and cap, was standing with his hand upon the closed door.

The woman rose hastily.

'Why, Tarnaby! How you do startle one! Back a'ready?'

'Yes, mother. And it's a miracle,' said Tarnaby, 'as I'm come back at all.'

'Why, what's amiss?'

He drew a chair towards the fire and began to fill his short clay-pipe with tobacco from a deep side-pocket.

'We've had a mishap out yonder,' said he, with a jerk of the thumb over his shoulder, 'and I'm drenched and terrible overset. Mix me a hot rum, mother, and I'll spin yer the yarn in two words.'

He blew a cloud from his pipe, looked criticisingly at his grog, tasted it, and then said, 'She's gone down, mother—cargo and all.'

'Mercy on us! Sam Derrick too?'

'No. Derrick's all right.'

'Ah! But how came it about?'

'She caught fire; and being a-mostly barrels o' petro aboard from stem to starn, she wur all o' a blaze in no time. Overboard we went, the both o' us, and we was picked up by a steam-tug and took ashore. She settled down in deep water, just round St Clement's Reach, about four o'clock this a'ternoon.' And the captain lapsed into silence.

'Why, Tarnaby,' said the woman, who seemed dumb-stuck for a while, 'whatever will you do?'

'Mother,' said Tarnaby, 'mix me another hot tumbler o' rum. I'm considering what's to be done.'

Mrs Tarnaby was still occupied in replenishing the captain's glass when the outer door was again opened. 'Hush!' said she; 'no word o' this to *her*.'

With startling abruptness Nell ran breathlessly in. There was a scared look in her eyes as she came staggering across the room towards her grandmother and clutched at her arm to save herself from falling.

'Granny, why didn't you tell me? You've knowed it all day!' said she. 'What shall I do?'

'I'd not the heart to tell you,' said the woman. 'But don't let it fret you, Nell. That won't do no good.—Will it, father?'

Without moving from his cosy place beside the fire, Tarnaby cast a kindly glance over his shoulder.

'Why, Nell, what's wrong?'

'There's been something terrible a-happened at Barton's, grandfather,' said she. 'The strong-room were broke into last night, and there's been thousands o' pounds stolen away.'

'A bu'glary at Barton's, Nell?'

'Yes! And—and Ted Cartwright—he's'——

'Well, what about the watchman, lass?'

She answered him in a voice broken by sobs, 'Gone!'

CHAPTER III.

AT SLACK-TIDE.

DAYS went by. No tidings as to the whereabouts of Ted Cartwright came to Nell. That he had disappeared on the night of the great robbery at Barton's Wharf there was not a shadow of doubt, and it was naturally surmised that he was concerned in the affair. But whether he was the culprit or whether he was the victim of foul-play, no one seemed able to say—no one seemed capable of throwing the faintest light upon the mystery.

Nell Tarnaby's distress overmastered her completely for a time. But in her love for Cartwright—in her undisturbed belief in his integrity—she found courage and consolation. She soon began to go about her household duties as before; and though seldom unmindful of this void in her young life, she kept her trouble to herself, never without hope that the time would come when this mystery would be solved and things put right. She had plenty of home-duties to distract her now, far more than she had ever had, as Captain Tarnaby appeared to have developed rheumatic gout after the barge disaster round St Clement's Reach, for he went limping about the house with the aid of sticks; and Mrs Tarnaby seemed more ailing than Nell had ever known her to be before.

One bright wintry afternoon 'Old Ben Tarnaby,' as he was called by the watermen for miles above bridge and below, sat dozing beside the fire in Cartwright's vacated garret. He had taken up his quarters there as being more breezy and congenial than the room downstairs. Here the perfume of Ted Cartwright's stock of tarpaulin, ropes, and lamp-oil was reminiscent of the barge-cabin; and then the broad sweep of the Thames outside, with its endless traffic of passing craft, held for this riverfarer a world of diversion.

'Grandfather,' said Nell, who was standing at the window, 'there's Sam Derrick again! He's about here every day in a brand-new boat. I wonder whether what me and granny hears about him can be true. It do seem like it.'

'What might that be, lass?'

'Why, the talk what's a-going on,' said Nell, 'as how he's come into his fortun' at last. *You* know what I means.'

'Ay, *I* know. The gold from 'Straly,' said Tarnaby, 'what was a-coming to him months ago.'

'Yes, that's it. Can it be true?'

'True? Ay,' said Tarnaby. 'A chap can't swagger about Greenwich like a yachtsman, and have a snug sleeping-berth at a big Greenwich hotel, and get top-heavy on champagne at times, what 's not somehows come into a pot o' money. There ain't no denying o' that.'

'I wish,' said the girl, moving towards the hearth, and laying her hand upon her grandfather's shoulder—'I wish it had been you what had been left a fortun'! You and granny needs a pound or two a sight more nor Sam do. I don't rightly know what 'll come to us this winter, what with you a-being at home, and what with coals and things a-being so dear.'

'Ay, rashuns is a-getting a bit low, Nell,' said Tarnaby, plunging his hands into his empty pockets, 'and baccy 's scarce aboard, bain't it? But don't you worrit, lass.'

'No fear! I 'm not a-losing heart,' said the girl cheerily. 'But it *do* seem hard. Why should Derrick be a man o' fortun' and us so poor that I 'm afeard a'most to part with the price o' a screw o' baccy for you or a ounce o' tea for granny?'

Tarnaby looked into the empty bowl of his pipe and gave Nell an expressive nod.

'Ah!' said he, 'what mother wants is a steady-going chap for a lodger, like young Ted Cartwright wur—a chap what pays for his 'commodation reg'lar. The lodging-money 'd come in handy just now—wouldn't it, Nell?'

The girl's eyes filled with tears as she looked disconsolately round the room.

'Nell,' said Tarnaby after a pause, 'they *do* say, though there mayn't be much truth in it, as Sam Derrick 's a-going to get married.'

Nell looked up swiftly into her grandfather's face.

'They don't mention no names, do they?' said she.

'No; but they do say,' said Tarnaby, avoiding her glance, 'as how she 's a gal what promised to marry him when he come into his 'Stralian gold, as he calls it, should she be free-like to wed.'

An indignant flash lit up Nell Tarnaby's eyes, but she gave no further sign that her grandfather's words had disturbed her; and presently she left him and went downstairs to occupy herself about the house.

That night a strange thing happened. Somewhere about midnight Nell Tarnaby was roused out of her sleep by the slight creaking sound of footsteps descending the old garret stair. She listened intently. Had Ted Cartwright come home? She stood with her hand upon her bedroom door, breathless with expectation, her heart beating fast.

The creaking sound ceased, and in the dead silence that ensued she opened her door warily and looked out into the kitchen.

The night-lamp was burning dimly on the table in its accustomed place, and Mrs Tarnaby was seated in her arm-chair beside the smouldering fire, seemingly sound asleep. Nell instinctively cast her glance up the garret stairs. The garret door stood open, and her increasing sense of wonderment impelled her to creep up to the head of the staircase and look in.

The garret was empty. Nell's wonderment increased tenfold. Her grandfather must have gone out into the night! Yet barely three hours ago she had seen him seated there, too crippled by gout, as she had been led to believe, to cross the floor without his stick. She went over to the window, and drawing a corner of the curtain stealthily aside, peered out. The night was dark. But the light of a boat's lantern moving along the deck of an old coal-barge, alongside of which Nell knew that her skiff was moored, quickly caught her attention. By this feeble light she saw the dark, indistinct figure of a man descend over the barge-side into the skiff; and then the dim outline of the boat, with the man seated at the sculls, passed out into the dimmer mid-stream and disappeared.

The girl went back noiselessly to her room and crept into bed; but she slept no more that night. She lay till daybreak puzzling her brain to find some sort of explanation for an expedition in the dead of night and freighted with so much caution and apparent secrecy.

Nell waited until she heard her grandmother moving about in an adjoining room before she ventured out into the kitchen.

'Ah, that 's right, my dear,' said the woman, coming out of her room; 'get father's cup o' tea ready for him. We 're a bit late this morning. But it 's a blessing *you* sleep soundly. What with my asthma and other worries, I 've not rested on my back like a Christian woman these five-and-twenty year. But I mustn't complain.'

Nell found her grandfather asleep on Cartwright's truckle-bed. But he woke as she entered the garret, and raising himself upon his elbow, looked searchingly into her tired face as she put the tray upon a chair at the bedside.

'Any better to-day, grandfather?'

'Why, no,' said he. 'No—not to speak of. I 've put in here for repairs, and here I seems to ha' come to anchor—don't I?'

As he volunteered no explanation, Nell, though filled with an almost overpowering desire to question him, refrained from comment or inquiry. For it was very evident that he was scheming to keep his midnight river outings—outings which Nell soon discovered were repeated night after night—completely hidden from her. Was it possible that he was employed as one among the search-party in ferreting for Ted Cartwright?

Nell Tarnaby was less frequently out in her skiff upon the river now. She had an instinctive dread of coming across Sam Derrick. But one bleak and cloudy afternoon she was seized with the impulse to try and overcome a fit of low spirits by a vigorous pull at the sculls.

She turned her boat's head towards Greenwich. Since the 'affair' at Barton's Wharf she had felt averse to pass that way; and now, as her skiff went swiftly under the lengthening shadow of the great warehouse, an indescribable sense of resentment seized her when she saw every one toiling away as though nothing had happened there, as though the man she had loved and lost were still in their midst. Yes; at Barton's Wharf work went on as usual. For nothing ever could stop work at Barton's. The fact that a big robbery had occurred there could not fail to create excitement, or even consternation, in the neighbourhood; but work went on—never ceased to go on—among the lightermen, wharfingers, and warehousemen alike in or out of Barton's employ. Never, except at the midday dinner-hour, did Barton's seven cranes cease to haul up into the warehouse or lower down out of the warehouse the blue-tinted barrels of American 'petro' which were being loaded or unloaded in the barges moored alongside—never, from dawn till dusk.

'Steady, there!'

She looked swiftly over her shoulder. A boat had shot out from behind the bank-side lighters, and was falling athwart her little skiff. She recognised the sculler at once.

'Sam!' said she, with a timely back-stroke of her sculls, 'are yer a-trying to drown me?'

Derrick laughed.

'Likely, ain't it?' said he. 'Drown *you!* But what's your hurry, Nell?'

'I'm a-going home.'

'Stop a bit! You can spare two seconds, I reckon; can't you?'

'What if I can?'

Derrick brought his boat alongside. 'You've heared about my luck?'

'How could any one help a-hearing about it?' said Nell. 'It's talked about often enough, goodness knows.'

'Ain't you pleased, Nell?'

'Me! Why should *I* be pleased?'

'Why?' said Derrick. ''Cos my luck's yourn; ain't it?'

'Mine?'

'Yes, yourn,' said Derrick, 'if you bides by your word. You ain't forgot *that*, have you?'

The girl gripped her sculls as though contemplating flight; but Derrick's hand was upon the rowlock of her boat as if to check her. For a moment both sat silent. It was slack-tide now, and the two boats, having drifted in among the black, empty barges, came to a stand. A wintry wind swept round them, and dark, lowering clouds began to spread over the river, foreshadowing the close of day. Snowflakes began to fall and dance round them, settling upon the black barges and covering them like shrouds.

'The luck's been a long time a-coming,' said the man, his eyes bent keenly upon Nell's face; 'but it's come at last—heaps o' gold from 'Straly—thousands! I've wanted it badly, 'cos I've wanted you. You ain't a-going to disapp'int me a'ter all? I've loved you long enough, long afore *he* ever come a-courting o' you. And now he's gone, what's there 'twixt us now?'

'My love for him,' cried Nell; 'that's what's 'twixt me and you, Sam. You know it! My love for him!'

'What! love a chap what's jilted yer! There ain't no sense in that.'

'P'r'aps there ain't; but how can I help it?'

'Help it? Look 'e here,' said Derrick; 'you've got to help it! You don't want it known as how you'd a hand in that burglary at Barton's, do you?'

'Me! What do you mean?'

'Mean?' said Derrick, bending forward and speaking in a low voice. 'Who was a-talking alonger Ted Cartwright on the top floor yonder the night Barton's ware'us wur robbed?'

Nell Tarnaby turned pale and peered round upon the river with frightened eyes.

'I—I never thought o' that,' said she distractedly.

'Don't 'e look so scared,' said Derrick. 'I ain't a-going to peach—not if you keeps yer word. Never a whisper won't pass my lips as how *you* was the last to see Ted Cartwright afore he took his hook. No, never a whisper, unless I'm drove to split. Never a word nor wink to nobody.'

But Sam Derrick's compromising tone only seemed to increase her agitation.

'What's to be done?' said she.

'Why, you've got to keep yer word, I tell yer,' said Derrick; 'that's about the size o' it. You've got to marry me. Won't that put things square?'

'No. I was only a-laughing, Sam. Who'd ha' dreamt as things could turn out so contrairy?'

'Laughing, was you? *I* warn't a-laughing,' said Derrick. 'Come now! Which is it a-going to be—yes or no?'

'Don't ask me to-night,' said Nell distressfully. 'How can I make up my mind all o' a sudden? Give me time.'

'What time?' said Derrick.

'Till to-morrow,' said she.

'Hereabout at slack-tide?'

'Yes, here,' said she; 'hereabout to-morrow, at slack-tide;' and she seized her sculls.

'Stop!' said Derrick, stretching forward till his eager face almost touched her own. 'I love you, Nell! Mind you don't rile me and make it—*hate*.'

She dipped her sculls and darted forward. Derrick sat motionless in his boat looking after her, and repeating in a muttered tone his parting words.

The wintry wind had risen, and the big snowflakes began to dance faster and faster while whirling round her in a cloud. Derrick's motionless figure was growing more and more dimly visible against the background of snow-clad barges, his

voice more and more subdued; and then the feathery veil falling between them hid him from sight.

CHAPTER IV.

CONCLUSION.

NELL TARNABY peered out over her boat's head through the blinding snowstorm—peered out towards her home, with its weather-boarded frontage. It was a house standing apart by the riverside, handy for the wind to sweep round it; the house where her grandparents lived—where she had lived since her earliest days.

What should she do? She began to realise that through a thoughtless word, a word given in jest, she had placed herself in Sam Derrick's power. The faintest show of defiance would impell him to inform against her; she would be charged with having been 'mixed up' in the 'affair' at Barton's Wharf. She could not, dared not, defy him now. If she did—if he carried out his threat—then would ruin and disgrace fall upon the home. They were poor—she and her grandmother—poor enough already; they would be rendered homeless, penniless—driven, maybe, to seek their livelihood as beggars in the London streets!

It was too hideous to think about. Her mind was quickly made up. She sprang out upon the bank, and, having secured her boat, ran up the steps leading to the house door. She raised the latch hurriedly and went in.

Mrs Tarnaby had taken to her bed the last few days. Nell found her asleep, propped up with pillows into a sitting posture, her bedroom fire nearly out. The girl collected a few sticks, knelt down upon the threadbare hearth-rug, and soon coaxed the smouldering fire into a bright blaze. The woman opened her eyes, drowsily at first; and then, looking with a sudden glance of recognition into the girl's face, she said, 'Why, Nell, where ha' you been?'

'Down Greenwich way, granny. I met Sam Derrick.'

'Met *him*, did yer?'

'Yes, granny. Has grandfather been a-calling out for his tea?'

'No. I haven't hear'd him,' said the woman. 'What's Sam Derrick got to say for hisself?'

'Him? He's ax'd me again, granny; and I'm to meet him to-morrow at slack-tide.'

'What for?'

'He wants an answer,' said the girl, 'and I'm a-going to give it him there and then.'

'Why didn't you give him your answer on the spot? It didn't want no thinking about—did it?'

'Yes, it did. It wanted thinking about—badly. But I've thought it all out now. I've settled what I'll answer him.'

'Not—*yes*?'

'That's it! I'm a-going to be Sam Derrick's wife.'

Mrs Tarnaby remained for a moment silent, and the girl, never looking up from the fire, seemed waiting for her to speak.

'Nell,' said she at last, 'light that barge-lamp and creep upstairs to Ted Cartwright's room. Father might be a-waking by now. And if he be, p'r'aps he'd come down and take a cup o' tea alonger us to-night. He don't often do; but he might help to make it a bit lively for once, seeing as how you're so soon a-going to be a lady o' fortun' and—and'——

'Granny!' cried the girl, turning quickly round and seizing the woman's hand, 'can't yer understand? It's for him and you that—that'——

'Ay, my dear, *I* know. It ain't for love o' Sam Derrick as you're a thinking to marry *him*. I know! It's the home as you're afeard may break up as is making you do it. There! don't 'e cry. Creep upstairs and do as I tells yer, softly, 'case he's asleep; and don't let him catch sight o' them tears.'

For a moment Nell stood at the foot of the stairs to suppress the sudden outburst of grief; and then she went up and passed in.

Shading the light with her hand, she peered round the room. On the truckle-bed, with the great gray ulster wrapped closely round him, a man was sleeping, his face turned to the wall.

'Grandfather!' she whispered, stepping on tiptoe towards the bedside.

There was no response, no movement. She paused for a moment, hesitating whether to wake him; and then, deciding to let him be, she went softly down the garret stairs again to Mrs Tarnaby's room. 'Granny, he's asleep,' said she. 'It's the going out on the river night a'ter night a'ter I'm a-bed what tires grandfather—ain't it? I wish I knowed what it means. Why do he do it?'

But a look of abstraction shadowed the woman's face. She took no heed of the girl's question—seemed hardly to have heard her speak.

'There! go and get me a cup o' tea, and don't worrit,' said Mrs Tarnaby at last. 'I've been a-having my queer dreams again this a'ternoon. P'r'aps a cup o' tea would rest me a bit. I never did have sich scaring dreams afore, I do believe. And about Tarnaby's barge, too, o' all queer dreams! That *was* a queer un.'

When the woman had drunk her tea she again grew drowsy. But of a sudden, just when she seemed to have fallen asleep, she opened her eyes on Nell, and said, 'You promised to give him yer answer at slack-tide to-morrow; did you, Nell?'

'Yes, granny. At slack-tide.'

[*Christmas Number.*

'Not afore?' said the woman.

'Not a minute afore.'

Mrs Tarnaby nodded approvingly.

'Ay, bide yer time, Nell,' said she, 'bide yer time! Many a thing may hap 'twixt ebb and flow.' And she closed her eyes.

Nell sat down beside the hearth. There was no light in the room save the light of the fire. And not unlike that fitful firelight was Mrs Tarnaby's fitful sleep. At one moment she would lie breathlessly still, while at another she would start up, with a wildness in her dream-ridden eyes, with muttered utterances on her lips. The night outside was fitful too, with its intermittent gusts of wind, and its soft pattering of snowflakes upon the window-panes that seemed like whispered echoes of Sam Derrick's voice warning her not to go from her word.

Lost in thought, brooding deeply over this trouble that had fallen upon them, Nell was suddenly roused by a terrified dream-cry from Mrs Tarnaby.

'There!' muttered the woman, with a muffled shriek, 'that's Tarnaby's barge. Can't yer see what that Derrick's a-doing o'? Stop him! He's a-going to set her afire. Stop him! Don't yer know as how Ted Cartwright's aboard? There—in the fore-cabin—in the cuddy! There! Break it open! Drag him out! Look! He's done it. The barge is all o' a blaze. Save him. She's a-sinking fast. Can't he be saved? Tarnaby, can't he be saved?' And the woman now dropped back upon her pillows with a moan, the vision of Tarnaby's barge afire still haunting her dream-stricken eyes.

The girl started up with a frantic cry.

'Ted—Ted Cartwright aboard? No—no! You're on'y a-dreaming, granny! It can't—it cannot be.'

Mrs Tarnaby took no heed. She was breathing heavily; but her broken utterances had ceased and her eyes were closed.

While Nell still stood staring at the sleeping woman in blank despair, conjuring up in her active brain a dozen bewildering doubts and fears touching Ted Cartwright's fate, there came a low knock at the kitchen door. Lighting an old barge-lantern at the bedroom fire—the first that came to hand—she hastened out to answer the summons.

But as she entered the kitchen the outer door was thrown open. Raising the lamp above her head, Nell was amazed to discover Sam Derrick—the man whose presence at this moment she desired least—standing before her.

Her first impulse was to call Ben Tarnaby—for her grandfather must surely be awake by now; but another impulse—the impulse to confront Derrick—made her pause.

'I can come in, I s'pose; can't I?' said he, his hand still upon the latch.

She regarded him from head to foot suspiciously; he seemed to her the worse for drink.

'What's brought *you* here at this time o' night?'

'I can't wait till slack-tide. I wants yer answer now,' said Derrick. 'Now! I wants yer word to-night, Nell, that you'll be my wife.'

A sudden inspiration seized the girl. Mrs Tarnaby's half-coherent mutterings a moment ago seemed to have given her the one clue she needed. The full meaning of this man's daring attitude towards her—his attitude from first to last—seemed suddenly made clear.

'*Your* wife! The wife of the man what robbed Barton's Wharf!'

Derrick winced as though he had been badly hit. He clutched at the back of a chair and stared blankly into Nell's face.

'Me!—a man o' fortun'—rob Barton's Wharf?'

His drunken look, his tone of injured innocence, angered Nell Tarnaby beyond endurance; and if while uttering her accusation she had still entertained one spark of doubt about the man's villainy, that spark was extinguished now.

'Who set Tarnaby's barge afire?' said she significantly.

'Tarnaby's barge? Who dare 'cuse me o' that?'

'I dare! But that ain't all,' cried Nell, giving full rein to her impulse. 'What was yer reason for doing it? Coward! 'Twere 'cos Ted Cartwright was aboard! You killed him—murdered the man I loved—killed him on the night you robbed Barton's Wharf, and lowered the poor chap into the barge-cuddy, and set the barge afire, thinking as how you'd hide all yer wicked sins! But I—I've found you out. I'——

At this instant Derrick turned ghastly pale, and a look of abject terror came over his face. Nell paused at the sight, wonder-struck, for he scarcely seemed to be heeding her or her criminating words. That look of terror was fixed upon something behind her—something on the garret stair.

Snatching the lamp off the table, Derrick raised it with a trembling hand.

'Cartwright!'

The name escaped him like a low shriek. The lantern fell from his grasp. Then he turned and sped out into the night.

Derrick was gone. But the man she loved was there. She heard him utter her name—'Nell! Nell!'

Ted Cartwright had come back to her—come back at last.

'Nell,' said Cartwright when they presently sat down together beside the kitchen fire, 'you left me on the top floor at Barton's t' other night a minute too soon. When you was gone I went and took a good pull at the flask in that 'ere basket. And what d'yer think happened? I toppled over in no time on the warehouse floor, and there I lay'd just like a dead un. That drink o' mine was drugged.'

'Drugged! Why, how could that be?' said Nell. 'I never let yer supper-basket out o' my sight, except for a second or two when I went aft to bid grandfather good-night.'

'Ah! That's when it wur done,' cried Cartwright, ''pend upon it; and it wur Sam Derrick what mixed it up.'

'But, Ted, what happened then?'

'I don't know,' said Cartwright. 'I can't rec'lect nothing till I found myself with ropes bound round me on the cuddy floor aboard Tarnaby's barge, and Mrs Tarnaby was a-bending over me and blinding me a'most with the light o' a barge-lantern.'

'Granny! How came she aboard?'

'A'ter you was abed and asleep,' said Cartwright, 'she got a scare. Tarnaby a-sleeping so sound as even *you* couldn't stir him set her a-thinking. She'd had her suspicions o' Derrick for many a day; and all o' a sudden-like she got that scare. Nell!' the young night-watchman went on, lowering his voice, 'it was she—your sharp-witted grandmother—what saved my life. If it hadn't ha' been for her a-coming aboard and hearing groans in the fore-cabin, I should ha' died that very night, and been burnt and drowned next day off Gravesend, aboard Tarnaby's barge.'

The girl clasped his hand and shivered, and cast a frightened look over her shoulder towards the outer door.

'Oh Ted! what—what a demon he be!'

'Ay, but that ain't all,' said Cartwright. 'When Derrick had lowered me into the cuddy and made the hatch fast over my head, he climbed back to the top floor, hauled up the crane, and closed the ware'us doors. Then he set to work to plunder the strong-room, and made off with a heap o' notes and gold. He hid the money up the river in some secret hole, and then turned up aboard Tarnaby's barge in the mornin' at ebb-tide—as agreed 'twixt him and the skipper—just as though nothing had happened.'

'And where was you, Ted,' said Nell—'where was you that morning at ebb-tide?'

'At Scotland Yard,' said Cartwright, 'talking the business over alonger Mr Barton and a detective.'

'Ah! the chap what startled granny,' Nell interposed, 'and startled me?'

'Startled you, did he? I was afeard he would,' said Cartwright. 'Well, you see, what he's been a-trying to do all this time has been to find out where Derrick has gone and hidden all that money o' Barton's. We've been a-shadowing o' him night and day; and at last, Nell, at last we've lighted on the right track.'

'But why,' said Nell disconsolately—'why ha' you kept me in the dark all these days? If yer on'y knew what a wretched time'——

'Don't I just know? Ah, Nell!' said Cartwright, 'it wur fear o' Derrick what forced us to keep all dark. Those bright eyes o' yourn might ha' told him too much. He'd ha' begun to suspect, and that would ha' ruined all. The money what he hid away have been found by now, I reckon, and if it be found that varmint 'll be nabbed to-night.'

At this moment Nell rose with a surprised and listening look on her face.

'Hark! Ain't that grandfather's step?' said she. 'I thought he was asleep upstairs!'

'Asleep upstairs? That was me curled up in his old ulster, Nell,' said Cartwright laughingly. 'Did you look in?'

'Look in? Yes! Oh Ted,' said she, 'if I'd on'y knowed!'

Then the door opened, and Tarnaby, his cap and reefer white with snow, stood before them.

'All well?' said Cartwright in a low, eager voice.

'Ay, my lad,' said the skipper; 'the money 's all been sighted at last—leastways a'most all o' it. It wur found, as expected, in an old willow-stump on Eel Pie Island, and it's been stowed away in Barton's strong-room again.—Ted,' he added, 'there'll be a ten-p'un' reward apiece for me and you to-morrow.—Nell,' he said, stamping about as though he were aboard his barge, 'mix us a stiff un, my lass. It's a shivering night.'

When he had shaken the snow off himself from boots to shoulders, Tarnaby sat down beside the hearth to fill his pipe.

While Nell was mixing the grog Cartwright whispered in the skipper's ear, 'Seen him?'

Tarnaby nodded.

'He's gone and drifted down Gravesend way, where he meant *you* to go. The ebb-tide's took him right enough,' said he, with a jerk of the thumb over his shoulder, 'and nobody ain't a-chartered him to come back.'

CHRISTMAS DAY.

ONCE more we see the far-off Eastern land:
  Its vineyards, mounts, and plains, its lakes and seas;
  White towns with walls and gates, with domes and trees;
Its temples, tombs, and desert-wastes of sand.
We see the shepherds watching flocks at night,
  And hear the Angel say, 'Be not afraid;
  The Christ is born, and in a manger laid;'
While clouds of singers softly fade from sight.
Again we see the moving star on high,
  And note the Magi, past the stable-door,
  Unroll their gifts and spread them on the floor,
Unmindful of the ass and oxen nigh.

'Tis Christmas brings these scenes before our eyes.
The day is ours, good friends. Take heed: Time flies.

SARAH WILSON.

[*Christmas Number.*